# PORT HARCOURT JOURNAL OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
## IGNATIUS AJURU UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
### RUMUOLUMENI, PORT HARCOURT, NIGERIA

# PORT HARCOURT JOURNAL OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Volume 1, No, 2 (2023)

**EDITORIAL NOTE**

Port Harcourt Journal of Society and Environment is a biannual peer reviewed publication of the Department of Sociology, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt. It aims at the advancement of the frontiers of knowledge, promotion of innovative research as well as providing a platform for the sharing and dissemination of information between and among the academic and professional world on society and environment.

It is our pleasure to welcome our valued readers to the maiden edition of the Port Harcourt Journal of Society and Environment even as we express our profound appreciation to the numerous contributors for the confidence shown by subscribing to this journal.

This edition features 23 articles on a wide range of issues on society and environment. We are confident that our valued readers will find this collection of articles a delight to read, while looking forward to more fruitful relationship.

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Printed in Nigeria by PH Journal Publishers Limited.

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# RURAL POVERTY AND URBAN VIOLENT CRIME IN THE 21ST CENTURY NIGERIA: A STUDY OF YENAGOA METROPOLIS OF BAYELSA

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**Abstract**
*Urban violent crime in the 21st Century Nigeria cannot be underestimated. Thus, understanding the level of damage and the futuristic effect on the Nigerian society is of great concern. Yenagoa metropolis of Bayelsa State is one of the areas in the state, where there is high crime rate prevalence. Such high level crime rate such as kidnapping, armed robbery, hooliganism, drug peddling and cultism informed the legislation of the anti-cultism law of 2012 by the state government and its further amendment in 2018, to tackle violent crimes in the state. This study therefore examines and highlights the neglect of rural communities and their productive activities, which is agriculture; that has resulted to poverty and unemployment, which in turn has created a high rural-urban migration. However, the absence of these envisaged means of survival in the urban areas, has significantly influenced the high rate of urban crime. The descriptive survey method was adopted, and data were gotten through secondary sources. The frustration aggression theory was preferred as the theoretical framework. The study revealed that the prevalence of urban violent crime is as a result of rural poverty that has created the influx of residents of rural communities to urban areas. Recommendations were made which included among others, that concerted and genuine efforts by government be directed towards improving the agriculture capacities, which is the main source of livelihood of rural dwellers in Nigeria, in general but in Bayelsa in particular.*

**Keywords**: Rural poverty, urban, violent crime, unemployment, secret cult.

## Introduction

Poverty is one serious and most prevalent social phenomena in human society. Over the years, even as human societies have applied different political and economic strategies to eradicate or reduce the level of poverty, the gap between the rich and the poor, particularly in Nigeria and in many countries in general is getting rather broadening. Nigeria is the biggest producer of oil in Africa and the sixth oil producer in the world but in spite of its vast and abundant resources, it ranks among the poorest countries in the world. World Bank (2010) report rated Nigeria as second poorest country in the world with most Nigerians living below poverty line.

Omoyibo (2013) has lamented concerning the nation's wealth and high rate of poverty that despite Nigeria's economic growth and its abundant natural and mineral resources, a large number of its citizens are wallowing in abject poverty. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS,2012), also revealed, the number of Nigerians living in poverty. According to that statistics, the highest poverty rates are recorded in the North-West and North-East geopolitical zones with poverty rate of 77.7 percent and 76.6 percent respectively. The reason for this excruciating poverty situation is not far-fetched giving that these zones are being riddled most with conflicts and violence. And the situation is such that, no day passes without news of one form of killing or the other by the insurgents, such as banditry, kidnapping, and cultist activities.

The report of the 2019 poverty and inequality in Nigeria, released by the National Bureau of Statistics based on data from the findings of the Nigerian living standards survey, conducted in2018-2019, with support from the World Bank's poverty global practice and technical assistance from the LSMS (Living Standards Measurement Survey) programme highlights that 80 percent of the total population, or almost 83 million people live below the country's poverty line of137,430 naira ($381.75) per year (World Bank, 2020). Similarly, the statistics office of the World Bank (2020), also revealed that 52 percent of the people in rural areas in Nigeria live in poverty, compared with 18 percent in urban areas of the country. And as being felt by the world over, and particularly Nigeria, the increase in poverty contributes to situations such as political instability, environmental degradation, conflict, violence, and crime, which drain resources that might be used to meet a nation's domestic needs.

**Statement of the Problem**

The Niger Delta region which is the main source of Nigeria's wealth, suffers from a paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty. The region, despite providing about 80 percent of the nation's revenue basically from oil and gas still remains the region with high level of poverty and insecurity in the federation, following the North-Eastern part of the country (World Bank, 2012).The per-capital income of about 90 percent of the people in the region is below I dollar and the level of insecurity is alarming; robbery, abduction, kidnapping, rape, cyber-crime, street hooliganism, cultism etc. are the orders of the day.

In the Niger Delta region, especially Bayelsa State, and Yenagoa Metropolis (the state capital) in particular, insecurity is also rife. Poverty and means of survival have contributed in no small measure to the level of violent crime being committed intermittently across the state. Cases of violent crimes and criminal activities are being reported on daily basis through the mass media, as it affects individuals, families and communities and the state at large. For instance, Abiowei Lawal (Tribune, Nov 13, 2020) reports the crime rate increase in Yenagoa metropolis in Bayelsa State, and revealed that; *"the absence of police personnel and other crime and gang – related crisis in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State capital has made residents vulnerable to attacks by cultists and armed robbers"*.

Leadership Newspaper on the 13 of November, 2020 also reports that the sundry crimes including armed robbery and cult violence were on the rise in some parts of the state, particularly the Yenagoa metropolis. For instance, a journalist and state correspondent of Guardian Newspapers, Mr. Osahon Julius escaped a robbery attack on Thursday night in November, 12, 2020, around 8pm along the Azikoro road, near the Ekeki Police Station. Also, while cult groups engaged in violence raids of the popular Swali Market and some residents of Amarata, and Ekeki areas in the Yenagoa metropolis; armed robbers are using commercial tricycle known as "KEKENAPEP" to raid residents at night along major roads of the state capital.

Investigation by the Blueprint Newspaper (2019, February 7), in Yenagoa revealed that, residents of Yenagoa now sleep with their two eyes open as hoodlums brazenly carryout their activities unhindered. Mr. Osomwari Goerge, a tricycle operator, narrating his experience with blueprint said: *"They face great danger in their business as most times, criminals waylay them at gun point to carry out their crimes"*.

Expressing sadness over the violent criminal activities being faced by residents of Yenagoa metropolis, a resident of Yenagoa, Mr. George Patrick also told Blueprint:

> Most people came here to make a living. It is a normal thing for human beings to look for legitimate means of survival but not here". He went further to add that "but everyone is living in fear as human lives means nothing anymore. I came here to earn a living as a Keke rider; before now, I usually leave my house by 4:am to carry passengers especially women going to the market early in the morning, but these days, crime rate is on the increase. You cannot see anyone to carry until7:00am because of bad boys, the market women are mostly their victims. Look around the whole of the state capital; no street lights, the whole town is completely in darkness like graveyard and once it is 6pm everybody goes home for fear of being attacked. It has crippled our business; no nightlife as before

Such violent crimes have resulted to low quality of life, loss of properties, income, relocation or closure of small and medium scale businesses. For instance, the wave of violent crime in the Niger Delta Region of oil producing areas of the country from time to time does hamper the rate of oil production. Consequently, the nation does record loss of income, because of the continuous kidnappings of oil workers in the region. What is even more, increased psychological trauma on victims and the general public, permanent disability of victim or victims, and even premature death which consequently, turning members of the society into orphans, widows and widowers (Adeleke& Charles, 2016).

Ludwig et al (2001), in looking at the relationship between poverty and crime believe that this is a possibility that most crimes can be linked to high poverty neighbourhoods. They believe that criminal behaviours can spread throughout a community, tempting others to commit crimes. In their study of poverty and crime, they state that if the number of citizens living in poverty was to increase by just one percent it would cause about 135 more crimes. Also, this one percent increase would result in

25 more violent crimes. And that, a 1 percent rise in poverty would amount in a 2.16 percent rise in violent crime. Therefore, an increase in poverty directly increases crime rates.

Poverty is a ravaging economic and social phenomenon that manifest in the inability to acquire the basic necessities of life needed for a decent living. It is a paradox that poverty prevails in a petroleum rich Bayelsa State and indeed the Niger Delta Region. Therefore, any society that intends to overcome violent crime and other criminal activates, must above all other things suppress poverty among its people or citizenry. For without security, there can be no development.

Giving the above, the pertinent and critical question is; what are the major factors of rural poverty? Why the high rate of violent crime in the Yenagoa metropolis of Bayelsa State in particular and Nigeria in general. It is on this note that this study examines the nexus between rural poverty and urban violent crime in the 21 century Nigeria: A study of Yenagoa metropolis in Bayelsa State.

## Theoretical Framework

The Frustration-Aggression theory is adopted in this paper. Frustration – Aggression hypothesis, also known as the Frustration – Aggression – Displacement Theory, is a theory of aggression first proposed by John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer, and Robert Sears in 1939. It was further developed by Neal Miller in 1941, and Leonard Berkowitz in 1969 (Dollard, et al, as in Wikipedia.org). This theory says that aggression is the result of blocking or frustrating, a person's efforts to attain a goal (Friedman, et al, 2014).

Dollard and his group, in their book *Frustration and Aggression* define frustration as an event; and thought about frustration as an unexpected blockage of a goal that someone anticipated attaining (Breuer & Elson, 2017). The frustration – aggression theory states that aggression is a result of frustration. Frustration is an event or stimulus that prevents an individual from attaining a goal and its accompanying reinforcement quality. When our drive to reach a goal is blocked by external factors, we experience frustration which, in turn, creates an aggressive drive and this can lead to aggressive behaviour. Furthermore, the theory states that while frustration prompts a behaviour that may or may not be aggressive, any aggressive behaviour is the result of frustration, making frustration not sufficient but a necessary condition for aggression.

This theory states that frustration causes aggression, but when the source of frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target. Our aggression is not always expressed towards the legitimate target because it could be too dangerous and we risk punishment, or because the target is not available so we displace our aggressive response towards a less dangerous target or one who just happens to be present. This is called "displacement".

As individuals or groups, we all seek to attain certain life desires or targets but, society is such that achieving these targets or desire are usually not easy as there exist what frustration – aggression theorists called "discrepancies'" "blocks" or interference" to the attainment of desired goals or targets. And where such discrepancies, blocks or interference between what individuals or groups seek and what they actually gain exist, frustration is likely to occur; consequently, there is the tendency that people will direct their frustration to the perceived source(s) of the frustration.

The underpinning argument of this theory is, providing explanations concerning an individual or group response to the perceived source whose actions are seen to be impediment to the successful attainment of desired goal(s) of the individual or group. Therefore, the utility of this theory of analysis develops from the rational thinking that the causes of poverty and violent crime in the Nigerian society can be attributed to the excruciating socio-economic and political predicaments highly prevalence in the country, which is frustrating, particularly to the young(youth) population. The high rate of poverty, unemployment and severe hunger in the land, particularly as it affects the youth population in the country, and Bayelsa State in particular; violent crime and criminality has become the order of the day. What even more, these excruciating conditions are harsher in the rural communities forcing a high movement(migration) of rural youths to the cities. However, in the cities, they are as well disappointed as they are unable to attain their desired goals or targets, hence, most of them become frustrated and therefore, seek other illegitimate means such as violent crime, to survive.

## Methodology

This study employed secondary source of data mainly from textbooks, articles, journals and news magazines. The descriptive survey method is adopted for this study, which is considered to be

more appropriate, since it intended to investigate rural poverty and urban violent crime in the 21st century Yenagoa metropolis of Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

**Analysis/Discussion**
**Rural neglect and poverty**

      For a country with wealth and a huge population to support commerce and plenty of natural resources such as oil, such as Nigeria to remain poor is unacceptable. And giving the many factors contributing to this ugly trend and excruciating condition of existence of the people; such as rural neglect, is one major factor creating poverty in the land. Rural neglect here we mean the neglect and abandonment of rural communities and their economic activities which is agriculture, for enhancing the people's well-being and existence.

      The composition of Nigeria's economy, especially the energy (oil) and agriculture sections contribute significantly to government revenues. However, it has been revealed that while oil exports contributes 9 percent to the GDP and employs only a fraction of the population, agriculture contributes to about 17 percent of GDP, and employs about 30 percent of the population (Adinde, 2018). Also, Megan (2018), reveals that, Nigeria's small farms produce 80 percent of the total food and 33 percent of the country's land is under cultivation for this purpose. He goes further to add that "Nigeria is the leading African country in farming because it has the highest levels of productivity and profitability in this particular sector". Even at this, agriculture is being neglected, consequently the huge movement from rural areas to the urban areas. Agriculture is very important because it provides income to farmers and government. Through farming, farmers get money which they use for other purposes, like provision of shelter, children's education, healthcare etc.

      The concept poverty is complex to define, for it does not mean the same thing for all people. The concept poverty is relative rather than absolute, that is, the experience of poverty is based on conditions in one's own society. People feel rich or poor with reference to others around them, not with reference to every rich or poor people elsewhere in the world. However, poverty is simply, general scarcity or the state of one who lacks a certain amount of material possessions or money. For most people, poverty simply means not having enough money to buy things that are considered necessary and desirable Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2nd edition, 2005), defines poverty as "the condition of being extremely poor". Being poor is therefore, usually seen in economic terms that is why Oxford English Dictionary also defines it as "having little money, not having and not being able to get the necessaries of life". In this most extreme form, poverty is a lack of basic human needs, such as adequate nutritious food, clothing, housing, clean water, and health services.

      For the purpose of this discuss however, the definition given by Hogan (2006), where the concept of poverty is defined as "a low standard of living that lasts long enough to undermine the health, morale, and self-respect of an individual or group of individuals" is for researchers, more appropriate.

      It is indeed a paradox that poverty prevails in a petroleum rich country, Nigeria, and Bayelsa State in the Niger Delta region in particular. Health indicators are low, lagging far behind the national average fatality rates from water-borne diseases, malnutrition, and poor sanitation are also high. Similarly, the quality and quantity of housing and infrastructure are deficient in much of the region. Only about 20 to 24 percent of rural communities and about 60 percent of urban communities have access to safe drinking water (World Bank, 2018).

      Again, the very fact that oil revenue is poorly distributed among the population, with higher government spending in urban areas than the rural areas, high unemployment rates, pollution as a result of oil extraction, floods, farmers-herdsmen clashes etc. across the country have resulted to agriculture growth being slowed, and thus the high migration trend to the urban areas. And while the "push" factors indicated above, which are the negative conditions people found themselves and therefore, migrate to the cities or urban areas; "pull" factors which are those positive and conclusive conditions that attract or encourage people to migrate, in search as these, such as education and employment for a better improved life are being disappointed.

      Philıp (2013), reveals that people migrate from rural areas to the urban centres due to low level of living, lack of infrastructural development and food insecurity. He further states "that the most important thing in life is shelter, food and cloth, and among all, food is the best". He explains that one might have shelter and cloths, not the moment you do not have food to eat; all three becomes useless, and if care is not taken, you might not leave to enjoy the shelter and clothes.

The death of basic infrastructural amenities affect the welfare of the rural dwellers, and food insecurity in the rural areas. This has made rural dwellers, particularly the youth to abandon rural settlement for the urban areas, with its attendant challenges. Growing up in poverty or living in poverty is like being exiled from society, it is being alienated in your own country. Indeed, one of the major reasons that poverty has been associated with crime, is because it is an opportunity for the poor to acquire materials that they could otherwise not afford. As Krugman (2008) has revealed that 'poverty can also produce violent crimes, because force is an easy way to get a large quantity of goods". And that many impoverished criminals feel the hope of treasures", is worth the possibility of being caught. Thus, when poverty is coupled with high levels of economic and social aspirations, the stage is set for violent crime and criminality, consequently, an increase in crime rate in society.

**Urbanization and Violent Crime**
Increased in urbanization which has resulted in growth and size of the urban population, which is one of the most significant trends in the modern world has adversely affected the human environment. For example, urbanization results in the creation of slums settlements which leads to deteriorating life quality, poor health services and flourishing of communicable diseases, and also crime and criminality. The development strategies and efforts in Nigeria over the years, has become more urban based resulting in the relative neglect of the rural areas. As McCarty (2014) opines, that *"excessive urbanization leads high rate of congestion, crime food insecurity, lack of basic amenities and chronic unemployment"*.

Suresh (2005), reveals that in many big cities, slum population accounts for about 40 percent of the total city population, resulting in filthy surroundings, lack of basic amenities and hence a disease prone life and crime. However, while many of the consequences of urban transformation are positive, such as migrants finding new opportunities for education and work in the cities, many other consequences are negative, such as overcrowding, poverty, and lack of adequate housing. In addition, water, transportation, electricity, medical facilities etc. are often inadequate to meet the new demands. In the face of these negative consequence is the high prevalence of violent crime in the urban areas.

Crime which is simply defined as any antisocial behaviour harmful to individuals or group is of many different types. It is any offence which goes beyond the personal and into the public sphere, breaking prohibitory rules or laws, to which legitimate punishments or sanctions are attached, and which requires the intervention of a public authority, i.e. the state or legal body (John & Gordon, 2005). Thus, what exactly constitute crime may vary from society to society. However, criminologists commonly group crimes into several major categories: violent crime, property crime, white collar crime, organized crime and consensual or victimless crime (Iwarimie-Jaja, 2012).

Violent crime (urban violent crime), which is the focus of this paper is any crime that causes physical, emotional, or psychological harm to the victim. These crimes are offenses against the person or group of persons, and they include: assault, murder, kidnapping, manslaughter and rape. Urban violent crimes are thus, these crimes undertaken by individuals or groups that are capable of causing apprehension, intimidation, fear, harassment, death or any other form of insecurity among residents of an urban area or settlement.

In this 21st century Nigeria, violent crimes are mostly being perpetuated under an organized group or groups commonly referred to as "secret cult" groups. In Nigeria, secret cult members are known to have been involved in cases of armed robbery, kidnapping, sea piracy, hired assassins, electoral violence etc. besides, intra and inter cult group clashes usually result to death of innocent members of the public, destruction of public infrastructure, and private individuals properties. In October, 2012, Vanguard Newspaper reports that the police arrested 160 suspected members of the "1 million boys' gang", a criminal gang. This sinister group terrorized the entire community, raping helpless women and robbing defenseless residents. However, in order to put a check on the spread of cultism and cult related activities resulting to violent crime, Nigeria government, both federal and state have taken various steps including passing appropriate decrees and enacting legislations aimed at stamping out this menace. Here in Bayelsa State, legislation directed towards curbing cultism and cult related activities was also established. This law was the first set of executive bills sent to the State House of Assembly, at the inception of the elected government in 2012.

According to the Bayelsa State secret cults/societies and similar activities (prohibition) law, which was assented to by the then governor, Henry Seriake Dickson, on May 12, 2012, clearly states

that: organizations, associations, group or bodes whose members and activities are kept secret from the public, and whose actions or inactions promotes, causes or engages in acts of violence, intimidation or harm is said to have committed an offence under the law and such individual or organization is liable for prosecution in an ordinary law court. The law slated under it schedule, one hundred and twenty-two (122) secret cults and similar groups and organizations.

Section 1, subsection (4) prescribes the punishment for anyone who commits an offence under this law, liable on conviction to imprisonment for ten years without an option of fine. While section 2, subsections (1) and (2) frown at any form of sponsorship or patronage of cult activities in the state (Bayelsa). According to this section "any person who gives any financial or material support or assistance to a secret cult or in any manner, sponsors or patronizes the activities of a secret cult, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for ten years without an option of fine". The provision of section 12 of the law deals with the trial of offences under the law; which states that "offences under this law shall be triable in the high court of Bayelsa State.

Odili (2019), reveals that, the establishment of the anti-cultism act yielded some positive results at the initial stage of implementation. For a short period of time, there was drastic reduction in secret cult related incidents particularly in Yenagoa metropolis as many cult group leaders went underground, while others flee from the state to other locations. Also, thousands of youth who were involved in secret cultism renounced their membership, while some suspected cult members were arrested by the police and prosecuted and those convicted were punished according to the provision of the law.

Nevertheless, as Emeka (2019) notes, that cult activities returned in full force shortly after the 2015 governorship election in the state, and argues that it may not be unconnected with the deliberate arming of youths by desperate politicians during the elections, unemployment, hunger caused by economic hardship, and materialistic desires among youths. Cultism became widespread as it continues to constitute serious threat of lives and property in Yenagoa metropolis, like the period prior to the promulgation of the anti-cultism law, 2012. As Odili (2019) reveals, a former commissioner of police in the state observes that: "cultism is the catalyst instigator and propeller of violent cries such as armed robbery, rape, kidnapping and other violent crimes".

The table below shows fatality rate from several incidents involving cult activities from 2012-2018.
Table 1: Cult violence in Yenagoa metropolis 2012-2018

| Year | Fatalities |
|------|------------|
| 2012 | 62 |
| 2013 | 36 |
| 2014 | 20 |
| 2015 | 45 |
| 2016 | 49 |
| 2017 | 60 |
| 2018 | 68 |

Source: Partnership Initiative in the Niger Delta (PIND)

From the table above, cult violence remained prevalent with associated increased fatalities, despite the existence of the 2012 legislation. This situation prompted the state government to take further steps by granting amnesty to cultists in the state. At the same time, the government amended the 2012 law (secret cult/societies and similar activities prohibition amendment law, 2018), to give more powers to security agencies to arrest and persecute suspected cultists. The new law makes it mandatory for offenders to be jailed upon conviction for not less than twenty (20) years without any option of fine. The law also empowered the police and other law enforcement agencies to conduct search on the homes of suspected cultists and sponsors, even without warrant, while buildings and premises used for cult activities, initiations as well as the storage of arms and dangerous weapons are to be forfeited to the government (BSHA, 2018).

However, even with these efforts by the state government, cultism still thrives and secret cult activates remain one of the major threats to urban residents in the Yenagoa metropolis of Bayelsa State. Yenagoa metropolis like other parts of Nigeria, has become a precipice of cult activities, creating violent

crime, as each day witnesses manifestations of fear and apprehension among the residents. Certain areas and streets in the Yenagoa metropolis are dreaded and avoided by most people, particularly at night.

**Summary and Recommendations**

Violent crime continued to rise, which generally reduces safety, disrupt, social order, creates chaos and confusion, hinders community collaboration for development, and creates serious economic cost to both the people and the Nigerian nation at large. The study therefore, assessed the continued rise of violent crime in Yenagoa metropolis of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Its main focus was on rural poverty and violent crime in Yenagoa Metropolis of Bayelsa State, as a result of underlying socio-economic challenges, such as poverty, urbanization and unemployment. The high neglect of rural communities resulting to agricultural growth being slowed, thus creates high migration trend, especially of the young population to the urban areas. Rural economic activity which is agriculture, contributes significantly to about 17 percent of GDP, and also employs about 30 percent of the population. Agriculture is the foundation of Nigerian economy; it is at the centre of the Nigerian economy, providing the main source of livelihood for the majority of Nigerians. Ironically, the reasons and expectations for rural-urban migration were never achieved, consequently, the continued rise in violent crime in urban areas.

Violent crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping, sea piracy, hired assassins, electoral violence etc. are mostly perpetuated under an organized group or groups "cultists". Cultism is the catalyst and propeller of violent crimes such as rape, kidnapping, armed robbery etc. Here in Bayelsa State, legislations directed to put a check on the spread of cultism and cult related activities were put in place in 2012 and 2019 respectively. Nevertheless, cult violence remained prevalence with associated increase fatalities, creating violent crime, and thus, stand out as one major threats to urban residents. In the light of the above therefore, the following recommendations are hereby made:

❖ Concerted efforts by government, federal, state and local government should be directed towards improving the agriculture capacities of the rural population, which is the main source of livelihood in Nigeria. Especially, efforts should be focused on encouraging commercial production of non-staple cash crop, particularly those that result in robust links to the non-farm sector, as this will be the major provider of employment for the rural poor. If agricultural capacitates are improved, it will translate to increased agricultural produce and ultimately reduce the rate of rural dwellers migrating to urban areas.

❖ Social amenities and services, such as potable water, steady electricity, functional education, medical services etc. should be put in place in the rural areas as to improve the quality of life of the rural population. For the rural poor will be best assisted by improving their access to health education, etc. services to improve their human capital.

❖ Skill acquisition centres be established and made effectively functional in different parts of the state. These centres would be used to inculcate self-sustaining skills in the youth and at the same time provide them with employment and helping to stem the tide of rural-urban drift.

❖ The anti-cultism act of 2012 which was amended in 2018, be again amended to include death penalty on conviction for offenders and not just 20 years jailed term without any option of fine. This would serve as a serious deterrent to others.

❖ Taking care of corruption is taking care of poverty. By eradicating corruption, Nigeria could come out of poverty. As a result of extreme corruption, even the poverty reduction programmes suffer from no funding and have failed over the years, to give the needed remedy to the Nigerian society. For various government have shown tolerance towards corruption and corrupt officials to the extent that corrupt officials facing indictment are pardoned and celebrated, in the Nigerian society, as a result of ethnic, religious and political party sentiments. Government at the various levels should decisively deal with officials found to be corrupt. Also, various agencies established to fight corruption should be headed by corrupt free individuals, and be made truly independent.

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# RESOURCE DEPLETION AND CRISIS OF POVERTY AMONG RURAL DWELLERS IN RIVERS STATE

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**Abstract**
*This work examines resource depletion and crisis of poverty amongst rural dwellers in Rivers State. Over the years, literatures abound in varieties on issues of resource depletion, yet no veritable debate on the linkages between it (resource depletion) and crisis of poverty independently as it affects rural dwellers particularly in Rivers State. This study, in view of the aforesaid statement tends to examine the commonality between resource depletion and poverty in Rivers State rural communities. One outstanding aspect of the natural environment of the South-South region of Nigeria is that it has displayed or shown consistency and unrelenting pressure and assault on the ecosystem. There has been pervading and deepening poverty, within and around the rural dwellers in Niger Delta and indeed Rivers State. Since it is obvious that there are no affordable and sustainable alternative, people within the rural communities keep assaulting the ecosystem as a perfect alternative out of poverty. With historical perspectives and antecedents, this study examined how poverty coupled with population growth has affected the ecosystem and established the relationship between them. Consequently, the study recommends among others that rural dwellers should be encouraged by government at all levels in an effort to conserve and farm marine resources (mostly referred to as seafood) in marketable quantity, as this would improve local economy, curtail and reduce drastically the pressure on marine resources.*

**Keywords:** Resource depletion, poverty, rural economy, ecosystem

**Introduction**
To maintain a sustainable balance that would exist between corresponding human needs and the exploitation of natural resources is to understand culture of a particular people. There is no doubt that culture remains an intellectual construct that is useful in the understanding of a people (Okaba, 1999). Therefore, resource usages which were tied to societal culture on one hand and the regenerative capacities of the environment on the other could be a huge challenge if the essence of facts is lost. Dealing with environmental issues requires a good knowledge and understanding of the people's culture and needs and also the relationship between them and certain physical habitats, ecosystem, their socio-economic status and wherewithal and the processes that create peculiar environmental challenges. For instance, natural ecosystems in rural communities of Rivers State have several characteristics that make them attractive and accessible as a source of income to the poor rural dwellers. Their environmental resources are renewable, widely dispersed, and often found in common property areas where the people can access them without owning them. However, the increased population and manner of its usability had driven most of these valued resources into extinction. To corroborate this view, it was asserted that:

> …in the past, individuals and community life was essentially rural. The population of most communities was relatively small; the forest-lands were sparsely populated. The people lived either as farmers, fishermen or hunters and perhaps carvers (craftsmen). Social and economic needs were relatively limited. Living was basically at the subsistence level and revolved round the forest and rivers and the resources therein. The people thus lived their lives off the forest/river resources as they serve as the centre of their lives (Irikana, 2015 p.60).

Basically, the people in different rural communities of Rivers State with awareness or in a way recognized the ideal relevance of rivers and forest resources to their very essence of life. And based on this, their attitudinal relationship to these resources were conducive and amiable. Consequently, any deed that is inimical to the river and forest resources was directly or indirectly discouraged. There were also rules and regulations with restriction and penalties guiding conditions of these resource usages. In the case of river, fishing methods were such that conserve continued natural productivity and fertility. In contemporary reality, the case of forests and rivers resource utilization has a paradigm shift. There is an enduring deforestation activity culminating or resulting not only in physical step-down of the forest space but also in the depletion of most of the resources. The same is applicable to rivers with their rich mangrove resources, as they disappear into the thin air and thereby increasing the level of poverty amongst rural dwellers of Rivers State whose primary sources of livelihood depends on mangrove resources. Furthermore, rural communities of Rivers State especially the riverine communities have over the years been in the eye of the storm due to the catastrophes accompanied by incidence of killing, kidnapping and occupation orchestrated by militant insurgency of the areas. This perturbed situation has prevented the people from accessing and conserving mangrove resources available to them and thus further increased not only poverty but also the depletion of the renewable mangrove resources. Indeed, most contemporary localities of Rivers State no longer have regards for resources conservation/preservation, thereby make equally peculiar and un-relentless demands of them and correspondingly create peculiar problem on their given environment. In the other words environmental challenges are the result of the interplay between and among the physical social economics and political factors of the human processes of production and consumption (Lowe & Rowby, 1992). Environmental pollution has long been a global challenge that concerns the totality of human existence. The case of most rural communities of Niger Delta and Rivers State in particular appears to be the worst. This entirely is because apart from the general issue of oil spillage and the most recent illegal refining of crude oil called, kpo-fire, there were cases of bush burning, deforestation, indiscriminate and unsustainable destruction of the mangrove forests and their resources. This was ably captured in Irikana (2005) titled: *The Niger Delta ecosystem and oil production: An analysis of capitalist incorporation of a natural economy*. In the study, he posited that a number of internal and external variables are held accountable for the accelerated disappearance and depletion of the forests and their resources. Internally, according to him:

> The combined effect of worsening poverty and rapidly growing population in the region no doubt has compelled the people to rely heavily on the forests and their resources for survival, and consequently increase the pressure on those resources since they serve as their major sources of livelihood. There is no doubt that the continued growth in population means more mouths to feed and this means forest had to be cleared and more demands for other forest resources.

In like manner, the external variables were linked to the introduction of nypapalm into the Niger Delta environment in the early 1900s and the dredging of numerous creeks and shallow rivers. The position as maintained herein was that, the nypapalm is a weed and causes so much economic damage to the ecosystem and its usefulness, while the opening up of rivers and creeks exposed the fish to the danger of constant hunting without a hiding place. Although, these facts had in no small measure contributed to the depletion of resources in the environment, they are too secondary to match up the increased and persistent social problems. Often times, considerable attention and emphasis were very much on issue of environmental degradation and oil spillages of oil multinationals. However, numerous studies have portrayed that even before the advent of oil exploration engagements, man's activities had demonstrated some level of destruction on the environment. Again, evidence have also shown that in some other rural communities of Rivers State where cases of oil spillages were scarcely noticed, resource depletion had occurred more drastic than those with oil spillage cases.

Consequently, for the researcher not to ignore different questions and answers that imbibe in different minds, the study tried to be categorical and assertive to state here that destructions on the environment cannot and should not be tied only to oil spillage but also on the activities of man, consequent upon drastic or acute poverty amongst these rural settlers. According to Irikana and Awujo (2009), the mangrove forests carry huge resources for the sustenance of various families living at the coastal line. However, they stated further that the indiscriminate and unsustainable cutting down of the

mangrove forest has led to the depletion of the mangrove and has resulted to economic loss because of poor harvest by the rural people. The implication here is that poverty keeps multiplying among the rural people especially among the women's folks due to the extinction of these resources. In estimating the level of impact of depleted mangrove forest, they further aver that:

> Prior to this period, women were seen complementing the efforts of their children's education. Today, they can no longer render such assistance to their husbands and this has affected the training of their children in schools … this situation of the rural women has led to several divorces because the initial role of the women in the household can no more be found; and apart from divorce, some women have taken into prostitution as a vocation.

The debate about the poverty environment nexus dates back to the 18th century, when Thomas Malthus argued that because of burden of their inherent economic handicap and disadvantages, the poor "seldom think of future" (Lowe & Bowlby, 1992). In that regard, they continually and heedlessly degrade their natural resource base and put their environment under perpetual jeopardy, pressure and stress. Mahatma Gandi has been reported to have echoed Malthus's assertion by concluding that "poverty is the area test cause of environmental harm" (Amokaye, 2004). In contemporary context, Ostrom, et al. (1999) are of the view that people living in poverty are always almost forced to deplete their local natural resources to survive; and that this degradation of their environment further impoverishes them in a vicious circular and self-reinforcing manner. Of particularly direct concern is the argument by Holden et al. (2004) and Agirey, et al. (2010) that poverty constrained options may, and do often induce the poor to deplete environmental resources at rates that are incompatible with long-term sustainability. Furthermore, evidence have also shown that, this perturbed situation could be traceable to lack of governmental policies, and inadequate legislation; the moral regard and respect for forest reservations, acquisition of easy wealth through the sales of lands, methods of fishing in some rivers, needs and use of mangrove trees for electric poles, building, traps, firewood and charcoal. The above highlighted scenario has culminated into massive deforestation that subsequently resulted to the extinction of rural life support system.

Although, in Nigeria both state and federal government had initiated some measures between 1980 first republic and 1999 second republic to conserve the environment by directing that every tree cut down must have a replacement. Yet, there was no regulatory legislation or if there are any of such legislation, they are non-enforceable. Therefore, it is worthy to note that there have not been any environmentally - inclined human rights instruments aimed at promoting and balancing the push and pull cases of environmental resource depletion and its sustainability. However, in spite of these prevailing circumstances on the forests and rivers resource depletion and its attendant manifested problems, yet human activity keep exacting pressure on the already depleted environment. For instance, the constant deforestation results not only in the physical reduction of the forest space but also in the depletion of most of the forest resources. The rivers were not in isolation of this limitation as most of its rich mangrove resources are fast disappearing. The people hardly see these resources anymore like they used to and sometimes if seen, are very expensive due to its scarcity.

It is in the light of the foregoing that this study seeks to ventilate its thesis position thus: Poverty amongst rural dwellers in the Rivers State have multiple effects and inadvertently increased the level of resource depletion and further intensified poverty and its severity amongst the rural people of Rivers State whose daily income depend primary on these resources. Accordingly, our discussion centres on these two questions thus: (a.) in what ways have resource depletion led to crisis of poverty amongst rural population in Rivers State? (b.) what could be the possible mechanism or ways that can be employed to avert resource depletion and poverty amongst rural communities in Rivers State? The outcome of this position here is very clear because it was once documented that: No one on planet earth is going to escape the effect of global warming, pollution and depletion of natural resources. For billions of people, the resulting deterioration is going to make life considerably more difficult, national and local economies will be knocked side-ways and the fabrics of our global society and local communities will begin to come apart at the seams as agriculture, water supplies, wild life and human habitats are becoming increasingly embattled (Wodu, 2015). Indeed, this part of our discussion is to study the abstract or general idea inferred or derived from specific instances that relate to contemporary research on resource depletion and human engagement. Our specific objectives herein are: (a) to investigate the manner or ways through which resource depletion has led to crisis of poverty amongst rural

communities in Rivers State; and (b) to examine the possible mechanism or ways that can be employed to avert resource depletion amongst rural communities in Rivers State. This serves as a foundation for our specific objectives and of the concept under discussion in relation to resource depletion of the ecosystem and poverty in rural communities of Rivers State. Thus further, the study provided a content and theoretical context to our later discussions.

**Conceptual Clarification**

It is worthy of note that natural resources play a specific role in the life of the people especially in the rural communities. More than 1.3 billion people world over depend on fisheries; forestry and agriculture for employment, which is close to half of all jobs worldwide (USAID, 2016). An aggregate number of these populations are found in the rural communities. According to the World Bank (2021) in 2002, 90 percent of the World's 1.1 billion poor of those living on less than $1 per day, depend on forest and mangrove resources for at least some part of their income. While all human societies are linked to ecological processes and healthy ecosystems that produce the requirements for life, rural poor people depend significantly more on natural capital than do other parts of the population. In order to abreast this accretion, certain concepts have to be clarified thus:

**Concept of Poverty**

The definition of concept of poverty is critical to the formulation of matters pertaining to the subject under discussion. In other words, and in this view, poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon extending from low levels of health and lack of education, to other non-material dimensions of wellbeing, including gender gaps, insecurity, powerlessness and social exclusion. On the other hand, as derived from Townsend's monumental work:

> Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary or are at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns and activities (Townsend, 1979 p.45).

The economists have traditionally looked at poverty on the basis of household income or consumption capacities and have adopted this as the best proxy for welfare (Bucknall, et al., 2000). This perspective limits the definition of poverty to those areas of life where consumption and or participation are determined primarily by command over financial resources. In the view of Nolan and Whelan (1996), the utility of the definition of poverty lies in whether its conceptualization is rooted in the individual's personal resources, especially income or in terms of living standards and activities. To Ringen (1987) condition of poverty is referred to as one of a low standard of living, meaning deprivation in a way of life because of insufficient resources to avoid such deprivation. The consistency of this condition of poverty has negatively affected the rural population of Rivers State and has led to drastic depletion of both mangroves and forest resources to cover up the gap created by poverty. This position shows that relative poverty is a multidimensional concept that embraces all major spheres of life of rural dwellers in Rivers State. Moreover, it is historically spatially dynamic, thus: as the general living standard improve, and new technologies show up new modes of consumption, standards of living are pushed constantly, toward and upward, such that these rural dwellers who cannot catch up are also constantly pushed down the ladder into poverty. Examples are shown in the evolving methods of household cooking and particular approach of fishing technology. As technology manufacture more sophisticated and innovative and invariably more expensive gadgets, new levels of poverty are either created for poor rural population that are left behind or the ranks of them who were already classified as poor increased.

**Concept of Environment**

As a concept, environment here shall be discussed in order to explore, interrogate and try to establish the relationship between its depletion and poverty in rural communities of Rivers State. However, because of the fluid nature of its content, examples of such definitions existing in literature were considered. In colloquial terminology, the environment is defined as our surroundings, especially the material and spiritual influences which affect the growth, development and existence of a living

being (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1995). Earlier, Detwyter and Marcus (1972, p.28) defined the environment as "the aggregate of the external conditions that influence the life of an individual or a population". The environment in this context is characterized and classified into two namely: physical and cultural. The physical environment is a natural environment, consisting of the biosphere, atmosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere and their inherent resources. While the cultural environment on the other hand, generally encompasses the way of life of the people of a particular geographic domain or location including the settlements, cultural, historical and religious aspects of human activities. This dichotomy notwithstanding, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has been cited as perceiving the environment, holistically, as the totality of nature and natural resources, which include the cultural heritage and the infrastructure essentially for socio-economic activities (Amokaye, 2004). In the same vein, Rau and Woofan (1980) have defined environment as the whole complex of physical, social, cultural, and economic and aesthetic factors which affect individuals and communities and ultimately determine their firm, character, relationship and survival. The legal definition of the environment is extensive and integrative in nature and incorporates the natural, human and non-living inhabitants of the planet. Thus, in Nigeria, for instance, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) Act (FGN/FLN, 1990) defined the environment to include the water, air, land, and all plants and human beings or animals living therein and the relationship between and among them. In the words of Kofi Anan, from whatever perspective we define environment, the reality is that it is a source of sustenance that humanity depends on: for food, fuel wood, medicines and materials (Johnson, 1993).

From the above given definitions, this study emphasized much of its concern about the environment, because within the outlined definitions are embedded the linkages between resources utilization and consumption, especially when the resources consumable are sourced directly from the natural sources of the environment. More explicitly, the environment is significant to human source of livelihood because it is the life-support system for planet earth; it is the ecosystem within which all living organisms live (including man who uses its resources for both food and income means), it's global life-support system, it's capacity that sustained human life and existence, and a provider of services for the maintenance of climate systems and ecological cycles, including forest, agricultural land, water and so on. In Rivers State some policies of the state attempt to link ecosystems to poverty reduction. Unfortunately, contemporary poverty assessment as well as poverty reduction strategies often under estimate rural income from natural resources management and undervalue ecosystem services and resources as an asset for the poor in the rural communities. To say the least, it can be asserted here that the total dependence of the rural communities of Rivers State on environmental resources is almost invariably a clear indicator of the poverty that is associated with lack of access and ability to alternative sources. Consequently, and for such human condition, the only option left is to assault and deplete the unprotected and vulnerable natural resources. If we accept the (WEO, 2006) warning that unless there are new strong and responsive policies, the number of people that will rely on natural resources to meet their livelihood needs will increase to over 2.6 billion by 2015 and to 2.7 billion by 2030, due largely to population growth and stagnant or sluggishly responding per capita income, then the poor rural dwellers especially in Rivers State have the potentiality to be restricted in a way from continuing to deplete and put pressure on the environment in order to meet their basic income needs and satisfaction in due time. It could be said without fear of contradiction that within the development context, if the present rate of human induced resource depletion of rural communities of Rivers State continues unchanged and unmitigated, the limits to growth on their environment would be erased in less than 50 years irrespective of the general faith in technology.

**Concept of Environmental Resources**

In specific terms, an environmental resource is any material, service, or information from the environment that is valuable to society. This can refer to anything that people find useful in their environs, or surroundings. Food from plants and animal, wood for cooking, heating, and oil are all environmental resources. Again, clean land, air, and water are environmental resources, as are the abilities of land, air, and water to absorb society's waste products. Heat from the sun, transportation and recreation in lakes, rivers, and oceans, a beautiful view, or the discovery of new species are all environmental resources. The environment provides a vast array of materials and services that people use to live. Often, these resources have competing uses and values. A piece of land, for instance, could be used as a farm, a park, a parking lot, or a housing development. It could be mined or used as a

garbage dump. The present day usage of environmental resources, then, raises the question like: what do people find valuable in their environment, and how do people choose to use the resources that their environment provides? Some resources are renewable, or infinite, and some are non-renewable, or finite. Renewable resources like energy from the sun are plentiful and will be available for a long time. Finite resources, like oil and coal, are non-renewable because once they are extracted from the earth and burnt, they cannot be used again. These resources are in limited supply and need to be used carefully. Many resources are becoming more and more limited, especially as population and industrial growth place increasing pressure on the environment. It could also be seen in some rural communities that people depend solely on their environmental resource every day as livelihood sources. This scene illustrates an extreme poverty cases and a central problem in environmental resource management because the demands that they placed on these resources seriously affect the health and quality of life for all these resources and themselves. Thoughtful management of these environmental resources, like forest and mangrove resource, could alleviate some of the strain on the river and forest and improve other uses of the same resource. As people make decisions about what resource they should take from their environment, they also must be conscious of what resource they intend to put back into that environment.

**Theoretical Framework**

The expression of resource depletion requires a relevant theoretical framework to postulate its outstanding position on poverty amongst rural dwellers, which is always the case. In this perspective, the study employed the theory of the Tragedy of the Commons (Alexandra, 2019) with its basic assumption that individuals with access to a public resource (also called a common) act in their own interest and, in doing so, ultimately deplete the resource.

This economic theory was first conceptualized in 1833 by the British writer William Forster Lloyd. In 1968, the term "tragedy of the commons" was used for the first time by Garret Hardin in Science Magazine (Alexandra, 2019). This theory explains individuals' tendency to make decisions based on their personal needs, regardless of the negative impact it may have on others. In some cases, an individual's belief that others won't act in the best interest of the group can lead them to justify selfish behaviour. Potential overuse of a common-pool resource—hybrid between a public and private good— can also influence individuals to act with their short-term interest in mind, resulting in the use of an unsustainable product and disregard the harm it could cause to the environment or general public. Here are few real-world examples of the tragedy of the commons and an exploration of the solution to this problem:

a. **Coffee Consumption:** While a simple cup of coffee might seem harmless, coffee consumption is a prime example of the tragedy of the commons. Coffee plants are naturally occurring shared resource, but overconsumption has led to habitat loss endangering 60 percent of the plants' species—including the most commonly brewed Arabica coffee.

b. **Overfishing:** As the global population continues to rise, the food supply needs to increase. However, overhunting and overfishing have the potential to push many species into extinction. For example, overfishing of the ocean, rivers, and lakes has driven into extinction the regular and common fishes that are accessible to local fishermen. It has also caused an all-time population low of approximately three percent (3%) of their original population. This not only endangers the ocean, rivers and lake, but also risks further marine ecosystem endangerment as a result increases the poverty level of rural fishermen and women.

c. **Groundwater Use:** Groundwater is the source of drinking water for about half the population, and roughly 50 billion gallons are used each day for agriculture. Because of this, groundwater supply is decreasing faster than it can be replenished. In drought-prone areas, the risk for water shortage is high and restrictions are often put in place to mitigate it. Over the years, most individual farmers, however, have ignored this water restrictions and the supply ultimately becomes smaller for everyone. This scenario has so far hampered farm yields, especially the poor rural farmers. Environmental experts have come to terms with the reality that the consistent consumption habits of the populace are depleting natural resources. Their two primary options to this catastrophe was a call for alternative, sustainable sources of products so as to prevent the overconsumption of the renewable resources. The tragedy of the commons has sent its signal to address the alleged harm and search for alternatives. Finding sustainable options, rather than carrying on without a

sustainability strategy, Professor Rebecca Henderson calls for a concerted effort to address the impact of human consumption habits and the constant depletion of the environment (Alexandra, 2019). Unfortunately, this response has not grown in popularity, since many people feel that boycotting a product or resource won't make a large enough impact to make a difference.

The tragedy of the commons vehemently shows that, without some sort of regulation or public transparency of choices and actions associated with public goods, there's no incentive for individuals to hold themselves back from taking too much. In fact, much of how we find the depleted and over used environment today was as a result of the permutation that individuals have a "use it or lose it" mentality. They're aware of the inevitability that the good itself will be depleted, hence they think, "I better get my share while I still can." The resultant effect is that, the production or use of these favourite resources keep threatening the ecosystem or worse still, their enduring consumption keep threatening the very existence of those resources and thereby harden the people's economic discomfort and worsen their poverty rate. In synthesis, this theory is very appealing to this study because, while this notion may seem implausible, it turns out that there are many renewable resources that are being depleted unsustainably, and in an endangering manner, of which its effect is negatively impacting on the people and environment. This theory is helpful for both firms and individuals to understand the tragedy of the commons so that they can make more sustainable and environmentally-friendly choices.

**The Sociological Indicators of Environment and Poverty**
One of the main challenges for the study of the relationship between poverty and environmental quality amongst rural dwellers is the choice of indicators and parameters. Given the diversity of environmental problems, the variety of contexts in which they arise, and the numerous possible remedy to them there can be no correct set of indicators. Again, there is also no set of universal indicators that is equally applicable in all cases. However, Segnestam (1999) has suggested a generic framework within which to consider what could be relevant for adaptation in a particular investigation of resource depletion. These include:
a) Direct relevance to the emphasis of investigation
b) Relevance to the target population
c) Unambiguity
d) Clear cause and effect linkages
e) Reliability and
f) Appropriate spatial scale
There is no doubt that the contemporary humanity lives in an environmentally perilous times and a doomsday scenario of global environmental catastrophes. (Bill McGuire, 2014).

Arising from this alarm and the collapse of increasing general awareness and concerns posed to the environment by persistent actions and activities of man and the aftermath of connectivity between environmental challenges and changing cultural values which was once held in high esteem prompted the environmental sociologist into framing methodologies to address the identified indicators. The core significance of the poverty-environment linkage is further confirmed by the number of indicators that are directly or indirectly related to domestic sources of resource for livelihood that is accessible to rural household dwellers. Subsequently, the following nine (9) poverty-environment indicators are used to measure the relationships between the relevant dimensions of the environment, and dependence of rural household on natural resources within their domain:
a) Relative percentage significance of household dependence on various types of resources usages;
b) Projected relationship between population and dependence on natural resources usages,
c) Relative significance of the various forest products exploited by the rural dwellers and its aftermath effect,
d) Relative percentage contribution of major sources of income to total household income by income groups derivable from resource extraction,
e) Relative percentage accessibility and availability of various sources of resources usages,
f) Relative percentage awareness of the people and the environmental impact of their applicability approach to its utilization,

g) Relative percentage significance of the involvement of these indicators and its activities in rural household livelihood (Segnestam, 1999).

**Resource Depletion and Rural Dwellers in Rivers State**

It is a fact that about one-third, if not all of the identified indicators are direct evidence of environmental problems of rural dwellers of Rivers State characterized by induced poverty on natural resources which was valued and held in high esteem. In conceptualizing this idea (Irikana, 2015) posited that before now:

> The people consciously or otherwise knew the importance of the forest and rivers to their continued existence. They thus adopted a wholesome attitude towards the exploitation of forest/rivers resources. The people related quite intimately and friendly with their forest/river and the entire environment. Thus any act that was destructive to the forest/river was consciously or unconsciously discouraged. The exploitation of the forest/river was controlled, orderly and purposeful. An average village dweller knew the various uses of these resources and when to exploit them. For instance an average village dweller knew that he can always meet with basic life's need of accommodation, clothing, food, medicine recreation, etc. from forest/river resource. He also knew that the availability of these forest/river resources must be continuously sustained in order to guarantee a continuous access to them from generation to generation.

Today, the way these resources are exploited and consumed have affected its reproduction and even driven some of the species into extinction. Consequently, inefficient and unsustainable approach and practice of man on these resources due to the uncompromised level of poverty have serious implication for its continuous existence. And because one must make-up to avoid the pains of poverty, sacred rivers and forest were not only ignored but no longer exist: banned fishing gadgets and methods with stringent laws and punishment is unheard of. This has placed a high burden on available river and forest resources. Amechi (2009) has tried to establish a more direct relationship between the poor and resource (environment) usage. He argued that the poor are often forced to rely heavily on the ecosystem for their energy needs, which in most cases leads to its degradation. Similarly, Johnson (1993) argued that the poor are driven to destroy the environment because they have no other viable possibilities to explore. For them, it is a question of sheer survival. Indeed, poverty pollutes the environment creating environmental stress in different ways on resources habitats. Those who are poor and hungry will often destroy their immediate environment in order to survive. The challenges of deforestation exemplify the effects of poverty on the environment where the rising demand for fuel wood and charcoal intensified as an alternative source of energy and income.

Rural areas of Rivers State usually account for a disproportionately large share of income generation arising from its agricultural produce and as her main generation of income growth. However, the economic growth of these rural areas without checks and balances of its activities and the environmental resource usages may often contribute to inequitable, spatially unbalanced growth patterns which would further aggravate its negative impact on poverty reduction efforts, and environmental problems. The twenty three (23) local government areas of Rivers State had no one exceptional case when it comes to poverty and depletion of environmental resources. Although, there are variation in degrees, the corresponding commonalities existed to explain its independent examples. Indeed, it must be appreciated that the scale and nature of problems faced by poor households vary with size of area affected and or nature of economic activities located thereof yet the quantifiable differences are quite relative. For example, the overall pattern of dependence of household on the various types of alternative fuels in Rivers State as presented on the table below completely shows that fuel wood has the highest percentage use which predominantly is the characteristics of the rural dwellers.

**Table 1:** Significance of types of fuel used by households in Rivers State

| State | Fuelwood | Charcoal | Kerosene | Gas | Electricity | Crop residue | Animal waste | Others | Total |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|-----|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------|-------|
| Rivers | 52.4 | 1.5 | 38.7 | 6.0 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 100.0 |

**Source:** Centre for Population and Environmental Development (CPEC), 2021.

The table shows that percentage of household dependence on fuel wood varies from others with as high as 52.4 percent. It is worthy of note that only 1.0 percent household throughout the state depend or use electricity as household source of cooking energy. Also, is the observation that dependence on kerosene is about a close average with fuel wood. The above data clearly show the disparity of poverty and why most forest resources are constantly depleted for an alternative source of energy supply. This scenario is applicable to aquatic life resources (fish) of most communities on the river bank. Bonny and Andoni are communities in Rivers State on the Atlantic Ocean just downstream of the point where the Atlantic Ocean bifurcate the Rivers Bonny and Andoni and they serve as a corresponding example to explain this scenario. Both are large linear communities with impressive river, swamp and lake fisheries. The communities also boast of an enviable supply of fish ponds, both man-made and natural. At a certain time of the year, fishermen from the communities wait for their catch on the bank of the river and take home much catch, but this is no longer so. They no longer get much from their rivers not to talk of their lakes anymore owing largely to environmental depletion and structural changes and dynamics in the population of the fish being exploited, the population of the fishermen engaged in the fisheries and the complex-interplay between them. And it was on record that fishes from these rivers usually dominate different markets in the state, but today the story has changed.

What we see or observe on the streets and market places in most urban cities including Port Harcourt are live catfish (commonly referred to as "point and kill"). They are not original salt water fish that have reserved nutrients. We have serious issue of environmental abuse; these places are no longer producing the way they should due to the destruction of the lakes occasioned by both dragging and consistent wrong methods of fishing. In 2020 the river banks and shores of Bonny and Andoni were covered with dead fishes from the ocean owing to the nefarious act of human activity. And as a result, the water space of the Atlantic Ocean and its channelled tributaries has their integrity completely changed to the disadvantage of most fisheries. This reduction in water space conducive for fish habitation and the space available for fish production have been significantly reduced and further aggravated poverty and deteriorating interest for fishing. The decline associated with fish production from 2018-2021 is presented below:

**Table 2**: The decline in fish production from 2018-2021 with estimated tones of 400 and their subsequent price variations.

| Year/fish type | Decline in tones | Price effect | Percentage purchase |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2020** | | | |
| Shrimp | 54 | ₦500 | 13.5% |
| Croaker | 48 | ₦450 | 12% |
| Catfish | 18-42 | ₦850 | 10.5% |
| **2021** | | | |
| Shrimp | 34 | ₦700 | 8.5% |
| Croaker | 26 | ₦600 | 6.5% |
| Catfish | 24 | ₦1,500 | 6% |
| **2022** | | | |
| Shrimp | 18 | ₦2,500 | 4.5% |
| Croaker | 12 | ₦1050 | 3% |
| Catfish | 10 | ₦2500 | 2.5% |
| **2023** | | | |
| Shrimp | 16 | ₦3,400 | 4% |
| Croaker | 08 | ₦4,500 | 2% |
| Catfish | 06 | ₦6,800 | 1.5% |

**Source:** The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture, 2023

Although, the world's appetite for fish and fish product in ordinary sense has not shown any slowing down, the available records of decline in production has shifted its purchasing percentage power in all available markets in Rivers State, as presented on the table. The truth is that this eventful change has so far affected the economic powers and income of the rural fishermen and women. Little that Olalekan and Ojebuyi (2017) were convinced when they argued that the fishing and seafood sector of our local economy generated more than N50 million in annual sales to fishermen and women and

supported about 8,450 (eight thousand, four hundred and fifty) jobs from 1978-1985 across Ogun, Lagos, Ondo, Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, and Cross Rivers States, found in the southern part of the country. The fisheries subsector of the Nigerian agriculture was an essential tool for rural development through its provision of income, high quality protein, and socioeconomic development of fishing communities in Nigeria. However, due to human consistent depletion of the sea, it has drastically led to an uncompromised decline in its supply thereby impoverishing the life of the rural fishermen and women.

**Conclusion**

Depletion of resources as a matter of fact will keep generating social problem in as much as poverty increases with absence of legislation and conscious effort to address the degrading ecosystem. African leaders have since recognized the importance of the environment and its resource to the development of their economies. What is more, there are collective positions from research that both forest and marine resources are depleting fast and the rural economic livelihood has shown negative impact due to uncontrollable human engagement on the ecosystem resources. We have established that at the level of individual nations, myriads of environmental instruments have also been adopted to protect the environment so that it can stimulate, enhance and continue to sustain socio-economic development of the poor rural masses, but with little or no enforcement mechanism. However, in spite of these continental and national instruments, environmental challenges have not only persisted, they have even deteriorated in certain cases. The study has shown strong linkages between economic status of individuals and resource depletion. Within the nexus, the strong linkages between poverty and depletion of environment have also been well established. Similarly, the shift in population coupled with poverty have been recognized as major factors responsible for the persistent depletion of environmental resources on both inland and aquatic life. Other factors may also be responsible but they are regarded to be too secondary to be reckoned with at this juncture.

**Recommendations**

As a result of widespread and persistent poverty, it has been projected that rural household needs and usage of marine and forest resource preference will decline the more in the next several years. In other words, poor households are expected to continue to depend on forest and marine resources thereby sustaining its depletion. Resource depletion is a long standing social problem in Rivers State especially as it concerns rural dwellers, therefore any short-term recommendation or immediate palliative will definitely not work in this category of problem to redeem the degraded environment or, if at all, must be such that is capable of addressing most of the perceived challenges. Against the backdrop of adopting an appreciable approach to work out an enduring mitigation of poverty striking resource depletion, the following measures have to be considered:

a) Rural dwellers in Rivers State should be encouraged by government at all levels in an effort to conserve and farm marine resources (mostly referred to as seafood) in marketable quantity. This would go a long way to improve local economy and drastically reduce pressure on marine resources.

b) Furthermore, in order to reduce poverty among inhabitants of rural communities of Rivers State and to sustain the supply of both marine and forest resources without further threat and damage to the environment, there should be a programme of cropping fast growing trees to be instituted to leverage the existing tree-planting programme by both state and local governments.

c) There should be a strong micro-financing structure established specifically for the purpose of supporting the scheme of resource conservation and assist rural dwellers that may have initial difficulty in embracing the new idea of resource conservation by all tiers of government.

d) Effort to deal with resource depletion in the form of legislation should mainly be drawn from folk knowledge of ordinary people (indigenous people) who understand the context of their particular and peculiar resource importance and live with its reality every day. This is because various strategies applied at various times towards the resolution of resource depletion crisis through state mechanism, were sometimes successful and others not quit successful. The use of indigenous mechanism would be very more realistic since they are tied to cultural norms.

e) For the purpose of accountability and focused responsibility, there should be a resource improvement unit in the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, charged with the responsibility of implementing correction measures on resource depletion cases.

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# DIGITAL LIBRARIES AND THE QUESTION OF CREDIBILITY IN NIGERIA: MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY APPROACH

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**Abstract**
*Undoubtedly, because of uncontrolled access to the Internet regularly and the acceptance of the anonymity of sources with free access to uploading and downloading at will, the Internet tends to breed a lot of fake content, unprofessional publishers, and sponsored sites. In other words, not all those online sources or competing information are quite credible, reliable, and trustworthy to refer to or use in an essay or seminar paper. Even if one is to do so, it is appropriate one checks the source credibility and trustworthiness of the site on a first-priority basis. Of course, the Internet has come to stay, no doubt! Online users and, most importantly, students and researchers should be able to critically locate relevant information, evaluate, and make critical inquiries about the credibility and truthfulness of the sources and sites before using them. To do this, the skills of media and information literacy (MIL) come to the fore. Unfortunately, at the moment, not everybody, particularly students in higher institutions and even researchers, is media and information literate, as many writers just search the digital library without critical evaluation of the source to ascertain its trustworthiness and thus make their writings questionable. Thus, this article focuses on the applicability of MIL skills to digital libraries to be able to ascertain the credibility and trustworthiness of online sources.*

**Keywords**: Credibility, digital library, digital media, media and information literacy, internet, traditional library

## Introduction

Today, with the majority of the world's population connected to the Internet, it is theoretically possible to create a single repository of all the books humanity has ever generated in such a way that anybody can access any of them at any time—within 24 hours a day and 365 days a year (Austin, 2019). Digital library, can be well thought out, according to Sharma and Chauhan (2019), as a modern form of information retrieval system. To them, a digital library is considered virtual for the reason that the collections are stored in digital formats and presented through computers or mobile devices at anytime and anywhere. Such qualities of a library are defined and can be interchangeably referred to as 'virtual library', 'electronic library', 'institutional repository', 'library without walls', 'digital library', etc. (Sharma & Chauhan, 2019). However, for this paper, the most accepted and suitable term for such libraries is 'Digital Library'. Of course, digital libraries are more convenient, cost-efficient, and, truly speaking, less energy-consuming to use. This means that one does not have to go somewhere else to find some valuable materials, for instance, when writing a research paper or academic journal article.

However, since the current digital technologies give everyone access to being online anytime and anywhere, and with the spread of citizen journalism, which qualifies everybody, including amateurs, to publish content, the result is information overload. This means that it may be difficult to find reliable information in a digital library that one could use in essays or research papers like a dissertation or thesis, unlike in a physical library. Certainly, because of uncontrolled access to the Internet every moment, and the acceptance of the anonymity of sources, the Internet breeds a lot of fake content, unprofessional publishers, and sponsored sites (Aduloju, 2021). In other words, not all those online sources or competing information are quite credible, reliable, and trustworthy to refer to or use in an essay or formal paper. Even if one is to do so, it is appropriate one checks the source credibility and trustworthiness of the site on a first-priority basis.

Of course, the Internet has come to stay, no doubt! And with free access to uploading and downloading at will, the ability to access and retrieve information is not enough. Online users and, most importantly, students and researchers should be able to critically locate relevant information, evaluate, and make critical inquiries (Aduloju, 2020) about the credibility and truthfulness of the sources and sites before using them. To do this, the skills of media and information literacy (MIL) come to the fore! Unfortunately, at the moment, not everybody, particularly students in higher institutions and even

researchers, is media and information literate, as many writers just search the digital library without critical evaluation of the source to ascertain its trustworthiness and thus make their writings questionable.

Hence, users of digital libraries and information resources must possess media and information literacy skills in order to truly harness the huge information resources at their disposal. That is, acquiring the skills of MIL would go a long way towards ensuring authentic and credible research and writing in today's world of information proliferation. MIL enables individuals to access, analyse, and critically evaluate the piece of information available to them regularly on the digital library in particular, and the Internet in general. Thus, MIL is an essential component of 21st[t]-century reality (Aduloju, 2020). It is against this backdrop that this article focuses on the relevance of media and information literacy skills as an approach to ascertaining the credibility and trustworthiness of online sources, particularly in digital libraries.

**The Concept of Digital Libraries**

Libraries collect and preserve books and other materials for future generations to ensure that everybody has equal access to information. Of course, with the dawn of the Internet and the World Wide Web (www), libraries can now extend their reach, boundless by time or place. The potentiality of the Internet has made shared knowledge and technical collaborations across the globe a viable endeavour (Kresh, 2007). In a way, one can say that this is a crucial moment for libraries. According to Cordón-García, et al. (2013), digital libraries are Internet sites devoted to the creation and preservation of electronic book collections and holdings of other kinds of materials without the need for end users to purchase the materials they want to consult and read. Chowdhury and Chowdhury (2003) see digital libraries in two major categories based on Borgman's (1999) discussion of competing visions. One approach focuses on the access and retrieval of digital content, while the other focuses on the collection, organisation, and service aspects of digital resources. Digital library research has developed rapidly over the past decade, and millions of dollars have been spent on building digital libraries. However, previous researches indicate that many potential users may still not use them (Thong, et al. 2002).

No doubt, information and communication technology (ICT) has revolutionised the concept of libraries. Every library is slowly getting digitized. A 'digital library' comprises digital collections, services, and infrastructure to support lifelong learning, research, and scholarly communication, as well as the preservation and conservation of recorded knowledge (LIZwiki, 2018). A digital library is therefore where one can find digital repositories, or digital collections, online databases of digital objects that may include text, still images, audio, video, digital documents, or other digital media formats. Items can contain digitised content such as prints or photographs, as well as primarily produced digital content such as word processor files or social media posts. The Association of Research Libraries (1995) identifies the common elements of digital library definitions: the digital library is not a single entity; it requires technology to link the resources of many; the linkages between many digital libraries and information services are transparent to the end-users; universal access to digital libraries is a goal; and digital library collections are not limited to document surrogates; they extend to digital artefacts that cannot be represented or distributed in printed formats. In addition to storing content, digital libraries provide a way to organise, search, and retrieve the contents of a collection.

Cleveland (1998) defines a digital library as the "World Wide Web." He further supports this definition by the large number of documents being gathered by the Web that can be searched. Furthermore, Seadle and Greifeneder (2007), as cited in Sharma and Chauhan (2019), posit that one of the best definitions of digital library was given by the National Science Foundation (NSF), USA, in 1999. NSF describes a digital library as "storing materials in electronic format and manipulating a large collection of those materials effectively." On its own, however, for this paper, the definition of the digital library provided by the Digital Library Federation (DLF) would be appropriate. According to DLF, as quoted by Waltes (2007), digital libraries are: Organisations that provide the resources, including the specialised staff, to select, structure, offer intellectual access to, interpret, distribute, preserve the integrity of, and ensure the persistence over time of collections of digital works so that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities (p. 5).

Although, according to Sun and Yuan (2012), a digital library is not only equivalent to a digitised collection with information management tools, it is also a sequence of activities that brings

together collections, services, and people in support of the full life cycle of creation, dissemination, use, and presentation of data, information, and knowledge.

On the one hand, traditional libraries emphasise the archive and preservation of physical items, especially books and periodicals that were the custodians of the library librarians. In these libraries, information is physically gathered in one place; users need to learn what is in the library and use it. On the other hand, digital libraries offer new societal benefits, beginning with the eradication of the time and space limitations of traditional brick-and-mortar libraries. More so, that physical libraries are accessible to only those who physically visit them, digital libraries exist on inter-networked data storage and computing systems that can be accessed and retrieved by people located anywhere and at anytime. The truth is that digital libraries have the potential to aid any person particularly students and researchers, in accessing a considerable proportion of all human knowledge from any location (Sun and Yuan, 2012). This is why Layman (2017) argues that digital libraries, cyberspace, and information technology are significant aspects of library development. He states that the role of digital libraries is the key to achieving holistic development in information-oriented globalization. Thus, a digital library is fundamentally to collect, manage, preserve, and make available digital objects to people irrespective of location, space, and time.

**Benefits and Challenges of Digital Libraries**

Advancements in technology have prompted numerous changes in the current world. The effects of these changes have affected all aspects of human endeavours (Aduloju, 2020) and organisations. Among the affected organisations are resource centres or libraries. Due to the changes originated by technology, some individuals are currently shifting their quest for information from physical libraries located in buildings to virtual sites that are accessible via the Internet (IvyPanda, 2020). The libraries on the digital platform are easily accessible; have huge capacities, are very convenient to use; occupy little space, are portable, convenient, durable, easily accessible, efficient, and so on. Furthermore, digital libraries can instantly accept innovations in technology, providing users with developments in electronic and audio book technology as well as presenting new forms of communication such as wikis and blogs. Other prospects of digital libraries, according to Kresh (2007), are:

i. No physical boundary: Those who make use of a digital library do not need to go to the library physically.
ii. Round-the-clock availability: Round-the-clock availability is a major advantage of digital libraries in that they afford people from all over the world access to information at any time or anywhere, as long as there is the availability of an Internet connection.
iii. Multiple accesses: With multiple accesses, several users can have access to the same resources and use them at the same time.
iv. Structured approach: A digital library provides access to much richer content in a more structured manner; that is, users can easily move from the catalogue to a particular book, then to a particular chapter, and so on.
v. Information retrieval: There is flexibility in the retrieval of information through the use of search terms, that is, keywords. A digital library can provide a very user-friendly interfaces, giving clickable access to its resources.
vi. Preservation and conservation: An exact copy of the original can be made any number of times without any degradation in quality.
vii. Space: When the library has no space for extension, digitization is the only solution.
viii. Networking. A particular digital library can provide the link to any other resources of other digital libraries very easily; thus, seamlessly integrated resource sharing can be achieved.
ix. Cost: In theory, the cost of maintaining a digital library is lower than that of a traditional library. A traditional library must spend large sums of money paying for staff, book maintenance, rent, and additional books. Although digital libraries do away with these fees, it has since been found that digital libraries can be no less expensive in their own way of operating.

Unfortunately, despite all the beautiful prospects of digital libraries, they are not without constraints like hacking, unreliable sources, fake news, cybercrimes, identity deception, heavy dependence on the Internet, unreliable Internet connection and use of software, as well as limited knowledge of using the Internet and many others. As already pointed out, digital libraries are

associated with cybercrime since they allow individuals to visit different sites as a result of the countless amounts of information available online (IvyPanda, 2007). This is why Babini and Smart (2006) assert that the absence of organisation and planning in the management of digital libraries increases the chances of hacking or the attachment of links by cybercriminals.

Another ugly side of digital libraries is that they allow the anonymity of authors or publishers to push content online without adequate checks or scrutiny. Cybercriminals can deceive or mislead other people who are searching for information through attractive profiles and links. Corroborating this view, IvyPanda (2007) asserts that in the quest for information, some individuals come across links that mislead and direct them to malicious sites. Obviously, one can say that the major victims of the insecure nature of digital libraries are youth and children, who search for information on the Internet for academic writings and researches.

Additionally, for digital libraries to function, they depend solely on Internet connectivity. The absence of an Internet connection in a particular place makes digital libraries functionless, and users of the libraries have to look for places that have an Internet connection. Definitely, the dependency on the Internet by digital libraries has made several users in various places with poor or no Internet connections miss the benefits of digital libraries (IvyPanda, 2007). Lastly, Beagrie (2006) describes that digital libraries require people who are familiar with the use of the Internet and the application of computers. Since digital libraries require training on the application and use of the Internet, some regions or countries of the world that are still developing (including Nigeria) are sticking to the use of traditional libraries, which are user-friendly. In other words, the high cost of setting up a functional digital library and the human resources required to maintain and monitor its use make several regions choose to develop traditional libraries, which are less expensive to build and maintain.

**The Notion of Credibility**

Credibility can generally mean the quality of being trusted and believing in a person or particular thing. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines credibility as the quality or power of inspiring belief. It comprises both the objective and subjective components of the believability of a source or message. Credibility also has two major components: trustworthiness and expertise, which both have objective and subjective components (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008). Trustworthiness is based more on subjective factors but can include objective measurements such as established reliability. Expertise can be similarly subjectively perceived but also includes relatively objective characteristics of the source or message (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008). Secondary components of credibility include source dynamism (charisma) and physical attractiveness. Credibility online has become an important topic since the mid-1990s. The reason for this, according to Aduloju (2021), is not far-fetched: the web has more and more become an information reservoir.

An online source can be considered credible when it is trustworthy. Sometimes it can be hard to determine whether 'credible' sources are trustworthy or not, as voicing an opinion or presenting false information as fact without any credentials or proof is easy for anyone, especially online (Paperpile, 2022). In other words, sources can frequently give the impression of credibility even when there is little or no evidence to back them—one can just think of the many pseudoscience-based articles that go viral on different websites daily. For this reason, Buttam, et al. (2012) stress that finding or locating sources for research is important because using unreliable sources can hurt one's credibility and make the arguments seem less powerful. To them, it is important to be able to identify which sources are credible from the fake and unreliable ones. The ability to do this requires an understanding of the depth, objectivity, currency, authority, and purpose of the source or information. Whether the source or the information is peer-reviewed, it is still good to evaluate it based on these five factors. If these areas are judiciously evaluated, it will certainly enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of students' and researchers' writings and lead to more accurate conclusions (Buttam, et al. 2012).

Therefore, the factors to be considered according to Buttam,et al. when evaluating source credibility are:

1. Depth: What is the depth of coverage of the information? A completely reliable source may still only give a light overview of the important information. In many cases, you will need more than a simple overview of information to connect the data to your topic.

2.  Objectivity: Is the information you are using biased in any way? If so, does the bias affect the conclusions of the research? Does the information come from a source that will profit from a particular point of view? If so, the information may not be reliable. Does the source use proper citations?
3.  Currency: How up-to-date is the information? When was it written? Many assignments, especially in the sciences, require research from the past five or ten years. Authority: Who is the author? Does the author have a degree in the field? Is the author affiliated with an unbiased, reputable organization? Note that scholarly articles tend to have multiple authors.
4.  Purpose: What is the purpose of the source? Is it to entertain, to change public opinion, to present research, or to teach? Who is the intended audience? Reliable research articles are usually very specific in nature and relate to a very specific field.

To be able to make adequate evaluation of the source credibility, acquiring the skills of media and information literacy becomes a must.

**Digital Library and Source Credibility**

As already pointed out, the digital age has increased access to information in the form of materials readily available to individuals. However, access to information does not always guarantee the accuracy or credibility of the provided information (Aduloju, 2021). We frequently find ourselves with too much information (information overload) due to the explosion of information and information sources that are available to us in today's age of digital media. In addition, evaluating credibility is a constant challenge for students, researchers, and young people in general. Other issues include the presence of biased and fake information, difficulties confirming sources, an abundance of information (Aduloju, 2021), a lack of transparency regarding the author's background, methods for evaluating credibility, the use of citations, provenance analysis, fact-checking and verification tools, expert opinions, peer-reviewed sources, etc. (Ekong & Ekong, 2018).

Thus, there is a need for us to sift through them all. We need to ask some questions to verify whether the information available or to be consumed will be relevant and useful. Hence, MIL students and media users must evaluate information by thinking critically about the reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, point of view, or bias of information sources. In that way, they can make informed decisions because they know all there is to know about the information and where it is coming from.
It is no gainsaying that the library is the heart of any academic institution, as it helps to provide, inform, and educate the students through books, journals, audio-visual materials, and services (Ekong & Ekong, 2018). According to them, higher institutions all over the world place a high emphasis on qualitative and quantitative research products to fulfil their mission of teaching, learning, research, and cultural development. The measure of value placed on any institution is determined by the access to the right information and the level of information literacy of the students and faculties, which automatically affect the research output of that institution (Ekong & Ekong, 2018).

The truth remains that research does not only help to solve practical problems and bring about material improvements, but it also offers insights into new concepts and ideas that improve human understanding of various social, economic, and cultural phenomena. Boaduo and Babitseng (2007) aver that, research has always been the main approach to solving problems for all categories of professionals. As said already, with the rapid advancement of information technology (IT), the library system has also been revolutionized. Institutional libraries are now categorised as having dynamic electronic resources as opposed to traditional printed paper materials. Academics and students now have unrestricted access to global digital information resources, particularly through the Internet for scholarly communication and publications (Ani & Ahiauzu, 2008).

No doubt, research contributes to the knowledge of many social, economic, and cultural phenomena by providing insights into novel thoughts and ideas, in addition to helping to address practical problems and bring about tangible improvements (Ani & Ahiauzu, 2008). For all professional categories, Boaduo and Babitseng (2007) aver that research has always been the primary method of problem solving. The library system has undergone a revolution in tandem with the swift progress of Information Technology (IT), as previously mentioned. Rather than the typical printed paper content, institutional libraries are now categorised with dynamic electronic resources. For scholarly communication and publication, academics and students today have unfettered access to worldwide

digital information resources, especially through the Internet (Ajegbomogun & Akintola, 2004; Ani & Ahiauzu, 2008).

Along with a variety of challenges, competitions, demands, and expectations, they have also led to the provision of reliable, accurate, and high-quality information as needed. However, simply having the capacity to access, retrieve, and assess data is insufficient. To effectively utilise the information resources at their disposal, users of information resources need to be media and information literate (American Library Association, 2009). The methods and expertise for using information to solve problems and make decisions are always evolving. Because of this, the spread of unrestricted information has made it necessary for people to learn media and information literacy skills, which will allow them to find reliable and authentic information (UNESCO, 2023). Thus, information consumers must choose which resource or resources to use in order to obtain information from a plethora of options. MIL skills will enable them determine the authenticity, validity, and usability of the information they discover (American Library Association, 2009)

For this reason, a particular media message may mean different things to different people. The combination of all these experiences culminates in how one may understand the media message. If one is able to decode the information received based on one's possession of these critical thinking skills then one will be able to understand the message communication fully and thus begin to apply it to one's daily life situations. In order to achieve this, users need to always adopt the four under-listed media processing skills:

**Access:** This skill aids the users to get information, identifying the need (through print or broadcast media) and which particular medium best provides the information.

**Analyse:** With this skill, users are able to interpret, and study the components of the message, such as pictures, illustrations, and words, as each of them has its own particular effect on your total understanding of the text.

**Evaluate:** Users can determine the authenticity of the message through the identification of the source, accuracy, truth, and relevance of the message to your needs.

**Reuse:** Once the users are familiar with these process skills, they will then be able to choose the appropriate medium or technology to repackage the message and share it with other people. In this way, the positive and wholesome messages of the media are disseminated for social growth and development.

## The Concept of Media and Information Literacy (MIL)

The Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy (2012) defines MIL as a "combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices required to access, analyse, evaluate, use, produce, and communicate information and knowledge in creative, legal, and ethical ways that respect human rights" (n.p). The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) also describes it as:

> The set of competencies to search, critically evaluate, use, and contribute information and media content wisely; knowledge of one's rights online; understanding how to combat online hate speech and cyberbullying; understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the access and use of information; and engaging with media and ICTs to promote equality, free expression, intercultural/interreligious dialogue, peace, etc. (UNESCO, 2017, n.p).

From the various descriptions of MIL above, the concept ranges beyond communication and information technologies to incorporate learning, critical thinking, and interpretative skills across and beyond professional and educational boundaries. This simply means that MIL comprises all types of information resources: oral, print, electronic, and digital. According to IFLA (2011), MIL is a basic human right in an increasingly digital, interdependent, and global world and promotes greater social inclusion. Of course, IFLA (2011) believes that MIL can bridge the gap between the information rich and the information poor and empowers and endows individuals with knowledge of the functions of the media and information systems and the conditions under which these functions are performed.

Media and information literacy skills are essential to accessing, evaluating, and creating media and information in the digital age. They enable people to become critical thinkers and creators, rather than passive consumers of information (UNESCO, 2023).

According to UNESCO: Media and Information Literacy Skills would ensure that people can readily comprehend, critique, and create media and information, and that they can use these skills to

engage actively in civil society, participate in the knowledge society, and improve their quality of life (Gamma. App, n.p)**.**

Media and Information Literacy consists of the knowledge, the attitudes, and the sum of the skills needed to know when and what information is needed; where and how to obtain that information; how to evaluate it critically and organise it once it is found; and how to use it ethically (IFLA, 2011). This means that, media and information literacy skills enable individuals to find and critically evaluate media content and information resources. It also ensures the capability of individuals to effectively make use of information in decision-making and knowledge creation (Aduloju, 2020).

**MIL Approach to Assessing and Evaluating Credibility in Digital Libraries**

MIL skills are of the utmost importance for making informed decisions in digital libraries. Digital libraries provide enormous volumes of information that can be overwhelming and sometimes conflicting, and MIL skills enable individuals to navigate this vast expanse of information and choose reliable and accurate sources. As already defined, MIL is a combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices required to access, analyse, evaluate, use, produce, and communicate information and knowledge in creative, legal, and ethical ways that respect human rights (IFLA 2011). Thus, according to the Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy, on June 28, 2012, individuals who are media and information literate can:

> … use diverse media, information sources, and channels in their private, professional, and public lives. They know when and what information they need, what for, and where and how to obtain it. They understand who has created that information and why, as well as the roles, responsibilities, and functions of media, information providers, and memory institutions. They can analyse information, messages, beliefs, and values conveyed through the media and any kind of content producer, and they can validate information they have found and produced against a range of generic, personal, and context-based criteria. MIL competencies thus extend beyond information and communication technologies to encompass learning, critical thinking, and interpretive skills across and beyond professional, educational, and societal boundaries. MIL addresses all types of media (oral, print, analogue, and digital) and all forms and formats of resources (p. 94).

As it is, the foundation of media and information literacy is the evaluation of source credibility. Effective assessment and evaluation of digital information sources, especially those sourced from digital libraries, is made possible by MIL skills. Put differently, MIL abilities or skills enable people to evaluate the reliability of information sources, the accuracy of factual assertions, and the writers' credibility. This means that MIL is about enabling people to think critically and make decisions about the types of information they consume, the media they create and share, and how they interact with the digital world that is full of misinformation, fake news, hate speech, propaganda, misinformation, and media manipulation.

A few of these MIL abilities that are crucial for determining the reliability of sources in digital libraries include; **Critical Thinking Skills:** With this skill, a person can ask questions, determine the information's source, and determine whether the assertions made are true. **Evaluation and Analysis Skills:** People who possess MIL skills can enhance their ability to evaluate and contrast various sources and determine the purpose, extent, and target audience of the information that is provided. Furthermore, this skill set helps individuals to recognise the standards by which the legitimacy and dependability of the sources should be assessed. **Creativity and Innovation:** With the use of these abilities, people can be creative and innovative in assessing and producing new content, participating actively in the process, and coming up with solutions for problems they run into on digital media (Gamma.app).

In a nutshell, media and information literacy (MIL) provides a crucial set of skills to navigate the digital landscape, including libraries. As already stated, the vitality of MIL skills in digital libraries cannot be overemphasised. These skills are crucial in today's digital world for students, in particular, to navigate digital information sources, evaluate credibility, and assess the reliability of information sources in the virtual landscape.

**Conclusion**

The reality remains that media has an impact on every part of our life, with a particular focus on how it affects our relationships, communication, learning, play, and social interactions. Every component of media, whether it is through traditional or contemporary channels like blogs, social media, nightly news, or advertising, has an overall impact on how we view the world and the events in it. The capacity to explore, validate, and trust knowledge is essential for all individuals, given its immense influence on our day-to-day existence. All things considered, a media and information literate individual needs to ensure that the material they are evaluating is reliable, accurate, factual, honest, ethical, and objective. Information seekers must ask relevant questions regarding the source, target audience, point-of-view, and hidden intentions of the message by the sender. In all, media and information literacy helps us to use information and media content, particularly from digital libraries in an ethical, efficient, and effective manner to always ascertain the credibility of information sources.

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# CORRECTIONAL CENTRES IN NIGERIA AND SCIENCE OF CONTEMPORARY PUNISHMENT

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**Abstract**

*This study examined correctional centres in Nigeria and the science of contemporary punishment. The study is guided by two research questions. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design. The study area is Nigeria Correctional Centres in Port Harcourt (Rivers State) and Aguata (Anambra State) with a sample of 301 respondent. Data collected was analysed using simple percentages in its analysis. The study findings revealed that there cannot be a correction when inmates are treated like animals. Where they stay in a very unhygienic environment, are underfed and are equally not incorporated into any advanced usefulness in life after jail term. The study concluded that correctional inmates in Nigeria impact on the science of contemporary punishment. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that there should be absolute legislation towards realistic correctional centre reforms and policies that would emphasize the correction tendencies of the inmates to actualize the essence of the science of contemporary punishment.*

**Keywords:** correctional centres, prisons, punishment, science,

## Introduction

From the different positions and histories, there are some existing formula put in place to meet social disobedience or deviant that has gone contrary to agreeable norms of the people. Societies world over have initiated outstanding ways of punishment to put to order and remove individuals from offending their norms and values which exist for the maintenance of order. According to Emerho (2012) in 399BC for instance, Socrates, at the age of 70, was condemned to death for belligerently corrupting the youths of Athens and mocking the city's gods. He was subsequently executed by being forced to drink the Hemlock, a slow acting poison (the Prison Transformation Digest, 2010). Similarly, Scmalleger & Snykla (2010) report that in 1757, Robert Francis Damien was sentenced to be publicly slaughtered in Paris for an assassination attempt on King Louis XV. Slaughtering him was adjudged a commensurate punishment for the attempted treason. Also, account from England talks about the tenth century Danish king of England, Canute, who preferred impelling culprits upon a stake after having them skinned alive (Carney 1977). Indeed, punishment is seen as the obvious principle and an age-old method of correcting deviant or anti-social behaviours. These different forms of punishment include: flogging, excommunication, instant death, torture, exile extradition, public humiliation, confinement etc. However, as humanity emancipate towards some changes and diver's mode of civilization, the concept of incarceration or imprisonment emerges. The emancipation of this new concept of imprisonment or incarceration is attributed to two major factors: the philosophical shift from punishment of the body towards the punishment of the soul, and the passage of laws preventing the imprisonment of anyone except criminals (Scmalleger & Snykla, 2010). They further posit that the Dutch were the first Europeans in modern time to segregate serious criminals from vagrants and junior delinquents. The workhouse of Amsterdam which opened in 1654 represented the first criminal prison in Europe (Miller, 1966).

In Nigeria, the origin of correctional centre (prison) dates back to remote history. Some historical antecedents have shown that various traditional societies in Nigeria had various forms of correctional centre (prison) prior to their contact with Europe (Emerho, 2012). Among the Yoruba, Ogboni house served as a sort of correctional centre (Ayandele, 1966). For the Edo State, the Ewedo building served as, not only for keeping those to be sold, but also those offenders who had to be put away for some time (Awe, 1968). In Tiv land, there were indications of an awareness of incarceration. In this community, offenders were required to concur to a sentence of imprisonment as an admission of guilt (Bohannan, 1957). It is also on record that in 1968, Sir Frederick Lugard recorded the existence of correctional centres (prisons) among the Fulani ethnics who used them for both incarcerating

offenders and for locking away condemned persons. Among the Igbo, solidly built dark rooms or houses were constructed by communities, villages and powerful individuals in the society for the purpose of confining offenders and captives (Igbo, 2006). Thus, the concept and reality of correctional centre (prison) in Nigeria preceded the arrival of British colonialists. What came at their heel was the specific introduction of the British form of prison system. Clearly, the first correctional centre (prison) in Nigeria which was the Broad Street Prison Lagos was established in 1872, by the British colonial administration (Igbo 2006). In 1890, the Calabar correctional centre (prison) was built, followed by the Sapele correctional centre (prison) in 1898. Subsequently Onitsha, Degema, Ibadan, Jebba and Lokoja correctional centres (prisons) were built (Egu, 1998). Correspondingly, it must be noted that colonial prisons were not designed for criminal correction. The correctional centres (prisons) were more punitive than corrective. The inmates were used as sources of forced labour. This is obvious of the fact that in the minds of the initiators of the first colonial correctional centres (prisons) it was essentially to serve as the places for punishment of the offenders who, owing to their lack of cooperation with the colonial authorities, were seen as causing obstruction and inhibiting colonial political authority and expansion of illegitimate trade and commerce in the territory (Igbo, 2007).

**Statement of the Problem**

The contemporary Nigerian correctional centre (prison) as a carryover of the colonial era has been described as human cages with no facilities for correction, reformation and vocational training. Modern correctional centres (prisons) world over emphasize reformation and rehabilitation of its inmates, however, Temibiage (2010) sees prisons as a place of reformation and rehabilitation, but they have become training grounds for inmates to become hardened criminals without any reformative agenda. Reformation in this perspective connotes an educative process by which the anti-social attitudes and values of the convict are changed into social ones and by which convicts acquire social skills for future effective participation in conventional society (Gibbons, 1977). This has always been in the contrary, such that the way inmates are classified in these correctional centres (prisons) has been a major problem to correction. In the correctional facilities, both hardened and first offenders are kept in the same cell due to lack of cells. This has made correction of inmates so difficult. In another development, the gross neglect of the welfare of correctional centres (prisons) staff is an obstacle that correspondingly led to the degradation and loss of self-worth of staff. For instance, some prison staff (especially officers) resides in hovels, which serve as their barracks.

When prisons staff are uncomfortable in terms of general welfare, they will hardly carry out the task of effective custody and reformation of inmates (Friday, 1990). However, the Nigerian situation defies the ideal state. Reality is that, the Nigerian prisons are fraught with a number of challenges that hamper the achievements of the goals of the prisons especially correction of inmates. Prison overcrowding is, without doubt, a major challenge of the Nigerian criminal justice system. A causal effect of the prisons overcrowding has been according to Ogwezzy (2011) attributed to increasing number of inmates awaiting trial. This situation is attributed to the conflict surrounding the criminal justice system as a process of criminal correction. Most of the staff of the Nigeria prisons do not even understand their roles as prison staff. Hence, most of them perceive themselves as security men and routine staff in the prisons. What they get involved in, is the day to day administration of the prisons which includes inspecting the prisons and making food available to inmates at the stipulated time. The crucial role of seeing themselves as agents of corrections is surprisingly abandoned. Besides, a number of the prison staff do not have the requisite training to engage in correctional activities (Ezeobi, 2012). Other factors like poor medical facilities, lack of basic needs (beds, food and sanitation) and violence are challenges of the prisons that have been identified (Ogwezzy, 2011). This position has militated against the corrective functions of the prisons and has subsequently calls for the question of the seriousness of the state in criminal correction. Therefore, this paper seeks to examine the internal and external factors that influence the correctional functions of the correctional centres (prisons) and the science of contemporary punishment with its target to fashion recommendations at the end.

**Research Questions**

To guide the work, two research questions were formulated thus:

1. What are the challenges hindering the free flow of engagements of the correctional centres as a science of correction of deviant behaviours?

2. What measures could be adopted to stem these challenges confronting correctional centres?

**Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study is are:

1. Find out challenges hindering the free flow of engagements of the correctional centres as a science to correct deviant behaviours.
2. Assess the measures could be adopted to stem these challenges confronting correctional centres.

**Literature Review**

The concept of correctional centre (prison) has been treated from various perspectives which include structural and functional dimensions. Mccorkle & Korn (1954) describe a correctional centre as a physical structure in a geographical location where a number of people living under highly specialized condition, adjust to the alternatives presented to them by the unique kind of social environments. Sykes (1958), Goffman (1961) and Okunola (1986) conceive correctional centre as a place where people are highly secluded from the rest of the world with entirely new order and control. This conceptualizations advanced by scholars are limited towards understanding that; correctional centre is a physical environment and could be described geographically or spatially. Different from the physical conception, there are other schools of thought that are based on function, framework and label. From the functional perspective, a correctional centre is perceived as a place to punish offenders, where criminals that are removed from the society are dumped to protect the society from further criminal activities. It is a place to reform, and teach offenders to be law abiding and productive after their release.

Okunola (1986) and Goffman (1961) define the concept of correctional centre in various ways. While Goffman (1961) conceptualized total institution as where there is a basic split between large classes of individuals who are restricted contact pattern where social mobility is restricted, Okunola (1986) on the other hand, sees a total institution as a place, (unlike the free environment or the community) that inhabits those who are socially rejected, insane, or mentally retarded. The labelling point of view on the other hand, stressed correctional centre as a place for vagrants who may pose actual danger to social life in the larger society. This model pre-supposes that every person in the correctional centre is a vagrant and irresponsible person. This was the position of Howard (1986) who demonstrates his view with what obtained during the ancient Greek times. With the recent developments, the general conception about the correctional centres is changing in the mind of some people with reference to the economic idea that people in the correctional centres are dregs of the society (Yongo, 2010). Imprisonment is most appropriately conceived as a formal perspective of inflicting pain on the individual. This has been an aspect of the traditional criminal justice system in various societies in Nigeria (Obioha, 1995; Obioha 2002).

The Nigeria correctional centres were established to manage criminals incarcerated in the yards. This constitutional function empowers the Nigerian correctional services to:

i. Keep convicted offenders (prisoners) in safe custody.
ii. Keep awaiting trial inmates in custody until law courts ask for their production.
iii. Punish offenders as instructed by the law courts.
iv. Reform the convicted prisoners.
v. Rehabilitate and re-integrate prisoners who have completed their sentences in the prison (extract from prison training manual (cited in Adetula, 2010).

**Philosophy of Punishment**

Punishment serves numerous socio-cultural functions. The concept of punishment has been justified on four basic principles or goals. These principles/goals are seen as the basic aims of punishment. Andrew (2008) in reviewing the philosophy of punishment in Nigeria opines that, of all the four goals of punishment which include retribution, incapacitation, deterrence and rehabilitation, the first three goals are the most focused on in the Nigeria Prison system. An examination of scholars' views on the above philosophies of punishment will suffice to shed proper light on the concept. Retribution: Ahmed (2009) submits that one of the oldest and most basic justifications for punishment involves the principles of revenge. This equation of punishment, with the gravity of the offence is embedded in the Judeo Christian tradition in the mosaic laws of the old testament in the Holy Bible that emphasize the idea of an eye for an eye. This idea was the classical principle of how justice should be

dispensed in democratic society (Alfreton, 2007). While this principle of punishment has been modified in the West as time progressed, Nigeria and other African countries are still using it as the principle guiding their various prison systems (Toluerimo, 2007).

**Prisons as a Correctional Institution**

After the American Revolution, Marek (1998) reveals, the ideas of enlightenment gained momentum. With the ideas of Cessera Beccari and Jeremy Bentham and the declaration of independence, a new penal system was developed. As such, reports argued that Americans had to move away from barbarism and punitive means of punishment and embrace a more rational and humanistic approach to punishment. Igbo (2006) opines that the concept of correction, embodies two key words: reformation and rehabilitation. Rehabilitation, according to Igbo (2008) gained ascendancy during the course of the 20th century. Up to the present time, the trend all over the world seems to be one of growing emphasis on the reformation-rehabilitation of the criminal offender. Both correctional spokesmen and correctional centres' reformers lend their professional voices to the growing call for the idea of rehabilitation and correction rather than punishment as such. Igbo (2006) sees 'treatment' as the essential element under the rehabilitative approach to punishment. Vold (1979) views rehabilitation as the process of 'straightening out' the offender deep with his own personality. He maintains that the rehabilitation activities of the modern prison generally have been of two kinds viz: psychological or psychiatric treatment and educational or vocational treatment. Reformation for Gibbons (1980), centers on education of inmates through which their anti-social attitudes and values are changed into socially acceptable ones.

**Theoretical Framework**

Every scientific enquiry or investigation such as this must have a backing theory. In this work, Deterrence theory of punishment was utilized. The Deterrence Theory of Punishment was propounded by Jeremy Bentham (1968). This theory states that general prevention ought to be the justification for punishment as its real justification. An unpunished deviant act leaves the path of crime and delinquent acts open, not only to the same offender but also to all those who may have the same motive and opportunities for such law violation. For this reason, punishment inflicted on deviants becomes a source of security for all. Such punishment validates the essence of conforming to shared conduct norms. The basic idea of deterrence is to deter both offenders and would be offenders from committing a similar offence. But also in Bentham's theory was the idea that punishment would also provide an opportunity for reform.

Scholars have faulted this theory on the ground that it uses the individual offender as a means to an end rather than as an end itself. It has been also argued that its reformative nature is also eroded in the sense that the offender will tend to react to the immediate pain of punishment rather than its further deterrence. The pain incurred by the offender, most times, lack intrinsic curative tendency and because the reaction tends to be towards the pain, the offender may return to the society to unleash more mayhem than before (Moris, 1993). The basic inclination of an average Nigerian citizen towards a prisoner is punishment in order to perhaps teach him a lesson. The contributions of this theory to the understanding of punishment seem to be the basic notion upon which Nigerian criminal justice is based and is therefore relevant to this study.

**Methodology**

The study employed a cross sectional survey design. A cross-sectional survey refers to a method whereby the researcher selects representative samples of individuals within the various specified stages of the study. The study area is Nigeria Correctional Centres in Port Harcourt (Rivers State) and Aguata (Anambra State) with its focus on sample respondents of 301 selected from the two correctional centres respectively at reasonable number of 188 in Port Harcourt Centre and 113 from Aguata Centre. A questionnaire containing ten (10) items was used to determine the perception of both staff and inmates at the two correctional centres in response of ''Yes, No and Indifferent''. On the whole 273 of the sampled questionnaire were retrieved and this forms the bases of the study analysis. The instrument was validated by experts in Social Work and Social Welfare Administration, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The instrument was further subjected to a reliability test using the test-re-test method. Subsequently, the data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Coefficient and it was

established at 0.87 which shows that the instrument is reliable. The instrument was personally administered by the researcher; and data collected were analysed using simple percentages.

**Result**
**Research Question 1: What are the challenges hindering the free flow of engagements of the correctional centres as a science to correct deviant behaviours?**
**Table 1: Respondents' views on the challenges hindering the free flow of engagements of the correctional centres as a science of correction of deviant behaviours**

| Challenges hindering engagement | Port Harcourt Centre (n=188) | | | Aguata Centre (n=113) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes % | No % | Indeffe-rent % | Yes % | No % | Indeffe-rent % |
| Correctional Staff difficulty in briefing inmates on any matter that affects them to enhance correction | 99 36.26 | 11 4.02 | 2 0.73 | 101 36.99 | 54 19.78 | 6 2.19 |
| Absence of legislation guaranteeing inmates access to other engagements of life outside the prison walls to enhance their correction | 81 29.67 | 25 9.16 | 6 2.19 | 101 4.44 | 43 15.75 | 17 6.22 |
| Correctional staff lack the knowledge or essence of the job they are engaged in | 102 37.36 | 3 1.09 | 7 2.56 | 136 49.81 | 17 6.22 | 8 2.93 |
| The total idea of inmates as condemn individuals eliminates the idea of correction | 98 35.89 | 7 2.56 | 7 2.56 | 133 48.71 | 16 5.86 | 12 4.39 |
| The attitude of correctional officials influences the corrective capacity of correctional centres | 83 30.40 | 12 4.39 | 17 6.22 | 140 51.28 | 10 3.66 | 11 4.02 |

Source: Field investigation, 2023.

Items on table 1 above show that all the items in the table received a positive response from the respondents. For example, on the issue on item one (1): Correctional staff difficulty in briefing inmates on any matter that affects them to enhance correction, 99 (36.26%) said Yes, 11 (4.02%) said No and 2 (0.73) were indifferent in Port Harcourt Correctional Centre, and 101 (62.7) said Yes, 54 (19.78%) said No, and 6 (2.19%) in Aguatu Centre were indifferent to the position. On item 2: Absence of legislation guaranteeing inmates access to other engagements of life outside the prison walls to enhance their correction has 81(72.3%) Yes, 25 (22.3%) No, and 6 (5.4) indifferent in Port Harcourt Correctional Centre while in Aguatu Centre 101 (62.7%), 43 (26.7%) No and 17 (10.6%) indifferent. Furthermore, on the question of Correctional staff lack of the knowledge or essence of the job they are engaged in our sampled respondents, 102 (91.1%) said Yes, 3 (2.7%) said No, 7 (6.3%) were indifferent and 136 (84.5%) said Yes, 17 (10.6%) while 8 (5.0%) were indifferent in Port Harcourt Correctional Centre and Aguatu Centre respectively. On the total idea of inmates as condemn individuals eliminates the idea of correction which is item four (4) has in responses of 98 (87.5%) Yes, 7 (6.3%) No, 7 (6.3%) indifferent in Port Harcourt Correctional Centre whereas 133 (82.6%) said Yes, 16 (9.9%)) No, with 12 (7.5%) of the sampled respondent being indifferent in Aguatu Correctional Centre. The attitude of correctional officials influences the corrective capacity of correctional centres, 85 (74.1%) of the respondents said Yes, 12 (10.7%) said No, 17 (15.2%) were indifferent; then 140 (87.0%) said Yes, 10 (6.2%) said No while 11 (6.8%) were indifferent in Port Harcourt and Aguatu Correctional Centre differently. In other words, the variables on the table are identified by respondents as challenges hindering the correctional centres from replicating its science of contemporary punishment to shape deviant behaviours. The data show that the responses were the same in the two correctional centres investigated. The implication here is that, if the above cited challenges are put in place, there would be a positive step towards the correctional centres serving its purposes.

**Research Question 2: What measures could be adopted to stem these challenges confronting correctional centres?**

**Table 2: Respondent's responses on the measures that could be adopted to stem these challenges confronting correctional.**

| Measures that could be adopted to stem the challenges hindering engagement | Port Harcourt Centre (n=188) | | | Aguata Centre (n=113) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Yes %** | **No %** | **Indeffe-rent %** | **Yes %** | **No %** | **Indeffe-rent %** |
| Inmates who are well behaved should be separated from other inmates and released mid-way to their sentence | 85 22.78 | 42 15.38 | 9 3.29 | 74 27.10 | 57 20.87 | 6 2.19 |
| The idea of seeing correctional centres as a place meant for condemn criminals should be eradicated | 112 41.02 | 25 9.15 | 8 2.93 | 98 35.89 | 13 4.76 | 17 6.22 |
| Discharged inmates should be assisted to practice the | 135 49.45 | 2 0.73 | 5 1.83 | 127 46.52 | 1 0.36 | 3 1.09 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| skills they acquired during their prison experience | | | | | | |
| Not sending first offenders to the correction centres except for an offence that entails homicide | 122<br>44.68 | 14<br>5.12 | 7<br>2.56 | 118<br>43.22 | 8<br>2.93 | 4<br>1.46 |
| Encouragement of plea bargaining in the judicial process | 126<br>46.15 | 10<br>3.66 | 6<br>2.19 | 104<br>38.09 | 16<br>5.86 | 11<br>4.02 |

Source: Field investigation, 2023.

Respondents' responses on table two (2) showed that 85 (22.78%) said Yes, 42 (15.38%) said No, and 9 (3.29%) were indifferent to the item with the position that inmates who are well behaved should be separated from other inmates and released mid-way to their sentence was the responses in Port Harcourt Correction Centre; while in Aguata Correctional Centre, 74 (27.10%) said Yes, 57 (20.87%) said No and 6 (2.19%) were indifferent. Again, for item (2) (in Port Harcourt Correctional Centre) which is on the idea of seeing correctional centres as a place meant for condemn criminals should be eradicated has 112 (41.02%) said Yes, 25 (9.15%) said No, 8 (2.93%) were indifferent; while in Aguata Correctional Centre 98 (35.89%) said Yes, 13 (4.76%) said No, 17 (6.22%) were indifferent to this position. Similarly, in the case that discharged inmates should be assisted to practice the skills they acquired during their prison experience 135 (49.45%) of the respondents said Yes, 2 (0.73%) said No, 5 (1.83%) were indifferent in Port Harcourt Centre; while in Aguata Correctional Centre 127 (46.52%) said Yes, 1 (0.36%) N0 and indifferent had three (3) respondents representing (1.09%). On the option of not sending first offenders to the correction centres except for an offence that entails homicide 122 (44.68%) said Yes, 14 (5.12%) said No, 7 (2.56%) indifferent, and 118 (43.22%) said Yes, 8 (2.93%) said No, with 4 (1.46%) indifferent respectively in Port Harcourt and Aguata Centres. Finally, on the option of encouragement of plea bargaining in the judicial process respondents in Port Harcourt Correctional Centre 126 (46.15%) said Yes, 10 (3.66%) said No, 6 (2.19%) indifferent; then in Aguata Correctional Centre 104 (38.09%) said Yes, 16 (5.86%) said No, and 11 (4.02% were indifferent. The implication here is that since the overwhelming response of the respondents were in the affirmative, the state should make appropriate measures such as highlighted herein to redeem the image of the correctional centres in order to meet up the world best practice.

**Findings**

The study revealed in its findings that there cannot be a correction when inmates are treated like animals. Where they stay in a very unhygienic environment, underfed and were equally not incorporated into any advance usefulness in life after jail term. From our interactions and observation some of the inmates can change within months if there is a positive step towards the correction; but what we experience here is a difficult situation that makes correction almost impossible. Also, attitude of prison officials was identified as a significant factor in enhancing the corrective functions of the prisons. Obviously, as officers in the correctional centres, one of the strategic training they deserve is to know how to relate with inmates. As officers, they are more or less like teacher, and as such ought to prove to inmates that they are their role model by way of good attitude, especially the way they behave and relate with them. This should more or less be like a teacher/student relationship. As staff, they do not need to be very familiar with the inmates but at the same time, they do not need to be very harsh with them. Such would guarantee some level of confidence through the interacting and learning process with the staff so that the corrective measures they are impacting on them can have some effect.

It is obvious that these attributes are not systematically in place, the corrective purpose may not be achieved.

Another important finding here is the internal factor which has to do with the periodic training of correctional centre staff on the latest correctional programmes and skills in enhancing the correction of inmates as it is world over. For instance, the field data collected show that a majority of the inmates are "not sure" if the periodic training of correctional centre staff on the latest correctional programmes and skills enhance their corrective capacity as inmates. On the other hand, the prison staff were more likely to agree with this notion more than the inmates that the periodic training of prison staff on the latest correctional programmes and skills enhance the corrective capacity of the correctional centres; even when it is very clear that there was nothing of such.

**Conclusion**

The investigation in this study has showed forth theoretical as well as empirical perspectives on the correctional centres in Nigeria using Port Harcourt and Aguata Correctional Centres as the science of contemporary punishment. Through the findings of this study, it is obvious that the Nigeria prison system is plagued with various challenges affecting its correctional functions. Thus, this study has produced insights into various internal and external factors which influence and constrain the corrective roles of the prisons as a corrective institution with the hope that proactive measures as identified in the findings would help in strengthening the lapses observed in the Nigerian correctional centres as a system of correcting deviant behaviours. Therefore, this study has presented some empirical position that would arouse further investigation (s) on the subject matter.

**Recommendations**

Arising from the findings as herein presented, the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be absolute legislation towards a realistic correctional centres reforms and policies that would emphasize the correction tendencies of the inmates in order to actualize its essence of the science of contemporary punishment.

2. There is the need for a total reorganization of the entire system in correctional centres across Nigeria so as to eliminate out-dated ideas, policies and approach in functions and implementations. This can only be achieved through compulsory training and retraining of the staffs so as to acquaint them with the latest global knowledge in correctional centres management and administration.

3. Correctional centres should have recognized institutes for both skilled and unskilled (academic) that would have a recognized certificate programmes for inmates. This will help equip inmates to face challenges of society as they gain their freedom and safe guide their fundamental human right.

5. Finally, there should be a reformation, enactment and enthronement of policies and laws to allow the employment of ex-convicts into correctional centres as staffs in offices. This will help ease the process of interaction and relationship for better results.

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# RE-EXAMINING THE LAWS AND REGULATION GOVERNING INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS PRACTICE IN NIGERIA: FROM COLONIAL ERA TO DATE

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**Abstract**
*The evolution of industrial relations in Nigeria has been shaped by a complex interplay of colonial legacies, post-colonial developments, and the dynamics of the Nigerian labour market. The study focused on re-examining the laws and regulations that governing the industrial in Nigeria from colonial era to present date. The purpose of this research is to understand the evolution of industrial relations in Nigeria and how these laws and regulations have contributed to the current industrial relations practices in the country. The study also, aims to contribute to ongoing debate on industrial relations in Nigeria and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the laws and regulations that shape labour markets in the country. Data for this study was gathered from secondary sources. Additionally, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in Nigerian labour market, including trade union leaders, employment lawyers and human resource professionals. The findings of the study provide insights in to the historical development of industrial relations in Nigeria and the impact of laws and regulations on the current state of industrial relations. Specifically, the study highlighted the successes and the challenges of Nigeria's industrial relations system, identified areas for improvement, and proffered recommendations for policy makers to strengthen the country's labour laws and regulation.*

**Keyword:** Laws, regulation, industrial relation Nigeria, colonial era

## Introduction

Historically, industrial relations in Nigeria can be traced back to the colonial or even the pre-colonial era, when formal and semi-formal relationships where established with the British in particular and the Europeans in general. Such relationships led to the introduction of wage employment in a formal industrial setting. At the Berlin conference of 1884 -1885, the British succeeded in formalising her claims to the Nigeria Basin and the activities of some private entrepreneurs were brought under control of the Royal Niger Company headed by Sir Taubman George Goldie (Ubeku, 1993).

Meanwhile, one administrative or political action of the British led to another, and eventually led to the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 to form Nigeria. This new country was led by Lord Lugard, a British colonial administrator. As the country advanced both in age and development, the British colonial masters carried out a number of reforms in the labour sector, which created the legal frameworks for industrial relations in the country. Therefore by 1960, when Nigeria gained political independence from Britain, constituted industrial relations was largely derived from the Anglo-Saxon model of industrial relations. These developments in the labour sector were no doubt without the activities of the nationalist and labour agitators at the time.

## Overview of Laws and Industrial Relations

Laws are body of rules and standard issued by a government or to be applied by courts and similar authorities. Thus, laws in industrial relations are standards rules, conventions, regulations, norms, and culture that are attached to the industrial activities; be it employment relationship or any other activities that are related to the industrial settings. Therefore, according to Yesufu, (1962), various

schools of thought have attempted to define the scope of industrial relations. The main theoretical conceptions can be classified as follows:
(a) The Systems Models of John T. Dunlop
(b) The Oxford School of Allan Flanders
(c) The Behavioural School of C. J Margerison

A closer examination of the fore-going theoretical conceptualisations will shed more light on the general character of industrial relations, in relation to the theoretical and practical application of impact of industrial relations within the Nigerian system.

**The Systems Model** is usually credited to the much respected American Professor of Labour Economics, John T. Dunlop. According to Otobo (2000) Dunlop's seminar publication – Industrial Relations Systems (1958) drew great inspirations from the works of Professors Talcott Parsons and Neil J. Smelser, who were great advocate of the systems approach in their sociological analysis of the society. Hence, Dunlop as cited in Otobo (2000) describes the structure of industrial relations system in the following ways: "An industrial relations system in its development is regarded to comprise certain actors; certain contexts and ideology which bind the industrial relations system together and body of rules created to govern actors at the workplace and work community".  Basically therefore, Dunlop states that an industrial relations system must entail three main groups of actors:
(a). The workers and their organisations
(b). The employers and their associations
(c). The government agencies mainly concerned with work place and work community.

However, other components of industrial relations are certain contexts i.e. the technological, market, budgetary constraints, and relations of power and the status of actors. Ideology and rules, which bind the industrial relations system together, are further components of the industrial relations system of Dunlop. Having stated all these structural components of an industrial relations system, Dunlop (1958) is of the view that "the task of any theory of industrial relations is to explain why particular rules or laws are established; how and when they change in response to changes affecting the system.

**The Oxford School**. Allan Flanders (1965) in his conceptualization of industrial relations defines it as the study of the institutions of job regulation. His argument is based on the position that the only aspect of business enterprise that directly concerns industrial relations is the employment. The relations between the enterprise and its employees and among the employees themselves (Ubeku, 1983). According to this approach, in order to fully understand or identify these relationships among these aforementioned elements in industrial relations, they must be placed in their legal setting.

To Flanders (1965) industrial relations "either expressed in or arise out of controls of employment or service which represents in common speech jobs. The study of industrial relations may therefore be described as the study of the institutions of job   regulations". Another major statement of the oxford school of Allan is one which states as represented by Ubeku (1983) that "the rules of any industrial relations system are either procedural or substantive". That is, the rules, which govern industries relations system, are determined by and large, by means of the rule-making process of collective bargaining. This has been described as "a political institution involving a power relationship between employers and employees" (Ibid). The Oxford school also made a distinction between what it calls internal and external job regulations, and finally, the question of whether these rules can be changed automatically by labour (employees) and their organisations without the consent of an outside authority, i.e. government or its agencies.

**The Behavioural School**. The contribution of Margerison (1969) can be summarized briefly as follows:
   a)  That industrial relations job content, constitute a complex field of study that requires its proper appreciation at both the behavioural and institutional levels.
   b)  That the conflict is an inherent feature of modern industrial society.
   c)  That agreed rules are needed to resolve conflict or potential conflicts between the parties.
   Based on the above, Margerison (1969) identifies two conceptual levels of industrial relation, of which conflicts could be generated:
1.  Intra-plant level: Margerison believes that it is at this level that most of the conflicts are generated. At this level, situational factors like job content, work task and technology and interaction factors

are said to generate three main types of conflicts-distributive, structural and human relations (Ubeku, 1983).

2. Outside the firm: This level deals with industrial relation problems that cannot be resolved at the intra-plant level. This is concerned mainly with the machineries for conflict resolution.

In summarising the inputs from the aforementioned schools of thought on industrial relations, certain common grounds can be identified. They include:

1) **Actors:** e.g. employers, employees and governmental agencies.
2) **Contexts**: i.e. technological context, market or budgetary constraints, and locus and distribution of power.
3) **Rules**: i.e. some agreed and established rules generated by interaction between the parties. In some cases rules are imposed on the parties by the government. Where they are imposed on the parties, i.e. employers and employees, they often constitute the source of strains and conflicts in industrial relations.
4) **Ideology:** Dunlop (1958) defines this ideology "as a set of ideas and beliefs held by the actors that help to bind or integrate the system together as an entity". Meanwhile, these common grounds will appreciate the nature of industrial relations practice in Nigeria.

## Practice of Industrial Relations in Nigeria

As stated earlier on in the introductory part of this paper, much of what we known as the industrial relations system of Nigeria are derived from our colonial history. Nigeria was colonised by Great British, the first industrialised country, where industrial revolution began in the 1750s with the invention of the steam engine. The influence of this revolution in industry is examined under the rubric of the Anglo-Saxon model.

## The Influence of the Anglo-Saxon Model

At the time when British were industrialised, the philosophy of laissez-faire had been fully established as the intellectual substructure of all economic activities. Smith as cited in Ubeku, (1983) popularizes this economic principle of laissez-faire with the publication of "The Wealth of Nations".

The basic principle of the Anglo-Saxon model of industrial relations is that workers and their employers are in the best position to deal with situational factors at work, especially the issue of conflicts arising from employment. The state, therefore, should be a fair umpire in disputes settlement, having established the necessary legal frameworks upon which voluntary negotiation or collective bargaining is based.

Furthermore, under the Anglo-Saxon model, the state does not intervene directly in any dispute settlement procedure involving the parties - labour and their employers. For instance, the right of labour to strike is recognised under this model of industrial relations. Consequently, the British literally imposed its models and other institutional values on Nigeria. Hence, the Anglo Saxon principles of voluntarism became the foundation of industrial relations practised in Nigeria. Meanwhile, the Anglo-Saxon model of industrial relations was largely and eventually abandoned by the British for a number of reasons.

First, the number of wage earners in Nigeria increased as increasing number of Nigerians had become paid employees.

Second, the introduction of western education increased the level of awareness or consciousness as far as human right (right of labourers) was concerned.

Third, the activities of early nationalist war veterans, educated elites raised the tempo of agitation for labour and democratic reforms. The British were neither prepared nor ready to accede to these demands. This forced them to abandon voluntarism for interventionism. The Aba Women Riots of 1929 and the coal miners' strike at Enugu in the 1940s, that were brutally suppressed, are classic historical flashpoints in the legendary quest by Nigerian workers for fair and humane conditions of work or service (Kilby, 1967).

## Independence and its Aftermath.

In 1960, the British granted political independence to Nigeria and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa became president (in ceremonial capacity) and Prime minister (head

of government) and with executive powers respectively . Certain political crises in the west and middle belt of Nigeria were critical litmus test, which the new Balewa government handled poorly and wrongly. The Tiv riots and the AG crises of western Nigeria were resolved by military means, which ushered in a new era of intervention in Nigeria. By 1966, Balewa's policy of inviting the military to deal with civil unrest backfired and two army coups occurred within a space of about six months (January and July).

**The Military Government and Industrial Relations Reforms in Nigeria**

The military coup of 1996 kept them in power till 1979 – a period of about thirteen years. During this period, the nation experienced a civil war; the military suspended the constitution and ruled with decrees. However, the military authorities also introduced many radical reforms that changed the socio-economic and political atmospheres of the country. The Nigerian industrial landscape was greatly affected, as a number of labour laws, decrees and regulations were put in place by the military authorities. The military era was therefore characterised by radical changes which amongst other things included grouping and regrouping of labour unions, promulgation of laws, especially those affecting labour, prescriptions and proscriptions of labour unions, arrest and detention of labour users and of course wage reforms, which led to increase in the minimum wage from the regime of General Yakubu Gowon in 1975 (Udoji Award) to general Abdulsalam Abubakar in 1999.

**Structure of Industrial Relations in Nigeria Today**
**Sources of Labour Laws in Nigeria:**

A number of labour laws and amendments were enacted or promulgated under military regimes at various times, especially since the first military coup of 1966. The following list represents a summary of the main laws promulgated by military decrees.

**i. Trade Unions Act of 1973:** The act mainly makes provision for the formation, registration and organisation of trade unions, federation of trade unions and central labour organisations; it also specified the category of those who could join trade unions or not or serve as officials.

**ii. Labour Act of 1974:** This act provides the general provisions in respect of wages, contracts and terms of employment; it also regulates procedure for recruitment and provides for some special categories of workers such as apprentices, women and young persons. However, the act does not apply to these category of workers:- the armed forces, police, administrative and executive, technical or professional workers. Domestic servants are also excluded from the labour act of 1974.

**iii. Trade Disputes Act of 1976:** the Trade Disputes Act of 1976 establishes the time-table or time frame for the settlement of trade disputes between workers and their employers. The procedure for disputes settlement takes the following pattern: voluntary settlement-Mediation- Conciliation- Arbitration (at the National Industrial Court, I.A.P.) for determination. The Industrial Arbitration Panel, I.A.P.

**iv. Trade Disputes (Amendment) Act of 1977:** This act basically represents an amendment of Trade Disputes Act, TDA of 1976. Under this act, the minister of labour may take certain step where a trade dispute is apprehended by him. The act also establishes what constitutes offences and penalties for workers, trade unions and employers for any failure to comply with the Trade Disputes Act, TDA.

**v. Trade Disputes (Essential Services) Act of 1976:** The Trade Disputes (Essential Services) Act of 1976 empowers the President to proscribe any trade union whose members engage in essential services have taken part in acts calculated to cause industrial unrest; it also establishes the power of union members.

**vi. Labour Amendment Act of 1978:** This act amends the labour act of 1974 in order to make it obligatory for employers upon registration and recognition of a trade union to operate the 'check-off' system to cover all the employees qualified to be members of the trade union except those who contract out of the system in writing.

**vii. Trade Unions (Amendment) Act of 1978:** The trade unions amendment act of 1978 amends the trade unions act of 1973 as a result of the restructuring exercise carried out on the trade union by the federal military government; it also makes provision for the real organization of trade unions in Nigeria, and contains the list of registered and recognised trade unions.

**viii. Trade Unions (Amendment) Act of 1979:** This act shows which categories of officials belong to management cadres and could therefore not joined trade unions or hold office therein.

**ix. Trade Unions (Miscellaneous) Decree of 1976 :**This decree amends the list of trade unions recognised and registered by the Registrar of trade unions into Part 'A' and Part 'B'. The objective of this amendment is to distinguish between trade unions whose members are taken from the workers and those whose members are drawn from the senior staff and employers' associations; the act also forbids deductions except on voluntary basis from wages and salaries and senior employees as contributors to the trade unions. Basically, the idea behind the amendment was to weaken the Senior Staff Associations.

**x. Factories Decree of 1987:** The decree, generally regarded by the various stakeholders as long overdue, repealed the old Factories Act by updating its provisions in line with contemporary conditions in the industry and the country in general. Hence, its application to a wider spectrum of workers and other professionals exposed to occupational hazards, and by making adequate provisions regarding the safety of workers by updating penalties provisions, had made it attuned with the current value of the naira, the country's official currency.

**xi. Workmen's Compensation Decree of 1987:** In the main, this decree re-enacts the Workmen's Compensation Act by adding new provisions in order to extend its coverage to benefit many more workers. It also removes the difficulties and delays inherent in the administration of the previous Act.

**xii. Trade Disputes (Amendment) Decree of 1988:** This decree amends the Trade Disputes Act of 1977 by reducing the periods provided in the Act for settlement of trade disputes referred to the courts to be determined within thirty days.

From the above, what constitutes industrial relations today can be seen in the procedures established by statutory regulations, which govern collective bargaining. The Nigerian industrial relations system is a hybrid of several systems – a combination of both voluntarism and state intervention – but to a great extent, it is a product of Nigeria's history and development. Colonialism, military rule civil and inter-ethnic conflicts all combine in changing the industrial relations system from voluntarism to interventionism, which according to Ubeku, (1983) is more production-oriented and also more integrative in its approach. Therefore, the enactments as stated above provided the fundamental legal frameworks for collective bargaining within industry, and the actors have legalistic reference points or bases to indulge in negotiations.

The Nigerian system of industrial relations provides for collective bargaining at the national level. In Nigeria today, industrial conflicts can be resolved in two ways:

(a). Voluntary Procedure Process of internal machineries and,
(b). Statutory procedures (as contained in the Trade Disputes Act of 1976) i.e. external machineries.

The principle of voluntarism has now been generally accepted in Nigeria as an established procedure for disputes settlement, and this is usually encouraged before any recourse to statutory procedures for the settlement of trade disputes. The main objective of the voluntaristic approach is to ensure that voluntary collective bargaining process between the parties lead to the resolution of any dispute between them. According to Diejomoah, (1979), many firms in Nigeria lack proper grievance procedures which in his words: "will cause poor bargaining (reflected in strikes, working to rule, lockouts, etc.) and will lower worker morale, perhaps higher labour    turnover rates, and malaise at the peremptory nature of decision" (Ubeku, 1983)

**The Main Source of Employment Laws in Nigerian Nowadays**
The following are the source of employment law in Nigeria:
1. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended)
2. The Labour Act of the federation of Nigeria 2004 (labour Act)
3. Federal laws enacted by the National Assembly and the state laws enacted by House of Assembly
4. Decision of the Nigerian court-case law, and
5. International conventions, treatise and protocols relating to labour employment workplace, industrial relations and or matters connected therewith that have been ratified by Nigeria.

**The Statutes Applicable to Labour and Employment in Nigeria**
The Labour Act is the principal legislation governing employment relations in Nigeria. Its application is limited to employees engaged under a contract of manual labour or clerical work in private and public sector.  Employees exercising administrative, executive, technical or professional functions are governed by their respective contracts of employment. It is pertinent to note that reliance is

sometimes placed on judicial authorities to espouse some labour and employment law principles. Also, the main statutes applicable to employment and labour relations in Nigeria include:

i.      The Labour Act, 2004
ii.     The Factories Act, 2004
iii.    The Pensions Act, 2004
iv.     The Trade Disputes Act, 2004
v.      The Trade Union Amended Act, 2005
vi.     The Employees Compensation Act, 2010
vii.    The National Minimum Wage Act, 2011
viii.   The Pension Reform Act, 2014
ix.     The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Third Alteration) Act, 2010.

**The Right of the Worker in Industrial Relations in Nigeria**
The followings are the right of workers in industrial relations in Nigeria, these are:

1.  Wages
2.  Pension
3.  Leave
4.  Transportation
5.  National housing fund
6.  Termination

In briefs:

**a.  Wages**
The Labour Act of 2004 set the standard for the minimum amount of naira a worker in Nigeria is supposed to make. In 2004, the minimum wage was set to ₦5,500.00 per month. In 2011, the National Minimum Wage Act of 2011 set the minimum wage to ₦18,000.00 per month. The Labour Act of 2004 also has an exception that states that any establishment which employs fewer than 50 workers does not have to abide to the Nigerian minimum wage. In 2019, a new implementation for an increase to more than 50,000 naira was advocated but later settled to 30,000 naira which has commenced payment at that rate.

**b.  Pension**
The Pension Act of 2004 established a contributory pension scheme for people employed in the public and private sector of Nigeria. The amount that has to be contributed towards the pension is 7% of an employee's pay check. It also states that in the event of an employee's death, the next-of-kin is to receive their pension and any benefits from their life insurance policy. In the act, it allows retired employees to receive retirement benefits.

**c.  Leave**
Under legislation passed in 2004, every employee is entitled to twenty-one days' leave after working for twelve months of continuous service and in the case of people under 16 years old, 12 leave days. The exception to this rule is in the case in which an employer and employee agree to extend the period of entitled leave from 12 months to 24 months, but no more than 24 months. Employees also have up to 12 days of paid sick leave per year in which an employee is allowed absence from their job as long as a registered medical practitioner certifies the illness. A woman also has the right to maternity leave as long as she provides a written medical certificate from a medical doctor stating that she should not or cannot work. The medical certificate allows a woman to not work for approximately six weeks before the birth of her baby and six weeks after the birth of her baby. She is also owed at least 50% of her normal wages as long as she has been employed for six months. She is also allowed two extra thirty-minute breaks for the purpose of nursing her child.

**d.  Transportation**
The labour act also provides transportation for employees in situations in which they have to travel over 16 km (9.9 mi). In that situation, the employer might provide free transportation. It is also mandatory that the vehicle is in good condition, sanitary, and not overcrowded.

**e.  National Housing Fund**
Under Nigerian Law, employees who make over ₦3,000 must also contribute 2.5% of their pay check to the National Housing Fund, which is controlled by the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria. Any company who fails to deduct 2.5% from a pay cheque of an employer could face a fine of ₦50,000.

f. **Termination**

The Labour Act of 2004 allows for a few different ways in which employees can be terminated. The first method is in the event of the death of an employee. The second is that either party may terminate the employment contract as long as the other party is given notice. The amount of notice given goes as follows: one day's notice for a contract that has lasted less than three months, one week of notice for a contract that has lasted more than three months but less than two years, two weeks for a contract that has lasted more than two years but less than five years, and one month for a contract that has lasted for more than five years. Also, within the terms of the contract, all payments must be made to an employee before his contract is terminated.

Furthermore, the statutory procedures, for disputes settlement involve four stages, as directed by the labour minister sequel to the failure of voluntary procedures for disputes settlement. These stages are:
1. Conciliation
2. Arbitration
3. Inquiry
4. The National Industrial court

However, the highhandedness of the Nigerian government in respect of labour matter had made nonsense of these mechanisms or procedures for dispute settlement. More often than not, the Nigerian government fails to honour its own agreement with labour, thereby setting poor standards for employers in the poor sector. It has violated more agreement reached out of collective bargaining than any other institutions in Nigeria or the world over. A case in point is its failure or reluctance to honour a number of agreements with the Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU, and the Nigerian Labour Congress, NLC. Consequently, the Nigerian industrial relations system today is replete with case of violation of negotiated agreements as a result of executive lawlessness and ubiquitous of governmental power.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is a fact that the nature or structure of industrial relations laws and regulations in Nigeria today owe largely to its colonial history, having been ruled by Britain. The basis of industrial relation in Nigeria, as identified by this paper lies in the Anglo-Saxon Model, although it also drew inspirations from other systems of industrial relations, especially the Germanic, Chile, Soviet, Australian and the American systems, all of which have created a hybrid of the Nigerian system of industrial relations. The paper also highlighted the radical reforms of the military authorities and what now appears to be the permanent nature of interventionism policies of the Nigerian government in relation to industrial relations practice.

Finally, the paper examines the extant practice of industrial relations in Nigeria today and shows why it has failed as a result of governmental interference through high-handed policies and unpopular anti-labour law. Based on the re-examination, the following recommendations are proposed for strengthening industrial relations in Nigeria: to enhance the capacity of labour unions to effectively represent workers' interests; to strengthen the enforcement mechanisms for labour laws, particularly in the informal sector; to promote social dialogue and cooperation between labour unions, employers, and government and to adapt labour laws to the changing dynamics of the Nigerian labour market, including the rise of the informal sector and the digital economy

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# FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICE UTILIZATION AMONG PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITY IN YENAGOA METROPOLIS, BAYELSA STATE

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## Abstract

*This study examines the factors associated with social welfare service utilization among people living with disabilities (PLWDs) in Yenagoa Metropolis, Bayelsa State. The research aims to explore the various social welfare services available and the challenges associated with their use by people living with disabilities in the region. To accomplish objectives, a survey approach was employed, utilizing a questionnaire as the primary research tool. The research sample comprised 400 participants. Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 362 were successfully retrieved, collated, and analyzed. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed, involving random, quota and snowball sampling techniques respectively. The analysis draws upon the use of quantitative surveys to gather comprehensive insights into the dynamics of social welfare utilization among this demographic. Univariate statistics was the analytical technique used in this study to interpret the data. . The study discovers that most people living with disabilities in Yenagoa have utilized the health intervention service in the past 12 months. The study concludes that the major problems faced by PLWDs in the city are transportation and mobility problems, employment opportunities and stigma and discrimination. The study therefore recommends that access to employment opportunities was highlighted as one of the major problems faced by PLWDs in the city and this also contributes to their inability to afford the necessary welfare services they need. Hence, more PLWD-friendly jobs should be created in the city to enable them to earn a decent living, rather than resorting to begging on the streets.*

**Keywords:** Social, welfare, services, utilization, disabilities**.**

## Background to the Study

The World Bank noted that the poor socio-economic status of people with disability is more likely to affect them than people without any form of impairments (World Bank, 2018). It also noted that 15% of the global population, or more than 1 billion individuals, have a certain form of disability. Of this number, it is estimated that about 29 million Nigerians, or 15% of the estimated 195 million people in the country as of 2018, are disabled (World Bank Group, 2020). This figure is expected to increase as age, warfare, environmental catastrophes, and forced relocation, among other causes increase. Data from the 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, suggests that Approximately 7% of family members older than five (and 9% of those 60 and above) have some trouble with at least one functional domain, such as communication, vision, self-care, walking, hearing, cognition; 1% have substantial difficulties or are unable to perform in at least one sphere of life. The incidence rate is certainly underestimated by the numbers currently available, therefore despite being significant; these estimated rates are probably significantly higher (NPC & ICF Macro, 2019).

Compared to the general population, people with disabilities tend to have a higher rate of negative socioeconomic results and experience multidimensional poverty. They experience more psychological and environmental obstacles that hinder them from participating equally and effectively in society. Their reduced socio-economic and labour market participation costs, which burden governments in terms of welfare, highlight the costs of exclusion, which range from about 3 to 7 per cent of gross domestic product (Buckup, 2009).

Disability-inclusive development responds effectively to the World Bank's dual goals of eradicating extreme poverty and promoting income equality. It also relates to the Human Capital

Agenda, which encourages people to acquire knowledge, skills, and health throughout their lives to maximize their potential as valuable contributors to society (World Bank Group, 2020). The socioeconomic disparity of people with disabilities must be addressed for the global development and poverty reduction agenda to be successful, and their participation in all phases of development initiatives must be guaranteed. This can be done through the provision of adequate social welfare services aimed at providing the basic and essential needs of those with disability.

The disability-inclusive 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development expresses the need to empower those living with disability (United Nations, 2006). Concerns about disabilities are also specifically mentioned in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2015–30 and the Habitat III New Urban Agenda. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006), which is almost universally accepted and which Nigeria adopted in 2010, outlines the right of a person with a disability to participate and be equally integrated in society actively. The Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework for disability-inclusive development, which was recently released by the World Bank, demonstrates the organization's steadfast commitment to leaving no one behind (World Bank, 2018).

To improve policies and social welfare services for people living with disabilities, the Government of Nigeria has shown a significant readiness to collaborate with international development partners, particularly the World Bank. The Discrimination of Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018 signed into law in Nigeria on January 23 by President Muhammadu Buhari following 9 years of relentless advocacy by disability rights groups and activists, made a significant step toward disability inclusion and demonstrated the government's growing emphasis on disability mainstreaming. Similar laws had already been passed in a few Nigerian states before the signing, and they are now being implemented to various degrees in those states. The national legislation cannot now be implemented since there is no documentation of the steps taken to date or of the lessons discovered during the implementation of these laws. If the problems encountered by people with disabilities in Nigeria are not addressed, both the affected individuals and the nation as a whole which carries the bulk of the burden will suffer. Restricting the access of people with disabilities to essential services would have a significant negative impact on the nation's economy given the vicious circle between disability and poverty (Dark, 2017).

In Nigeria, there are series of programmes for people to acquire basic skills for them to be employable. These programmes include: The National Directorate of Employment" (NDE) and "Industrial Training Fund" (ITF), N-power, etc. However, access to these services has proven to be herculean, especially for the disabled. It is on this note that the thrust of this study is to examine the factors associated with the access and utilisation of social welfare services among people living with disability in Yenagoa City, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

**Statement of the Problem**

The plight of people living with disability are increasing daily, as cases of poverty and other poor indicators of living standards affect them (Ashi et al., 2015). Despite an increase in the number of disabled individuals in Nigeria, there seems to be neglect in the delivery of social welfare services for these population sub-groups. Again, where it seems to be provided to some through skill acquisition programmes, conditional cash transfers, payment of pensions and social safety net, food and health programmes, and other policies and social intervention programmes, they are not effectively managed, as some are even hijacked by unknown agencies or individuals (Oriji, 2018). Therefore, the purposes for which programmes for people with disability are established or initiated are hardly accomplished. Meanwhile, social welfare services have been found essential to ameliorate the plights of vulnerable groups (Charles et al., 2005; Miller, 2007; Oriji, 2018). Some of the assistance to the vulnerable groups include the provision of health interventions, educational interventions, social interventions and counselling.

The majority of researches on the use of social welfare services have combined lots of vulnerable groups with people living with disability (Osgood et al., 2010). Some of these studies include: the transition of vulnerable groups from childhood to adulthood (Eseadi, et al., 2015), as well as welfare services for people suffering from chronic diseases (Rahman et al., 2017). While these studies have exposed the knowledge of social welfare services in the direction of where the services of social workers are needed, the specific social welfare services vulnerable groups received from these studies

remained unknown. As a result, the scope of such issues has not been thoroughly documented, particularly from the perspective of people with disabilities. As a result, little is known about the structural and institutional variables affecting how people with disabilities use social welfare programmes in the country.

Again, the utilisation of health social services for behavioural health issues has very seldom been specifically examined in studies. In reality, numerous studies about the utilisation of health social services in mental diseases were discovered after a search of the research literature. (Coker et al., 2015; Okoye, 2019), with others attempting to explore the integration of mental health care into primary care to improve health social welfare services of vulnerable groups (Patel, et al, 2016). Consequently, despite these functional areas of social welfare services, little is known about factors associated with the social welfare services utilisation by people living with disability, as well as the extent to which the services are provided by the concerned agencies in the country.

Understanding the factors associated with social welfare service utilisation among people with disability can help inform policies and programmes of action towards achieving "ending hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations (Open Working Group, 2014). This is especially important as extant research has found that only a small percentage of vulnerable groups have access to social welfare services to solve their problems in the country. Because this gap exists, it becomes necessary to fill it. Therefore, the following research questions have been formulated to guide the study:

- What are the social welfare services available to people living with disability in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State?
- To what extent are there any challenges associated with the use of social welfare services by people living with disability in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State?

**Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to examine the factors associated with social welfare service utilization among people living with disability in Yenagoa City, Bayelsa State, while the specific objectives are to:

i. examine the social welfare services available for people living with disability in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State.
ii. investigate the extent to which there are challenges associated with the use of social welfare services by people living with disability in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State.

**Literature Review**
**Factors Associated with the Use of Social Welfare Services among People with Disability**

Strong data suggests that social welfare services are difficult for persons with impairments to obtain globally. For instance, the Brazilian National Health Survey revealed that people with disabilities had limited access to rehabilitation services (Clemente et al., 2022). Discrimination, physical inaccessibility, information inaccessibility, and unavailability are a few potential obstacles that people may experience when trying to use social welfare programmes.

According to studies, several factors influence PLWD's usage of social assistance programmes. For instance, Clemente et al. (2022) cited factors like poor communication between professionals, patients, and caregivers, financial difficulties, psychological, behavioural, and attitude problems, lack of service availability, organisational and transportation issues, among others, as major obstacles to PLWD's use of services. On the other hand, Medeiros et al, (2017) showed that people with visual impairment face a variety of barriers to accessing healthcare, including transportation to the facility, physical access to care, and communication with healthcare providers. These barriers violate the principles of accessibility and reduce the quality of care for these individuals.

This finding was supported by Vieira et al. (2017), who took into account how people with hearing difficulties perceive health care. Communication barriers between users and healthcare providers stood out, generating access issues, patient uncertainty, and the lack of interpreters in the services. Furthermore, Clemente et al. (2022) discovered that factors affecting people's characteristics (such as where they live, their financial resources, and their social situation) and factors affecting services interact to determine how accessible social welfare services are to people (for example, quantity, location of facilities, costs). A person's capacity to pay for certain services, rather than just the

cost of the services themselves, determines whether those services are accessible. Similar to this, a health facility's location affects how easily a population can obtain health care, depending on the population's settlement patterns and transportation options. (For instance, the volume, the location of the facilities, and the price).

According to França et al. (2016), there are social determinants that make universal access to social welfare services for the vulnerable more complex and difficult. These factors include the precarious urban infrastructure of public services in the territories, local violence brought on by drug trafficking, lack of accessible public transportation, lack of professionals and facilities for continuity of care, and lack of professionals and facilities. These discourage people from using the care that is provided by public services. To support this assertion, Clemente et al. (2022) highlighted that attitudes on transport to the health service vary widely, with differences in the amount of time required for the trip, if assistance is necessary, and the mode of transportation chosen. One significant factor is that some people feel the need to be accompanied. In some cases, this can be attributed to lack of security when navigating social environments alone, the potential presence of architectural and social barriers, or the perception of excessive protection from family members and caregivers.

The study by Sousa et al. (2014) demonstrated the challenges users of the system face in their pursuit of continuous and comprehensive care. These challenges include limited and unwelcoming access, high demand and a lack of medical professionals in primary care, inadequate provision of consultations and specialized exams, lengthy gaps in specialized care, and lack of communication between services of various levels of care. According to the findings, the primary obstacles cited by service providers were: lack of professional training; a failing healthcare system; physical obstacles; lack of resources or technology; and language hurdles. Amorim et al. (2018) who used the literature review methodology, underlined in their findings the extremely low qualification of primary healthcare workers for the needs of users with some disability and urge the need for ongoing training opportunities. Additionally, they emphasize that the Brazilian normative legislative framework's protection of comprehensive health was hampered by the inaccessibility of health care. In light of this, the physical and psychological barriers that are present in the majority of primary healthcare institutions lead to a culture that is filled with symbolic violence toward those who have some form of physical, mental, or sensory impairment. This continues a circle of injustices in which individuals with disabilities are caught, which fuels social marginalization.

According to França et al. (2016), the main obstacles to full coverage and universal access to social welfare services for people with disabilities are poor management and governance of local public policies, coupled with the inconsistent application of financial resources, lack of equipment, inadequate material and human resources to implement health and intersectoral problem-solving actions in social care, and lack of equipment. All individuals who require access to social welfare programmes, including those with impairments, face financial obstacles, including lack of money. Another factor that directly restricts access and, as a result, indicates the frailty in the design of the care network is the absence of communication between the services and personnel that comprise primary care and specialized care (Clemente et al., 2022).

Studies have uncovered several equity-related factors in addition to the barriers. Equity and access to social services are closely linked to how well social welfare systems can organize themselves to meet the needs of the most vulnerable (Clemente et al., 2022). Additionally, when personal characteristics that could lead to inequities were examined, it was discovered that factors like caregivers' residence, race/ethnicity, gender/sexual orientation, education, socioeconomic status, and social capital were connected to their ability to access social welfare services.

According to a study by Santos et al. cited in Clemente et al. (2022), the difficulty of access is related to demographic and socioeconomic factors, as well as greater vulnerability. The study sought to identify the major issues with access to health services for children with disabilities in Latin America. The following obstacles also stand out: mobility issues, family vulnerability, lack of public policies and infrastructure, weak connection between health services and the community, lack of specialized services, lack of health information, ineffective referrals, late diagnosis of comorbidities, and lack of specialized services. Therefore, actions are required to reduce obstacles to the accessibility of social welfare services for those with impairments. People with disabilities, who frequently experience poverty more than any minority or ethnic group, are additionally impacted by factors related to disparities in access to health care among various socially vulnerable populations, such as

underprivileged racial and ethnic groups, more vulnerable socioeconomic groups, and rural residents. Without the ability to access social services, employment opportunities, or education, many persons with disabilities are trapped in a cycle of poverty and hardship (Bray, et al., 2014).

**Research Methodology**

For this study, a survey research design was chosen. There is no existing population of people living with disabilities and that explains why the study could not establish a known population. Therefore the population of the study is unknown. The sample size of this study is 400 respondents. The study adopted a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques. They include random, quota and snowball sampling techniques. Hence, the simple random sampling technique was used to select 8 communities in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State (Akenfa, Agudama, Opolo, Biogbolo, Yenizue-Gene, Kpansia, Swali, and Ovom. Having done that, the quota sampling technique was used to allocate fifty (50) samples to people living with disabilities in each of the communities randomly selected. Thus, arriving at the 400 people living with disabilities. Thereafter, the snowball sampling technique known as referral sampling was used to locate people living with disabilities. This is because the desired sample characteristic is very rare. The primary data for the study were gathered using a questionnaire while secondary data were obtained from published materials. The respondents were duly informed about the purpose of the study and other rights as respondents of the study including confidentiality. A combination of analytical techniques was used in this study to interpret the data.

**Substantive Data**
**Evaluation of Objectives**
**Objective 1:** Examine the social welfare services available for people living with disability in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State.
**Table 1: Frequency Table for Social welfare services and Social Support available for people with Disability**

| Variables | Frequency (n = 384) | Percentage (% = 100) |
|---|---|---|
| **Intervention Services available for use in the City** | | |
| Health Intervention | 169 | 44.0% |
| Home Care Services Intervention | 22 | 5.7% |
| Rehabilitation Services | 21 | 5.5% |
| Family Foster Care Intervention | 43 | 11.2% |
| Social Safety (Financial Assistance) | 42 | 10.9% |
| Faith-Based Intervention | 22 | 5.7% |
| Skill Acquisition Intervention Programmes | 65 | 16.9% |
| **Which Agency Provides Such Intervention Programmes** | | |
| Family | 85 | 22.1% |
| School | 43 | 11.2% |
| NGO's | 21 | 5.5% |
| The Government | 213 | 55.5% |
| Other Agencies | 22 | 5.7% |
| **Have You Received any Support from your Social Network?** | | |
| Yes | 342 | 89.1% |
| No | 42 | 10.9% |
| **Nature of Support Received** | | |
| Financial/Material | 279 | 72.7% |
| Psychological/Emotional | 21 | 5.5% |
| Assistive Device | 42 | 10.9% |
| Others | 42 | 10.9% |
| **Which of the social network have you received greatest support from?** | | |
| Family | 235 | 61.2% |

| Friends | 22 | 5.7% |
|---|---|---|
| NGO's | 21 | 5.5% |
| Government | 42 | 10.9% |
| Church | 64 | 16.7% |

**Source:** Fieldwork Survey (2023).

In reference to Intervention Services available for use in the City, the table indicates that a significant number of respondents (40.0%) have access to Health Intervention Services, 16.9% can access Skill Acquisition Intervention Programmes, 11.2% have access to Family Foster Care Intervention, Social Safety(Financial Assistance) is available to 10.9% of the respondents, Home Care Services Intervention is available to 5.7% of the respondents and Faith-Based Intervention are also available to 5.7% of the respondents, however, only 5.5% of the respondents have access to rehabilitation services. Responses to the enquiry on the agencies that provide such interventions indicated that most respondents (55.5%) received these social intervention services from the Government, 22.1% received intervention from Family, Schools provided social welfare services to 11.2% of the respondents, 5.7% noted that other agencies provided these intervention programmes and 5.5% stated that social intervention services were provided by NGOs.

Furthermore, 89.1% of the  population affirmed that they have received support from their social network and only 10.9% noted they have not. Also, on the nature of support received, 72.7% stated that they have received financial support, 10.9% affirmed that they received assistive devices, 10.9% also noted that they have received other forms of support and only 5.5% had received psychological/emotional support. Lastly, the table indicates that the social network most participants (61.2%) have received the greatest support from the family, followed by the church (16.7%), with the least being NGOs (5.5%).

**Objective 2:** Investigate the extent there are any challenges associated with the use of social welfare services by people living with disability in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State.

**Table 2: Frequency Table for Factors associated with social welfare services utilization among the vulnerable groups**

| Variables | Frequency (n = 384) | Percentage (% = 100) |
|---|---|---|
| **How many minutes of walking/driving distance are the social welfare services in your area?** | | |
| Less than 5 minutes | 105 | 27.3 |
| 5-9 minutes | 63 | 16.4 |
| 10-14 minutes | 65 | 16.9 |
| 15-19 minutes | 43 | 11.2 |
| 20- 24 minutes | 65 | 16.9 |
| 25 minutes and Above | 43 | 11.2 |
| **How much does it cost you to access any of the social welfare services in this city?** | | |
| Cost Nothing | 42 | 10.9 |
| Less than 5000 | 106 | 27.6 |
| N5000-N9000 | 192 | 50.0 |
| N10000-N14000 | 22 | 5.7 |
| N15000-N19000 | 22 | 5.7 |
| **Have you used any welfare services and stopped?** | | |
| Yes | 278 | 72.4% |
| No | 106 | 27.6% |
| **If yes, why** | | |
| High Cost | 193 | 50.3 |
| Poor Attitude of Service Providers | 43 | 11.2 |
| Lack of Equipment | 42 | 10.9 |

**Source:** Fieldwork Survey (2023).

Data from the table indicate that a significant percentage of respondents (27.3%) are less than 5 minutes walking/driving distance away from the social welfare services in their area. 16.9% are 10-15 minutes or 20-24minutes away. However, only 11.2% live 19-25 and above minutes away from the social welfare service in their area. Table 4.3 also shows that it cost 50% of the respondents ₦5000-₦9000 to access social welfare services in Yenagoa City. For 27.6% it costs less than ₦5000, for 10.9% it costs nothing. However, for 5.7% it cost ₦15000-19000. When asked if they had used any welfare service and stopped, the majority of the respondents (72.4%) said yes and only 27.6% said no. When probed for the reason why they stopped using a particular welfare service, most participants (50.3%) noted that they stopped using a welfare service because of the high cost. 11.2% stopped using a service because of the Poor Attitude of Service Providers and 10.9% stopped due to lack of equipment.

**Discussions of Findings**

This section discusses the findings of the study in line with the previous studies around Factors Associated with Social Welfare Service Utilization among People Living with Disability while putting into consideration the specific objectives the study was set to achieve. Findings from the first objective showed that the major types of disabilities among PLWD in Yenagoa city are spinal cord impairment and musculoskeletal disability as most respondents averred that their disabilities were within the aforementioned category. Other disabilities like Speech impairment, Neuromuscular Disability, Vision Disability and Hearing Disability were also mentioned. This finding was in line with a study conducted by Uduu 2020 which asserted that one in eight Nigerians, or around 25 million individuals, are predicted to have some form of disability and the most prevalent types of these disabilities include vision impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, intellectual impairment, and communication impairment.

Results also indicated that the assistive devices used by most people living with disabilities in Yenagoa city are wheelchairs as more than half of the respondents averred that they made use of wheelchairs. Other assistive devices like hearing aids and crutches were also mentioned.

The study further showed that the major problems faced by PLWD were transportation and mobility problems, a significant percent of the respondents noted that they had problems with employment opportunities and very few noted that they faced stigma and discrimination daily. This finding collaborated with the social model of disability theory that avers that, due to physical, organizational, and mental hurdles that prevented them from participating in mainstream society, people with impairments are considered to be disabled. Because of these restrictions, they are unable to gain equitable access to information, education, employment, public transportation, housing, and social and recreational opportunities. Additionally, four empirical studies analyzing the problems encountered by the physically challenged noted that the following; access to health, access to educational services, employment opportunities, transportation and mobility, housing, recreation and sports, and stigmatization and discrimination (Haruna, 2017; Yohanna, 2018).

Again, results revealed accidents as the major cause of disabilities in Bayelsa state. However, some respondents noted that their disabilities were natural (inherited/complications from birth) while others averred that there were other factors responsible for their disabilities. Likewise, Aderemi and Haruna explained in their article for the WHO (2012) that the concept of physical challenges can be perceived in two different ways. First, as a biological or physical impairment that prevents the best performance of an individual. Examples include illnesses brought on by birth deprivation of oxygen, genetic flaws, an extra chromosome, an accident, environmental contamination, etc.

An inquiry into the social welfare services available to PLWD in Bayelsa State revealed that the social welfare services available to most disabled people in Yenagoa city are Health interventions. The skill acquisition programme, family foster care intervention sports services and welfare service were also noted as intervention programmes used by some PLWDs in Yenagoa. Similarly, empirical studies on the available social welfare services available for PLWD revealed the following: sports services (Daniel, 2005; Agwubike, 2006); health services and skills acquisition and empowerment programmes (Otaru, 2022; Udo, 2020; Samson, 2019). According to results from the data collected, these interventions are mostly provided by the Government as affirmed by more than half of the study population. Additionally, results also implied that most people living with disabilities in Yenagoa city receive support from their social network. It also noted that this support was mainly financial or material

and was mostly provided by the family. Correspondingly, Southwick et al. (2016) noted that social support could be structural, functional, emotional, and instrumental/material.

The findings of this study also disclosed that most people living with disabilities in Yenagoa have utilized the health intervention service in the past 12 months. Other social welfare services utilized by PLWD in Yenagoa city as revealed by the study included skill acquisition programmes, family foster care interventions and sports services. However, half of the study population have used more than one social welfare service and the other half have not. For the percentage of the respondents that have used more than one social welfare service, results showed that health intervention, sports service, provision of assistive devices and conditional cash transfer services were the most utilised. In addition, results also showed that these interventions were mainly provided by the government. Other agencies as noted by the respondents were NGOs, the Family, Church/Mosque and the Social Welfare Department. This finding corroborated the findings of Aderemi and Haruna in their article for the WHO (2012) which asserted that to fulfil physical or social roles, people with physical disabilities must have some kind of assistance from someone in their social network, from an organisation, or the government, since it is a condition that produces several barriers to the social, political, economic, and physical well-being of people with disabilities.

The study also revealed that most people living with disabilities in Bayelsa are less than five minutes walking/driving distance away from the social welfare service in their area. Also, it costs most of the respondents ₦5000-₦6000 to access social welfare services. Findings also indicated that most respondents have used a social welfare service and stopped mainly due to high cost. Other reasons like the poor attitude of service providers and lack of adequate equipment were also highlighted. Similarly, a survey among 100 disabled persons by Ashi et al, (2015) in Nigeria indicated that basic social welfare services continue to be inaccessible to disabled people. Another empirical study by Magnusson et al (2022) in Sierre Leone revealed that barriers to accessing healthcare and rehabilitation services for PLWD were financial constraints, long distances and inaccessible environments to the health and rehabilitation facilities, and negative attitudes of healthcare personnel. Rehabilitation and healthcare facilities lacked specialized services, educated personnel and materials to provide quality services for complex rehabilitation needs.

Furthermore, it was unveiled in this study that a strong significant relationship existed between Social Welfare Service Utilization and Factors associated with social welfare services utilization among vulnerable groups such as *PLWDs* who are less than five minutes walking/driving distance away from the social welfare services their area have never used any welfare service and stopped. This confirmed the findings of Magnusson s et al (2022) who averred that, long distances and inadequate transportation to rehabilitation facilities were a challenge experienced by PLWD living in both rural and urban areas, which could negatively affect their health condition before arriving at the health facility. Participants described rehabilitation centres lacked funding and transportation to conduct outreach services.

Also, results implied that most respondents who had to access a welfare service have used a service and stopped, however, people with disabilities who get access to social welfare services for free have not stopped using any and most PLWDs in Yenagoa city who stopped using a welfare service most likely did so due to high cost. Likewise, Magnusson et al (2022) noted that accessing healthcare and rehabilitation services was expensive due to PLWD having to pay for registration, consultation fees and other services like transport within the hospital and drugs even though they should be provided for free. Due to high rates of unemployment, PLWDs had difficulties raising money to pay for their healthcare. In Sierra Leone, the high costs and inability to pay for rehabilitation services were reported as challenging for PLWDs. In South Africa, Namibia, Sudan, and Malawi, financial constraints to pay for rehabilitation services were a major barrier for PLWD to access rehabilitation services

Lastly, findings from this study showed the area of residence is a major factor in the utilization of social welfare services among PLWDs in Yenagoa City. Age grade was also a major factor as those who are older have never used a service and stopped. Ethnicity was also revealed to be a factor affecting the use of social welfare services as most respondents from the Ijaw ethnic group have used a welfare service and stopped but all respondents from other ethnic groups have not stopped using a social service. Findings also indicated that educational level, monthly income, occupation and relationship status were all factors affecting the use of social welfare services in Yenagoa City. Likewise, a report by Improving PDHE (2020) noted that people with disabilities still do not have equal or equitable access to services and support. The report noted that factors affecting accessibility for people with disabilities included:

Individual characteristics (e.g. Age), Personal resources (e.g. Time, money), and Service attributes (e.g. Location)

**Summary of Findings**

Based on the findings, it was summarized that there were factors associated with social welfare services utilization among people living with disability in Yenagoa City of Bayelsa State. Findings in research question one disclosed that most people living with disabilities in Yenagoa have utilized the health intervention service in the past 12 months. Other social welfare services utilized by PLWDs in Yenagoa city as revealed by the study included skill acquisition programmes, family foster care intervention and sports services. Also findings in research question two disclosed that most people living with disabilities in Yenagoa have utilized the health intervention service in the past 12 months. Other social welfare services utilized by PLWD in Yenagoa city as revealed by the study included skill acquisition programmes, family foster care intervention and sports services. Lastly, findings showed the area of residence as a major factor in the utilization of social welfare services among PLWDs in Yenagoa City. Age grade was also a major factor as those who are older have never used a service and stopped. Ethnicity was also revealed to be a factor affecting the use of social welfare services as most respondents from the Ijaw ethnic group have used a welfare service and stopped but all respondents from other ethnic groups have not stopped using a social service. Findings also indicated that educational level, monthly income, occupation and relationship status were all factors affecting the use of social welfare services in Yenagoa City.

**Conclusion**

The study examined the issue of factors associated with social welfare utilization among people living with disability in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Based on the research findings, this study concludes that the social welfare services available for people living with disability in Yenagoa City are health interventions, skill acquisition programmes, family foster care intervention and sports services. Half of the PLWDs have used more than one of these services and half have not. PLWDs who have used the social welfare services more than once utilized the health intervention, sports service, provision of assistive devices and conditional cash transfer services which the Government provides.

More so, the major problems faced by PLWDs in the City are transportation and mobility problems, employment opportunities and stigma and discrimination. Accidents and natural causes are the major causes of disabilities in Yenagoa.

Additionally, Health intervention services and skill acquisition programmes are the major social supports available to PLWDs in the City and they are provided by the Government. PLWDs in Yenagoa City receive financial support from their families.

Furthermore, it was evident that PLWDs in Yenagoa City are less than five minutes walking/driving distance away from the social services in their area, most PLWDs who started using a social welfare service stopped due to the high cost, poor attitude of service providers and lack of necessary equipment. Hence, utilization of these services is quite low.

Lastly, a significant relationship was discovered to have existed between the factors associated with the use of social welfare services and social welfare service utilization in Yenagoa these factors included proximity to the social welfare organization and the cost of accessing these services. A statistically significant relationship was also discovered to have existed between the socio-demographic characteristics and the utilization of social welfare services. These socio-demographic characteristics included: area of residence, age, religion, ethnicity, level of education, monthly income, occupation and relationship status.

**Recommendation**

The factors associated with social welfare service utilization among people living with disability in Yenagoa City are mainly high cost, attitude of service providers and availability of necessary equipment. Proximity to the service, transportation and mobility and sociodemographic like area of residence, age, religion, ethnicity, level of education, monthly income, occupation and relationship status were also discovered to be major factors associated with social welfare service utilization among people living with disability in Yenagoa City. However, with certain measures put in

place, the impact of these factors on social welfare service utilization among people living with disability in Yenagoa City can be reduced.

Therefore, the following recommendations are made at the end of the study

1. The relevant ministries in charge of the social welfare services of PLWDs in the City should endeavour to make these services more accessible to the mentioned vulnerable group by cutting the expenses and subsidizing the cost as most PLWD in the city are unemployed. Doing this would enable all PLWD to have access to social welfare services without fear of spending too much.

2. Access to employment opportunities was highlighted as one of the major problems faced by PLWDs in the City and this also contributes to their inability to afford the necessary welfare services they need. Hence, more PLWD-friendly jobs should be created in the City to enable them to earn a decent living and not resort to begging on the streets.

3. More social welfare service offices should be set up by the Government or NGOs in different parts of the City, so PLWDs would not have to travel long distances to access them.

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# STAFF WELFARE AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY IN ABEC GROUP OF SCHOOLS AND PLEROMA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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**Abstract**
*The paper analytically undertook a comparative study of how staff welfare influences organizational productivity. This study adopted the equity theory of motivation as framework to explain the relationship between the staff welfare and organizational performance. Methodologically, the study adopted a desk research which relied on secondary data of other empirical studies. The discourse, established from the analyzed literatures that staff welfare increases staff motivation, brings about organizational productivity and its decrease on one hand, as is the case in ABEC Group of Schools and Pleroma International School. The study therefore concludes that while more empirical work needs to be done specifically on the effects of staff welfare on organizational performance, it can be inferred from previous findings as follows: if staff welfare package leads to motivation, and staff motivation leads to higher productivity, it, therefore, follows that staff welfare package impacts organizational performance. It is on this note that the study recommends amongst others that employers should let go of the entitlement attitude.*

**Keywords:** Employees, welfare, organization, performance, productivity.

**Introduction**
There is a general belief among professionals that various initiatives and programmes improve organizational performance. Nonetheless, many of these claims have not been evaluated. Indeed, even the best definitions or measures of performance are debatable. Fortunately, when these assertions are evaluated, the results are frequently positive. That is, practices that enhance employee commitment and attitudes strengthen many financial indicators of organizational productivity (Gong et al. 2022). Staff members are the major success factor of any business operations, and their contentment established the degree of their efficiency. A happy and productive person is a satisfied worker; and a satisfied worker is a motivated employee. The values of a contented employee speak volumes, and a plus to her organization, necessitating the call for leaders to devise methods of encouraging and fulfilling the desires of the organization employees in order to achieve better productivity. In the current working world, the systems being used in the management of human capital are changing, but with very little of it manifesting in Africa. Up till now, the personnel management era, when human capital is used more like machinery that should produce results at all costs is still in place in all organizational practice in Africa. The change in work culture, where work is becoming less humane, human capital is yet to be considered in different ways. Instead, the employee current business practice is that the employees must be seen as complete and holistic human beings with no due consideration of life beyond work. Also, in the last few years, employees have been struggling with a growing number of competing demands between their work and private lives. Such demands include: salary increment, infrastructure up-grade and increased years of redundancy, health and life insurance and in some cases, maternity leave for nursing fathers. These demands are caused by trends in globalisation, technological advances, workplace changes, and demographic changes. And have succinctly supported the call for the inclusion of increased staff welfare as a key component of business motivation and human resource management. Although staff welfare has received much attention from scholars and practitioners, there are some gaps in the existing literature since the consequences of staff welfare and the related organizational policies and practices have not been fully identified to match these demands.

In line with the above, this study looked at the effects of staff welfare on organizational productivity in the school sector, looking specifically at the case of ABEC Group of Schools and Pleroma International School, all in Port Harcourt**.** The educational sector is one of the most human resource intensive sectors. Here, employees stay in the school for longer hours doing routine work, which could be highly tasking on their mental health. With the current state of the working world, the

role of human resource in organisational development has begun to be taken more seriously. It has been realised that human resource are beyond just productive tools at work, but their effectiveness stretches to how well the other areas of their lives are. With improve staff welfare, an organisation can ensure that their human resource are well taken care of beyond just work but in other areas as well. It takes a holistic approach to life. This situation informed a remarkable change in work environment for staff of Pleroma International School as against their counterparts in ABEC Group of Schools.

This realization in Pleroma International School is based on the understanding that the value of human resource without people, may not achieve its objectives. Currently, their staff welfare has become a progressively persistent concern to both employers and employees of the organisation. In the contrary, most recently, there has been an increase in the contemplation of the pressures that work has on family as well as life of employees in ABEC Group of Schools. This has prompted staff withdrawal. It should be noted that work is generally considered as a part of life. Though separated by certain physical, psychological and temporal boundaries, the two concepts are operationalized within the same context of time and space.

Nonetheless, the question here is whether employee performance equals organizational productivity. That is, can organizational productivity be measured solely by staff performance? To understand this question and provide answers, it is important to note that many studies on the relationship between staff welfare and organizational productivity have confused organizational productivity with staff performance, resulting in the use of only staff performance to measure organizational productivity. As a result, it is important to note that organizational productivity includes an organization's actual output or results as measured against its intended outputs.

According to Richard et al. (2021), organizational productivity includes three types of firm outcomes: (a) financial productivity (profits, return on assets, return on investment, and so on); (b) product market productivity (sales, market share, and so on); and (c) shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, and so on) . Staff performance, on the other hand, refers to how a member of staff performs their duties, completes required tasks, and behaves in the workplace, as measured by the quality, quantity, and efficiency of work (Upadhaya et al., 2020).

The implication of these definitions is that every employee in an organization is subjected to a different set of expectations. Some have high expectations, while others have average expectations and those expectations are what link staff performance to organizational productivity (Akintunde, 2019; Anyadike, 2021). In other words, when employees invest resources in jobs that are beyond their call of duty, perceive their workload to be more than they can handle or appraise the demand of their work as exceeding their resources, they are likely to experience interference from their work with their family lives due to little time left to allocate to their family roles (Hall & Richter, 1998). The mechanism by which the provisions of staff welfare practices that has affected both employee behaviour and organizational productivity remains unclear and under-researched (Maxwell & McDougall, 2004). On this note, the present study is therefore aimed at investigating staff welfare practices as a panacea for organizational productivity with a focus on ABEC Group of Schools and Pleroma International School, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. It attempts to gain a better understanding of the experiences and expectations of employees in an attempt to identify the source of staff welfare and its effect on organizational productivity as well suggest ways in which organizations can assist employees to achieve better working environment and improve their performance and wellbeing.

## Methodology

The study utilized desk research method which involves the use of secondary data. The sourced data were analyzed with thematic analysis. This means, collected data were presented in themes for proper analysis.

## Conceptualize Review of Literature
## Staff Welfare

To understand staff welfare under this context is to look at how the employer makes life worthwhile for employees by providing such generous fringe benefits. Employee welfare includes anything done for the comfort and improvement of employees that is not covered by their wages (Makanjuola et al., 2013). The firmness for better employees' performances is what prompted their hiring in the first place. As a result, it is in any organization's best interest to shape the appropriate

methods to increase employees' performances by the thoughtfulness of incentives owing to employees in the structure of welfare packages.

## Organizational Productivity

Some scholars' and researchers, such as Chandler (1962) and Thompson (1967), appear to have fostered a concept of organizational performance. According to these researchers, the ultimate criterion of organizational performance is growth and long-term survival. In other words, continuous improvement of organizational performance is a critical goal. The "effectiveness" or realization of the objective component of organizational performance was shared by all of these definitions. Furthermore, some scholars contest that the concept of performance addressed both organizational means and ends (Jasimaah, 2013). Performance is defined as the extent to which a company or firm, as a social system with limited resources, is able to achieve its objectives without depleting its resources and means or putting undue strain on her employees (Ofobruku, & Iheabunike, 2013; Ofobruku, & Yusuf, 2016). In comparison to other researchers during the same time period, Jenatabadi (2014) treats the concept of organizational performance with the most care and explicitness. According to Lupton, an effective organization has a high productivity rate as well as high levels of satisfaction and motivation among its members, while turnover, costs, and labour unrest are low or absent.

## Labour Productivity

To grasp the concept of labour productivity, it is necessary to first grasp the concept of productivity. According to studies (Aderinto, 1981; Osundahunsi, 1988; Ibraheem, 1989; and Ejiogu, 2000), productivity is the end result of a complex social production process. According to Francis (2012), productivity should be viewed as a measure of an organization's overall production efficiency, effectiveness, and performance. He believes that productivity entails high output quality, adherence to standards, and customer satisfaction. Also, productivity refers to the absence of disruption, trouble, and other signs of difficulty in organization, as well as quantitative measurements such as units produced or sales volume.

The term labour productivity is generally used to refer to the amount of goods and services produced per worker in a given year, month, day, or hour (Chinwoh, 1989; Eze, 2013). The distinction between productivity and labour productivity is that the former emphasizes the relationship between input and output, whereas the latter emphasizes the result of input, implying that labour productivity explains the effort of staff in making output possible. The practice of using labour, particularly direct labour inputs and costs, can be ascertained and quantified more easily than those of other factors, partly due to a legacy of classical economics thought that not only considers direct labour to be the sole source of value, but also considers all forms of indirect labour to be "unproductive labour." Based on the foregoing, we can conclude that improving labour is necessary before increasing productivity. There are several methods for accomplishing this. These include improving worker skills, making resources available, creating a conducive environment, and providing other general welfare packages (Francis, 2012; Eze, 2013).

## Theoretical Framework

The equity theory of motivation was used in this discourse to explain the relationship between the staff welfare package and organizational performance. The motivational theories of organizational behaviour began in the 1920s with Elton Mayo's experiment at the Hawthorne plant. According to the equity theory, employees will weigh their input into a job against the output they receive from it; and the more the rewards, the more satisfied they will be. This is consistent with Naveed et al. (2011) definition of job satisfaction as the difference between employee input and job output. According to this theory, employees who believe they get more out of their jobs than what they put into them will be satisfied. Certain aspects of the job shape how an employee perceives it as well. Clarified tasks result in higher job satisfaction because a clear role breeds a work force that is happy, committed, and shows a high level of involvement in the work that is done. The authors identified five major job characteristics that impact an employee's psychological state and influence motivation, job satisfaction, and absenteeism, namely, the variety of skills involved in a task, the identity and significance of the task, autonomy, and feedback. Employees compare their input-output ratio to that of other employees, and if they believe it is fair, they will be satisfied (Robbins, 2007). Employees

become dissatisfied and less motivated if they perceive an inequity in their input-outcome ratio in comparison to other employees.

So, in a bid to remedy the challenges confronting management, regarding how to motivate workers to perform assigned tasks in order to meet or exceed established standards, management must understand that the workforce weighs the rewards for jobs and expects equity. Armstrong (2001) asserts that human behaviour is motivated, goal-directed, and difficult to motivate; and that the success of any motivated act is dependent on the extent to which the motivator meets the needs of the individual employees for whom it is intended.

People are motivated when they anticipate that a cause of action will result in the achievement of a goal and a valued reward that meets their needs (Armstrong, 2001); motivated people are those who have clearly defined goals and who engage in actions that they anticipate will result in the achievement of those goals. It has also been argued that it has become critical for organizations to provide a context in which high levels of motivation can be achieved by providing incentives and rewards for satisfying work as well as opportunities for learning and growth (Akintunde, 2005).

**Staff Welfare and Organisational Productivity**

From the foregoing sections, the paper has reviewed concepts as they relate with staff welfare packages and organizational productivity. Therefore, the following section will consider critical sections below:

**Staff Welfare and Motivation- The Nexus:** According to Okumbe (2020), an organization that genuinely cared about its employees' well-being was concerned with creating a positive work environment in which individuals recognized that they were valued, which in turn boosted their performance. Their findings show that one of the welfare services that improved employee performance was medical insurance coverage.

Relatedly, Mitchell (2021) conducted a study on medical services and discovered that reduced absenteeism is highly related to good health. According to Mitchell's research, due to the high cost of hospitalization, surgical, and maternity care, it has been determined that employees must be protected against these costs by implementing a Medical Insurance plan. This is a significant benefit that greatly aids in the retention of employees in a company. General medical care, optical care, drug abuse, alcoholism, and mental illness are all covered under Medical Coverage. Employers who provide health insurance are advantageous for a variety of reasons. As a result, employees who have medical insurance are more likely to be satisfied at work.

Furthermore, Osterman (2022) focused on the production sector, where he examined the relationship between staff productivity and staff welfare using Coca-Cola as a case in point, where secondary data were collected and analysed using the SPSS package to run the multiple regression, and the result showed a positive relationship between the variables under study, and it was concluded based on the finding that staff productivity is a function of staff welfare.

Finally, Abu (2021) carried a research on the role of staff overall output per day and the remuneration system, using Berger Construction Company Abuja as a case study. The chi-square statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses, which revealed a strong relationship between the variable, stating that employee output increases as their daily pay increases.

**Staff Motivation and Performance:** Stephen & Muathe (2014) met to discuss a critical review of literature on employee welfare programmes in Kenya. According to the study, employee welfare is very expensive and may not have a significant impact on employee and organizational productivity. It has a greater potential for capturing broader influences related to an individual's characteristics and behaviours, as well as the social, physical, and economic environment.

Similarly, Kuria (2012) investigated the effects of employee welfare programmes on job satisfaction in Kenya's flower industry. The study agreed with the equity theory of motivation established in this study because they established how equitable rewards, involving employees in decision making, career development opportunities, health and safety, and good HR policies and practices contributed to job satisfaction. In this regard, when employees are satisfied with the equity of their benefits packages, they are motivated to work harder in their assigned roles.

**The Effect of Staff Welfare on Organizational Productivity in ABEC Group of Schools and Pleroma International Schools**

The reviews here applies to staff welfare as applied generally to the performance of an organization, even those that are not in the education sector. The term performance, in this context, implies the accumulated end result of all the organization's work process and activities. Employee performance is a process for establishing a shared workforce understanding about what is to be achieved at an organization level. It is about aligning the organisational objectives with the employees' agreed measures, skills, competency requirements, development plans and the delivery of results.

It was found in a study by Casper & Harris, (2008) that, competing demands between work and home have assumed increased relevance for employees in recent years. As a result of the demographic and workplace changes such as rising numbers of women in the labour force, an ageing population, longer working hours and more sophisticated communications technology enabling near constant contact with the workplace. In response to these changes and the conflict they generated among the multiple roles that individuals occupy, organizations are increasingly pressured to implement work practices intended to facilitate employees' efforts to fulfil both their employment related and their personal responsibilities. All of these factors, in turn, affect job performance, direct and indirect absenteeism costs, costs associated with the loss and replacement of valued employees, customer satisfaction, and organisational productivity. Although the formal evaluation of staff welfare practices is often difficult because of the problem of calculating the costs and benefits of different strategies, some organizations have attempted to quantify the outcomes of specific policies (Beauregard, 2006).

However, to the management of Pleroma International Schools, productivity is critical for their long-term competitiveness and profitability. They have shown that their experience of staff welfare is positively related to employees' performance and organizational productivity as well. More specifically, staff welfare has been shown to have positive outcomes, such as low turnover intention, prompt payment of salary, improvement of performance, and job satisfaction. Staff welfare has a positive effect on employee's affective commitment to their organizations' productivity as against the experience portrayed in ABEC Group of Schools. That is, the inexperience of genuine attention to staff welfare has generated feelings of disloyalty and decreases affective commitment ABEC Group of Schools. It is very obvious that lack of effective commitment is a denial of emotional attachment by the organization or the employer has led to employees wanting to vacate the job instead of remaining with the organization. There is no doubt that, experience of psychological well-being and harmony in life helps employees concentrate on their work, resulting in better performance. Studies have found that work–life conflict is associated with stress, depression, and a variety of stress-related poor health and mental health effects, and that such ill health increases work absenteeism, turnover, and low morale (Emslie et al., 2004). In their narrative review Beauregard & Henry (2009) observe a corresponding evidence for a positive effect of organizational welfare practices on recruitment, retention, attendance (including turnover intention), and productivity.

One explanation very outstanding in the study is comparison: that employees reciprocate with increased loyalty, effort and productivity in exchange for the organization's practical assistance with managing work-life demands, and in appreciation for the organization's indication of care and concern as demonstrated by welfare policies and practices. There is a wealth of information that outlines the advantages of offering flexible and special leave arrangements to employees in terms of improving staff recruitment, reducing turn-over, absenteeism and the costs associated with all this as well as increasing employee satisfaction and performance.

**Scholars' Observation and Position on Staff Welfare and Organizational Productivity**

Some scholars and researchers have confused employees' performance with organizational productivity. This has led to dearth in empirical work on the effect of staff welfare on organizational performance, as all available literature concentrated on staff welfare and staff performance or productivity. Therefore, the few studies that specifically dealt with organizational performance are reviewed as follows. The findings of Irefin & Mechanic's (2021) empirical research revealed, among other things, that when employees' well-being is taken care of, they are motivated, resulting in their commitment and high productivity, which has a positive impact on organizational performance. Similarly, Mensah et al. (2022) discovered that showing concern for employees' well-being increases employee commitment and, as a result, their performance and, ultimately, the organization's growth.

From the understanding in the relationship between staff welfare and motivation as well as that of staff motivation and productivity, the effect of staff welfare on organizational performance can be inferred. The findings on staff welfare and motivation shows that when the staff needs are met through staff welfare packages, it leads to job satisfaction, and staff commitment (motivation), which consequently leads to higher productivity. When productivity increases, profit increases, market share increases and dividends for share also increases. By the reason of all these, organizational performance will increase.

**The Challenges of Staff Welfare**

Organizational performance in relation to employee welfare packages is critical not only to the workforce and management, but also to society. In addition, there is a clear positive relationship between staff welfare benefits and organizational productivity. Despite this, management in some industrial organizations take advantage of workers' ignorance about welfare packages in the workplace and refuse to implement such welfare programmes. It's no surprise that Ejiofor (2018) identifies some issues impeding the implementation of a workers' welfare package, some of which are briefly discussed below.

**Entitlement Attitude**: One of the notions that colours management's attitude toward employee welfare programmes is that workers should view fringe benefits as a kind gesture from employers that they should reciprocate; for example, in the various letters of appointment and promotion emanating from our tertiary institutions, one will see sentences like "the Governing council has graciously"... Statements like this and others are usually part of an employer's concerted effort to give employees the impression that they owe the employer money and that hard work is one way to pay it back. As a result, employees must be aware of and comprehend the benefits to which they are entitled in order to bargain for them with their labour. Also, for employers to understand the role of employees in organizational productivity, understanding the effects of motivation on productivity is essential (Ejiofor, 2018).

**Misconstrued Value**: Any reward must be appealing to prospective recipients in order to motivate employees; and the intrinsic value of the reward is unimportant. This implies that employers should examine their welfare package and compare it to the age and status of their employees, and even involve the employees in the planning of their welfare packages. This will assist the organization in developing a welfare policy that will be beneficial to the employees while also achieving the goals of improved organizational productivity (Ejiofor, 2018).

**Intra-organization Inequality**: They are distributed inequitably between the senior and junior staff, the superior and the subordinates. This fails the test of the equity theory of motivation, which expects welfare packages to be given to employees based on their level of input, motivating them to strive for more input. Nonetheless, seniority and occupational level do not imply higher input, implying that if the welfare package is delivered along the line of seniority, the principle of equity must have been defeated, and employees will continue to be dissatisfied with their jobs (Ejiofor, 2018).

**Bad Management of Resources**: Benefits that are not properly administered can cause frustration, and such mismanagement may result from the dispensing officer's questionable integrity. Furthermore, in order to achieve the equity and fairness that this study believes consolidates motivation through welfare packages, such packages should be delivered by a well-trusted agent. Even better, let the employees choose who will be the agent in charge of distributing their benefits (Ejiofor, 2018).

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

The effect of staff welfare on organizational productivity as discussed in this study is immense and cannot be overlooked. The issue of low productivity and minimal organizational productivity has been and is still inimical to the organizational growth in particular and societal development at large as demonstrated in our example of ABEC Group of Schools and Pleroma International School. Therefore, any effort towards boosting staff performance and organizational productivity is at the frontline of organizational objectives. This has led many research endeavours into the relationship between staff welfare and organizational performance. Howbeit, most of those researches have ended up misinterpreting staff productivity/performance as organizational productivity/ performance.

This paper, in its discussion approach has used the equity theory of motivation to examine staff welfare package and motivation, staff motivation and productivity, and the effect of staff

welfare package on organizational performance. Reviewing some empirical literatures to consolidate the study's objective, the study finds that many research reports agree that a significant relationship exist between staff welfare package and motivation, as well as between staff motivation and productivity. Yet, very few related staff welfare policies are specific to organizations.

Nevertheless, this study from its findings, took an inferential stand, drawing from the tenets of equity theory of motivation, and the established relationship between staff welfare and motivation as well as motivation and organizational productivity, to conclude that there is a nexus between staff welfare and performance and organizational productivity. Therefore, the following recommendations are proffered:

- Employers should let go of the entitlement attitude. This can come when they understand the place of the staff in the production process and therefore their importance in achieving organizational objectives.

- Grant the staff a welfare package of value. This will go a long way in motivating the staff to get committed, because it is found that it is not just about welfare package, but a package that means something to the prospective recipient.

- The employers should follow the tenets of equity and fairness when it comes to staff welfare. If staff welfare is transparently structured in such a way that your level of output determines how bumper your package will be, it will go a long way in motivating the staff to put more effort in their work.

- It is also necessary for the staff to know that they deserve their welfare. When the staff are aware of what is due to them as welfare package, they can press for it and peacefully get it without necessarily begging for it. Above all, organizations should take the welfare of employees seriously so as to motivate their staff.

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# INTEGRATING INDIGENOUS PEACE PROCESS INTO THE MANGEMENT OF PROTRACTED CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

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**Abstract**
*Nigeria territorial ecology has been grappling with divers conflicts, ranging from ethno-religious, insurgency, farmers-herdsmen, banditry, kidnapping and others. These had jeopardized peace, security and derided gallantry efforts of Nigeria's security architecture in ensuring sustainable peace on the shore of Africa. The corporate existence Nigeria's existence has been threatened while her insecurity challenges are compounded by the highly impoverished youths, poverty, state failure to improve infrastructure to ensure equity, social justice and peace building activities. Nigeria situation seems to have differed solutions in spite of gallant and efficient roles Nigerian security apparatus had played to ensure security of lives and property in Africa countries. The ineffectiveness of military hard wares and measures necessitate interrogation of soft wares through indigenous approaches to the conflict management, resolution and peace building processes to prevent relapse and protraction of conflict. The paper adopts conflict theory as its theoretical framework. Hence, the paper intends to front for the adoption of traditional approaches to ensure security and to manage security in Nigeria and Africa shore. This paper adopts interview methods in the study area to court for inclusion of traditional methods in the management of conflict and transformation of diverse conflicts in Nigeria to promote peace and sustain our collective future progress. The paper finds out that effective and efficient integration of indigenous methods into formal security architecture will ensure sustainable peace and development in Nigeria and African states at large.*

**Keywords**:  Conflict, Indigenous Approach, Peace building, Military and Development

**Introduction**
The narratives of "new wars" which is internal and cultural sensitive–based challenges brought the concern of not only their emergence but how to transform, minimize the escalation or building peace aftermath of their escalation. Conflict, like death is inevitable and could lead to development or underdevelopment in every social engagement, depending on its management. Conflict sensitivity therefore becomes imperative for the interveners to remove encumbrance associated with violent for political, religion, culture economic milieu (Albert, 2001; 2006; Boege, 2006 and Kaldor, 2007). These 'new wars' need intervention mechanisms that are culturally-based and relate to the environment of occurrence.  The Global Peace Index (2018) measured degree of peace using three parameters such as the level of safety and security in society, the extent of domestic and international conflict, and the degree of militarization in the countries of the world. From the above indices, Nigeria is experiencing negative peace of the graveyard and further explosion into   conflict is imminent. This report is in conformity with the recent happening and incessant killings in Benue, Adamawa, Nassarawa, and some other states in Nigeria. The high rate of insecurity enshrouded in intra and inter-states conflicts

disproportionately reduced Nigeria to home of wars, instability and one of the most dangerous countries in the world to live (Ajayi, 2005: 143; Alabi, 2006:41; Aremu, 2010: 549-560; Global Peace Index, 2018).

The contemporary society has been grappling with violent pursuit of incompatible goals, using ethno-religious, communal, resources and political spaces. The indigenous mechanisms for conflict management aims at denouncing the propensity for violence. Venturi (2014) states that the time has come for Africa to seek new ways of preventing conflicts, so as to enhance our growth and development, as well as remove the stigma placed on us, indicating that Africa is a continent of perennial conflicts and wars. The new conflict prevention process, conflict-management and resolution systems and techniques being elicited, are to make Africa a continent of peace in the new millennium (Venturi, 2014). The above view denounced Eurocentric mechanism inherited from colonial masters and advocates for new ways of conflict management in Africa.

The incessant nature of conflict and continuous inadequate capacity couple with gross level of conspiracy and sabotage in the security architecture and various government responses to the management of conflict in Nigeria prompted shift in paradigm to incorporate indigenous mechanisms which made people in the past to have zero zeal for violence. The reinventing the indigenous mechanisms for building sustainable peace process, peaceful co-existence, cohesion and social harmony in the past becomes necessary. This paper unravels the secret for zero level propensities for violence and provide valuable role indigenous conflict resolution mechanism plays among the Yoruba people. Again, the concern for integration of indigenous approaches to conflict management and contribution to the limited literature on traditional conflict resolution mechanism in Nigeria.

**Methodology**

This paper adopts qualitative method because it permits details explanation of a topic of interest to the researcher. Neuman (1994) and Sheffield (2009) concluded that qualitative content analysis espouses meaning with specific descriptions of events with the aim of bringing to the fore the potential gaps and opportunities in concrete terms. The qualitative approach is holistic and flexible competent to be applied to various approaches that attempt to describe how meanings arrived at in societies. The primary instrument to garner responses from the respondents was unstructured interview and secondary sources like journal, articles, gazettes, white paper reports textbooks and online materials were used in this research work.

**Literature Review**

Many scholars have delved into the issue of conflict management in Nigeria, prominent among but not limited to these area (Ake, 1985; 2001; Rahim, 2002; Best, 2006:95; Akinwale, 2008; Onwuzuruigbo, 2010; Nlerum, 2013; Oji, 2015). Clarifying the term conflict management, Rahim (2002) opined that conflict management is the process of limiting the negative aspects of conflict while increasing the positive aspects of conflict. The aim of conflict management is to enhance learning and group outcomes, including effectiveness or performance in organizational setting. Properly managed conflict can improve group outcomes.

In terms of the management of conflict, Nlerum (2013) pointed out that establishment of commission of Enquiry as a major means of managing conflicts especially chieftaincy, communal, land border disputes and religious conflict in Nigeria. In the same vein, Onwuzuruigbo (2010) and Ake (1985; 2001) agreed that government of a state is a vital organ of conflict regulation and mediation and the only organ that is capable of mustering enough legitimacy, resources and facilities to effectively manage conflicts. Just how the state relates with the governed as well as how these resources are articulated and mobilized in contending with conflicts define the outcome of the management strategies. Essentially, the government relied on brutal force and violence in managing conflict (Ake 1985; 2001). In the study of Oji (2015), identified two approaches in the management of conflict in Nigeria; they are preventive approach and long term approach. To Oji (2015), preventive approach entails tackling of the conflict from its causes, controls of arms, promotion of mutual respect for people, zoning of political positions and boundary adjustment. For instance, the creation of Osun state in 1991 was also a strategy to manage the supremacy tussle between Alaafin of Oyo and Ooni of Ife. However, this also has not adequately addressed the chieftaincy conflict between the two royal fathers. The second approach is called long term approach; the concerted efforts to develop early warning system in the communities

and the adoption of peace education programme suitable to tackle the peculiar nature of the conflict (Oji, 2015).

Similarly, Akinwale (2010) opined that mediation is a critical step in conflict management, and the neutrality of a mediator may be difficult due to the likely influence of a power differential among parties to a conflict. This difficulty can be averted as adoption of some traditional logics of spirituality can contribute towards the success of the process. Spirituality should be a top priority in conflict management strategies with the belief in the sense of culpability to align human actions with God's will and commands, this spirituality is aligned with African ontological mythology that forms a central concern for the majority of the population in Africa (Akinwale, 2010). In most African societies, the traditional and the modern systems play complementary roles in ensuring peace and social cohesion which can be achieved by integrating traditional measures and traditional institutions into modern constitution to engineer and to promote peace and development in Nigeria and to a large extent, conflict management is expected to connect with the predominant traditions of a society.

In this regard, Ojo & Abolade (2014) identified controlling the context, controlling the issues in conflict, controlling the relationship, altering the individual involved and develop a common set goal in conflict management in Nigeria, hardly could any of the conflicting parties be willing to understand the other party and dialogue to achieve common goals but rather they struggle to achieve individual goal and this by effect makes protracted and intractable conflict in Nigeria.

Conflict resolution is an old practice that has sustained various societies According to Miller (2003:8) conflict resolution is the use of various approaches targeted at terminating conflict through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflict. In essence, it is expected that the deep rooted causes of conflict are addressed to ensure that attitude is neither hostile nor violent while the structure of the conflict has been changed. In this regards, Furman (2010) opined that compassionate listening is one of the various approaches used in conflict resolution. This compassionate listening can be likening to what is known as Track II or citizen diplomacy. The essence of this compassionate listening is to connect and it is more effective than Track I or government-level diplomacy which is essentially meant to arrive at formal cease-fires and peace treaties. Track I is insufficient in establishing the infrastructure necessary for peace, that is containment of peace by coercive measures has not been effective in resolving conflict but compassionate listening will help to resolve the conflict in a manner that the disputants' attitude will not be hostile or injurious again.

In conflict resolution, Hoffman (2003) observes that compassionate listening as an approach to conflict intervention is committed to cultivating reconciliation as a necessary step in paving the way for resolutions to conflicts. Using listening as a main tool, the goal of compassionate listening is "to awaken the hearts of the various conflict participants. If the conflict participants can come to see one another as human and to feel one another's sorrows, the advocates of compassionate listening believe, they will be able to resolve their conflicts. Without such deep, mutual empathy between the parties in conflict, conflict resolution efforts often result only in temporary truces, soon broken" (Hoffman, 2003:15). From the view point of this approach, the work of peace-making is "not to take sides but to seek truth"; its conviction is that "there will never be peace unless both sides are listened to".

Hoffman (2003:281) states that the assumption that underlying his position which has to do with fact that people are changeable and that listening to their concerns can facilitate their transformation (Hoffman, 2003:264), which, in turn, can lead to openness to their opponents' humanity. He argues that compassionate listening seeks to establish relationship through deep listening with the heart, by which she means listening empathically. By contrast, she adds, politicians work with positions, a mental approach. Both approaches are necessary for peace and a functioning society

Burton (1990) opines that genuine conflict resolution can be attained by addressing the causes of conflict which are embedded in the institutional structure of society. Achieving complete resolution of a conflict can require making significant socioeconomic or political changes that restructure society in a more just or inclusive way. Changing societal structures, such as the distribution of wealth in society, is a difficult thing to do and can take decades to accomplish. Thus, fully resolving conflict can be a long, laborious process as a result there are other conceptions of ways to deal with, but not necessarily "resolve," conflicts.

According to Spangler (2003) the true conflict resolution often requires a more analytical, problem-solving approach than dispute settlement; the main difference is that resolution requires identifying the causal factors behind the conflict, and finding ways to deal with them. On the other

hand, settlement is simply aimed at ending a dispute as quickly and amicably as possible. This means that it is possible to settle a dispute that exists within the context of a larger conflict, without resolving the overall conflict. This occurs when a dispute is settled, but the underlying causes of the conflict are not addressed, an example is the various chieftaincy conflicts in court of justices in Nigeria where judgments are delivered without addressing the causal factors that had led to the conflict. As such the conflict persists because the broader issue has not been resolved. The essence of conflict resolution is to achieve genuine resolution of the conflict to the extent that there will be attitudinal change and hostility and adversarial inclinations are no longer there.

As Boulding (1962) posits, conflict situation sometimes reaches a point when parties can neither conquer nor avoid each other. At this point, certain procedural resolution of conflict is needed, in the procedural way of dealing with conflict; the parties have to stay together and cooperate with each other directly or indirectly to find a solution. Some of the major approaches in the procedural methods are:

1. Negotiation and bargaining or involving the parties in a process of discussion, which seeks to bring them into voluntary agreement.
2. Adjudication or using the power of the state and its legal system to provide an authoritative conclusion.
3. Mediation or using a third party to help the conflicting parties come to a mutually satisfactory agreement.
4. Arbitration or using a third party to decide, through prior mutual consent, the issues in dispute (Schellenberg, 1996:13).
5. "Hybrid procedures in which both mediation and arbitration components are utilized fully such as mediation-arbitration and arbitration-mediation (Ross and Colon, 2000:3). The conflict can be terminated or concluded in three ways through the procedural methods of dealing conflict. They are Reconciliation, Compromise and Award (Boulding, 1962:310).

**Theoretical Framework**

This present study anchors on Black's Social Control Theory. The theory proposes the black's theory proposes the conditions that predict the use of one of five forms of social control (self-help, avoidance, negotiation, settlement, and toleration) in the relationship between individuals, groups, and organisations, while Thomas-Kilmann's model explains strategic intentions that could be organised around the matrix of two factors (assertiveness and cooperativeness), which jointly produce five conflict management styles (avoidance, accommodation, competition, compromise and collaboration) (Volkema & Bergmann 1995; Borg 1992; Black 1990; Thomas 1992). The established complexity of violent conflicts in Nigeria requires a combination of approaches as proposed in this study. The combination is also needed for theoretical and methodological support in the proposed integration of traditional and modern conflict management strategies. The above approaches have been maximally utilized in American academic research, training seminars and development studies; however, few studies have linked the intentions measured by the model with actual behaviours (Volkema & Bergmann 1995; Borg 1992). This study includes an attempt to contribute towards further development of the theories through an examination of their applicability to the management of Nigeria's protracted violent conflicts. Black's theory and Thomas-Kilmann's model are contemporary versions of the two-dimensional modes of conflict management introduced by Blake and Mouton in 1964 (Volkema & Bergmann 1995).

In regards to Thomas-Kilmann's model, assertiveness flows from concerns for self-interest, while cooperativeness is driven by concerns for the other party or the relationship (Thomas 1992). This assertion set platform for a discourse on conflict management strategies in Nigeria where self-interest remains paramount in the country's political economy. In line with Black (1990:43), conflict management is defined as 'the handling of grievances'. This definition is adopted for this study due to its simplicity and relative applicability. The conditions under which each of Black's conflict management styles is likely to occur differ (Borg 1992). In this regard, existing strategies for the management of Nigeria's violent conflicts can be located within the classifications in Black's theory and Thomas-Kilmann's model. Again, incapacity of Nigerian's government for managing conflicts according to USAID (2005) calls for utility of other available strategy for conflict management. When conflicts erupt, the inability of the Nigerian mobile police to manage them usually prompts the Nigerian

government to deploy the Nigerian military to the scene of violence where the military are usually mandated to 'shoot on sight.' This situation sometimes leads to serious human rights violations and escalation of violence (Ibeanu 2006). The state's imposition of curfew and use of propaganda to douse public tension are part of the Nigerian government's regular strategies for conflict management in Nigeria. In view of the perceived inability of the Nigerian security forces to safeguard human lives in Nigeria, a considerable number of people in the country have however subscribed to unofficial strategies (vigilante, militias, charms, prayers, communal solidarity, etc.) in their attempts to manage Nigeria's violent conflicts.

The emerging strategies in the management of Nigeria's violent conflicts have a strong foundation in African traditional cultures. Contrary to general belief in western paradigms, every African community has capacities for promoting mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence (Lauer 2007). Uncritical adoption of Western approaches to conflict management has adversely affected the stability and development of many African societies including Nigeria. This study focuses on the possibility of integrating indigenous approaches to conflict management strategies for peace-building and development in Nigeria.

**Discussion**

High-valued cultural integration through socio-cultural groups and associations was instituted purposely to ensure cordial, peaceful co-existence and to develop social cohesion and integration. In the past socio-cultural groups provide a charitable instrument of understanding and rallying various diversities so much that interaction was deep and helpful enhance peaceful relationship unlike modern age that encourages individualistic and segregate society. The spirit of communalism and comradeship banished strife, malice, hatred and violence disposition culminated in ethnic cleansing, genocide attempt, unabated killings and other insecurity issues that characterized this age as we have in Nigeria today.

One key informant stated that socio-cultural associations or societies like *Egbe Bolomooku* (If a child did not die young Social Club), Soredegbe Social Club, Friendship Social Club, Iyaniwura (Mother is a gold Social Club etc) had enshrined spirit of oneness, love and disciplined so much that it became difficult to think of evil let alone execute it in the society. These societies aroused the spirit of nationalism, patriotism and inculcate respect for sanctity of life. Though the societies in the past experienced skirmishes but not aggravated as experienced in the present Nigeria where carnage is carried out unchecked by the security agents. The socio-cultural groups were mechanism for building and sustaining peace in the past which was gear towards conflict management and resolution and transformation of society habitable for all by all. Modernization under divers' guise has made us jettisoned this indigenous mechanism to building peace.

In addition, the rituals and gods played unfettered role in the management and resolution of conflict in the past and most conflict have been resolved through this. Integrating these traditional measures in corroborating with formal security architecture in the management and resolution of conflict adds consequential impact. For instance, the collaborative efforts of local vigilante in Operation Lafia Dole in combating Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast Nigeria could not be underestimated. Integrating indigenous approaches to management and resolution of conflict lead to win-win outcome unlike win-lose outcome of western approaches. Prominent among these mechanisms for conflict management and resolution is earth (ile) aside oath taking using earth process, conflict is resolved using earth. For instance, in Irawo-Ile and Irawo-Owode communal conflict, the king, Ajorinwin of Irawo called the warrior and parties to the conflict to his palace and asked them to bury hatchet and embrace peace. According key informant, she said that whenever there is crises or conflict between two parties, the elders, mediator or negotiator will ask this way;

*Lori ile- Irawo, Lori Osa- Oko Irawo*
*Iori Iganna M'ojo Irawo, jeki oro yin ko yanju.*

The interpretation is paraphrased as upon "the earth of Irawo (Irawo is a town in Oyo State), upon the goddess of Irawo and upon the gods of the land", let this matter be solved. Any knotty issues that could lead to conflict would be resolved. So the communal clash and conflict was not managed properly through the use of police and mobile police, court case and Judiciary Commission of inquiry with the award of compensation could not transform the conflict. The conflict was resolved and transformed using the above process indigenous approach. In this process, the role of elders both living

and dead could not be exonerated unlike in the modern conflict in Nigeria that leaders of all calibres take side in conflict.

Elders and their charismatic role in mitigate or transforming existing conflict in the pre-colonial society especially among the Yoruba were sound and unique, Olaoba (2008) attesting to the prodigious presence of this category of people in every society. In his word, Olaoba says an elder is a person that has reached the age of manhood and adulthood, eldership, however, is not particular to the Yoruba race alone. It cuts across various ethnic groups in Nigeria and it is globally accepted. These elders living and dead across diverse cultures in African societies resonate aural of social cohesion and order to the society by regulating the conduct of members of the society encapsulated in their wisdom and experiences to engender cultural development and management of disputes.

The insecurity emanating from various ethno-religious, economic, political, chieftaincy, communal conflicts depict the absence or non-recognition of elders in the modern states of Africa especially Nigeria hence, the proverb aptly captures the trends is "an elder should not be in the market place and allow a child's head to hang". As Ademowo (2015) affirmed that reliability of *agba* (elders) as arbitrators and agents of conflict resolution were unparalleled in view of certain qualities they possessed. In this regards, Bankole (2008) identified the following worthy attributes of *Agba* (elders), he or she must be fearless, knowledgeable, wise, tolerant, upright in all ways, and not must be selfish. These earn them respect as individuals in their families, communities, nations, regions and the world.

Another informant affirmed that most crises especially, communal conflict in Irawo-ile and Irawo-Owode communities was resolved through the efforts of council of elders led by the Asiwaju of Irawoland. Their continuous efforts in engaging the youths, dialogue and prompt response to early warning signals and proper management of information from local intelligence on factors that can triggers conflict in the two communities are promptly addressed. The council of elders in conjunction with the king found out that the critical point in the Irawo conflict is the chieftaincy matter. The concession to enthrone *Baale (*Chief) was granted to Irawo-Owode subject to acceptance and ratification of Ajorinwin who is the paramount ruler of Irawoland after series of dialogue and consultation as revealed by another key informant.

The concept of *Iyamapo*, Iyamapo is the process involve in refining and extracting fine shear butter through boiling and heating from raw one locally and manually. This process involves pouring grinded shear butter which is already in a big pot. This big pot full of shear butter will be heated for some hours before it brings its finest product out called shear butter. This is called *Iyamapo* in Oke-Ogun area, everyone that is involved in the process is expected not to keep grudges or bitterness against anyone. Whoever or whenever such is happening, the shear butter will not bring its full whiteness that shows the end product is good. During this time of processing shear butter, all the women settle scores and avoid conflict with anyone. One key informant confirmed that whenever, this process is on, anyone involved must not keep grudges, hatred, bitterness and imagined evils against its fellow being if the product will yield and comes out in whitish nature. The whitish nature is the result but if it is black it means bad product. This process can be applied to any aspect of human life and respect for sanctity of life will minimize conflict or better still resolved conflict in our society so that lives will be productive and yield fruitfulness.

**Conclusion**

Despite the theoretical controversy, whether conflict is functional or dysfunctional, scholars have agreed that in all human societies life does not move along in peace and harmony at all times (Mengesha, Yesuf & Gebre, 2015). The review of literature unravelled various techniques employed to manage and resolve conflict in Nigeria; it was sufficiently clear that these modern techniques are not competent enough to achieve desired outcome(s). Consequently, the call of integrating indigenous approaches will demonstrably agree with consensus that every society has its own mechanism of handling dispute. In line with this, in this thesis, an attempt is made to present some aspects of peaceful modes of conflict resolution. This paper admits that these modes are not so exclusive in their nature. Instead, simultaneously employment of these along efforts of security agents in Nigeria will bring desired outcomes of win- win situation agreeing with Schellenberg (1996) and Gulliver (1979) views of the possibility of employing simultaneously various modes of handling dispute.

It is also worth to note, Nigerians claimed to be civilized and highly religious condescending to the use of traditional means to manage and resolve conflict seems absurd. However, the respect

demonstrated for this gods and ritual sanctions associated these mechanisms in the past was wholesome and held in high esteemed challenging purported religiosity claimed by many Nigerians today. Nevertheless, in the pre-colonial era, they were able to maintain social order. Their ability mainly stems from public opinion, the moral ideas held by the community and the power of compulsion vested in elders facilitated sustainable peace. They also resort to ritual sanctions under the condition when normal means of healing the ruptured relations or punishments fail to bear fruit. In this regard, people in the pre-colonial time value system, which is embedded in their belief system, was strong for supreme deity unlike modern time.

**Recommendations**

This paper recommends that the responsible bodies or the government should preserve and employed indigenous approaches to conflict management and resolution mechanisms in Nigeria. Research grants and enabling support be given to researchers for robust research in indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms. Again, habitable, desirable and admirable world for all is attainable through advocacy for indigenous mechanism for conflict management.

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# TEAMWORK AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF IN NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY (NDU) BAYELSA STATE.

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**Abstract**

*The study examined Teamwork and Job Performance amongst Academic Staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State between 2012-2022. The study was guided by four research questions and four objectives. The study adopted a theoretical triangulation of Human Capital Theory and Functional Theory of Labour Welfare. The study adopted descriptive (survey) research design. The population of the study was 811, which comprises the entire academic staff of the Niger Delta University in 2023. Data retrieved from the office of the Registrar, Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Bayelsa State, in 2023. The sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Taro Yamane. The proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to allocate samples of respondents in each Faculty. The study also adopted purposive sampling research technique, in reaching out to the research subjects. The study utilized both primary and secondary data, to gather and analyze data extracted from participants. The Questionnaire was used to elicit primary data, while reviewed related literatures, journals, Internet, and so on, were sources relied upon for secondary data. Four research questions formulawere analyzed with Mean and Standard Deviation. Results showed that: teamwork helped academic staff to share ideas on topics of interest in order to deliver sound lectures; collaboration made academic staff at the Niger Delta University to effectively deliver their work prescription, and display results-oriented attributes critical for job achievement; pride and envy, amid others, posed a challenge of collegiality on job performance amongst academic staff in the Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. The study recommends that there should be selfless cooperation among teaching staff of the Niger Delta University (NDU), so as to promote job performance.*

**Keywords:** Teamwork, job performance, communication, collaboration, job production

## Introduction

Teamwork is as old as man from the time of creation. God Almighty applied the concept of teamwork when he said, ''Let us make man in our own image''. This statement brings to the fore, the fact that God in the time of creation, worked with other heavenly beings, hence, the lifeblood of teamwork in productivity: 'Man'. Since the beginning of history, teams or groups, are recognized as special means by which human beings can efficiently accomplish their goals.

A group of individuals who work together are seen as a team. They work together to produce services to which all of them are answerable, that is to say that team members share goals and are jointly accountable to team goals. They mutually depend on each other in their accomplishment and if through their interactions with one another the results are affected, the team will be jointly blamed for it (Borrill et al., 2021

Teamwork and job performance are crucial to work institutions, as working in teams has become widespread in work places, as teamwork usually involves group of workers who depend on each other to attain a common goal. It is effective to say that working in teams can help motivate workers and increase their job performance (Chen, et al., 2006). The present study is designed to study how teamwork can promote job performance among academic staffers of Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.

## Statement of the Problem

Today, collaboration is seen as one of the main attributes for operational performance in the workplace. Unfortunately, most organizations and particularly the tertiary institutions in Nigeria today do not carry out teamwork which affects workforce productivity and the success of the educational

sector as a whole. Higher percentage of lecturers in Nigerian universities feel they that know it all and there is no need to collaborate with fellow lecturers in areas they find difficult, that affect students and job performance (Shirky, 2021). The essential purpose of the study is, therefore, to address the value of collaboration at work and what are the conditions to provide an integrated and productive working team to boost efficiency and results. With this phrase, lecturers understand the value of cooperation in the workforce where partnerships can be strengthened in terms of coordination to accomplish the institutional objectives and priorities, quickly and effectively.

**Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The general aim of this study is to examine teamwork and job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. Thus, the following specific objectives are formulated to aid our investigations are to:

i. examine the influence of collaboration on efficient job delivery amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.
ii. determine the attributes associated with synergy on job achievement amongst academics in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.
iii. examine the challenges of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.
iv. ascertain how mutualism can enhance and promote work performance amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions are formulated to guide this study:

i. What is the influence of collaboration on efficient job delivery amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?
ii. What are the attributes associated with synergy on job achievement amongst academics in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?
iii. What are the challenges of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?'
iv. How can mutualism be enhanced to promote work performance amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?

**Hypothesis**

**Ho$_1$:** There is no significant relationship between teamwork and job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.

**Scope of the Study**

This study covered between 2012 and 2022. Its geographical scope was limited to academic staff of Niger Delta University (NDU), Amassoma, Bayelsa State, while its content scope was centred on how teamwork could aid job performance among academic staff. The unit scope covered all academic staff in the geographical scope.

**Review of Related Literature**

**Teamwork**

The workplaces of today have employees that are focused on achieving goals as individuals, as opposed to achieving them as a team. However, with today's digital world, studies have shown that organizations that accentuate teamwork innovate better, make and correct mistakes faster and generally attain higher productivity. The essence of teamwork is that workload is reduced and broken into pieces of work for everyone to take part. Alan (2003) defines teamwork as a grouping of professionals whose members work intensely on a specific, common goal using their positive synergy, individual mutual accountability and complementary skills. Employees take many steps towards accomplishing key action items and nothing important is finished. Team work is the ability to work together towards a common vision. It is a fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results. Collective action is widely recognized as a positive force for teamwork in any organization or institution to succeed. Teams enable

individuals to empower themselves and to increase benefits from cooperative work engaged on as a group. Getting together with others also can allow individuals to better understand the importance of teamwork and how the organizations operate as well as promote the culture of teamwork success (Alan, 2003).

In a study of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, fatigued crews were placed under simulated pressure to test their effectiveness. The crews who had flown together in the past, made significantly fewer errors than fresh crews who had never flown together. Positive psychology has always emphasized the personal benefits of social relationships and connectedness to others. Now we can say that connectedness makes good business sense, too it has the potential to improve organizational performance at the highest levels.

**Job Performance**

Job performance is defined as the total expected value to the organization of the discrete behavioural episodes that an individual carries out over a standard period of time. This definition is a slightly revised version of the definition of performance presented in a previous publication in connection with a theory of individual differences in task and contextual performance (Motowidlo et al., 1997). Activity statements in task inventories can be extremely useful for analyzing a job according to the degree to which incumbents are involved with various tasks and for providing detailed reports of precisely what incumbents have to do in order to satisfy the demands of their jobs. In order to achieve high productivity in an organization, the organization firstly needs to discover methods that can be used to improve the employee's performance. A great effort is necessary for the employees to attain high performance in jobs. When the employees are satisfied with their jobs, they tend to be motivated and are willing to put more efforts and are committed more in their jobs.

**Performance Theory and Model**

This study adopts a theoretical triangulation of Human Capital Theory and Functional Theory of Labour Welfare. Organizations need highly performing individuals in order to meet their goals, to deliver the services they specialized in, and finally to achieve competitive advantage. Performance is also important for the individual. Accomplishing tasks and performing at a high level can be a source of effectiveness, with feelings of mastery and pride. Low performance and not achieving the goals might be experienced as dissatisfying or even as a personal failure. Moreover, performance, if it is recognized by others within the organization, is often rewarded by financial and other benefits

Given the above studies and several other related studies, it was discovered to our limited knowledge that most scholarly works are geared towards teamwork and organizational productivity; others are structured towards manufacturing industries and organizations. There exists a dearth in literature in terms of teamwork and staff performance in the educational sector. Hence, this study became imperative in order the bridge the gap in knowledge by studying the influence of teamwork on job performance amongst academic staff of Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.

**Methodology**
**Research Design**

Descriptive (survey) design is used for the study as it helped in gathering data from respondents for this study, as well as for the purpose of analyzing data extracted from academic staff at Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State, on teamwork.

**Area of the Study**

Niger Delta University (NDU) is in Wilberforce Island, Amassoma, Bayelsa State in the southern part of Nigeria. It was established in 2000 by an act of law by the Bayelsa State House of Assembly. The university commenced academic activities in the 2001/2002 session, with seven (7) faculties. It is a state government-funded university, established by late Chief D.S.P Alamieyeseigha, the then Governor of Bayelsa State. It has two main campuses, one in the state capital, Yenagoa, which contains the law faculty, and the other in Amassoma. It also has its teaching hospital known as Niger Delta University Teaching Hospital (NDUTH) in Okolobiri. The university offers education at Bachelor, Masters and PhD levels. It is a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities. It is accredited and recognized by the National Universities Commission (NUC) (O'Jules, 2019). The

university is approximately 32 km from the state capital, Yenagoa, and is made up of three campuses: Gloryland (main campus), College of Health Sciences, and the temporary campus of the Faculty of Law in Yenagoa. A new campus, which is an extension of the Gloryland campus, is being developed with Standard Faculty buildings, School of Postgraduate Studies, DOCERAD, Senate Building (Under Construction), inter alia (O'Jules, 2019).

The University has fourteen (14) faculties. The faculties and their respective departments are:
1. Faculty of Arts
2. Faculty of Environmental Sciences
3. Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences
4. Basic Clinical Sciences
5. Faculty of Clinical sciences
6. Faculty of Engineering
7. Faculty of Education
8. Faculty of Law
9. Faculty of Management Sciences
10. Faculty of Nursing
11. Faculty of Pharmacy
12. Faculty of Sciences
13. Faculty of Social Sciences
14. Faculty of Agricultural Technology

**Population for the Study**

The population of this study is 811 which comprises the entire academic staff of NDU as at October 2023. Data retrieved from the office of the Registrar, Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Bayelsa State, (2023). Table 1. below gives a clearer illustration of the population of the study.

**Table 1: Population of Academic Staff at Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Bayelsa State.**

| S/N | FACULTY | MALE | FEMALE | TOTAL |
|-----|---------|------|--------|-------|
| 1 | Agricultural Technology | 31 | 9 | 40 |
| 2 | Arts | 53 | 13 | 66 |
| 3 | Environmental Sciences | 12 | 3 | 15 |
| 4 | Basic Medical Sciences | 50 | 6 | 56 |
| 5 | Clinical sciences | 24 | 5 | 29 |
| 6 | Engineering | 83 | 9 | 92 |
| 7 | Education | 53 | 38 | 91 |
| 8 | Law | 21 | 7 | 28 |
| 9 | Management Sciences | 51 | 23 | 74 |
| 10 | Nursing | 9 | 16 | 25 |
| 11 | Pharmacy | 39 | 8 | 47 |
| 12 | Sciences | 76 | 18 | 94 |
| 13 | Social Sciences | 65 | 13 | 78 |
| 14 | Basic Clinical | 62 | 14 | 76 |
| | Total | 629 | 182 | 811 |

**Source**: Office of the Registrar, Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Bayelsa State, (2023).

**Sample size and Sampling Techniques**

This study adopted Taro Yamane formula to determine the sample size of 400.
Taro Yamane Formula.
n = N (1+N (e) 2
Where: n = sample size
N = Population of the study = 811
e = level of significance $(0.05)^2$
Solution

$n = \dfrac{N}{1+N\,(e)2}$

$n = \dfrac{811}{1+811}$ x $(0.05)^2$

$n = \dfrac{811}{1+811}$ x 0.0025

812 x 0.0025=2.03

$n = \dfrac{811}{2.03}$ =400

n = 400.

With this, the proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to allocate samples of respondents in each faculty. Table 2. gives a clear illustration of how the sample size was proportionately stratified among faculties based on the number of staff.

**Table 2: Stratified Sample Size for each Faculty**

| S/No. | Faculty | No. of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Agricultural Technology | 22 |
| 2 | Arts | 36 |
| 3 | Environmental Sciences | 8 |
| 4 | Basic Medical Sciences | 30 |
| 5 | Basic Clinical Sciences | 15 |
| 6 | Engineering | 46 |
| 7 | Education | 44 |
| 8 | Law | 14 |
| 9 | Pharmacy | 30 |
| 10 | Sciences | 13 |
| 11 | Social Sciences | 23 |
| 12 | Management Sciences | 48 |
| 13 | Nursing | 36 |
| 14 | Basic Clinical Sciences | 35 |
| | **TOTAL** | **400** |

**Source**: Field Work from the Researcher, Amassoma, Bayelsa state, (2023).

The study adopted purposive sampling technique in selecting the respondents.

**Method of Data Collection**
The study utilized both primary and secondary data. The primary data were elicited with the use of questionnaire. The secondary data were sourced from the review of related literature, elicited from journals, Internet, and so on.

**Methods of Data Analysis**
The study adopted simple percentage in analyzing the demographic features of the respondents which also represented with charts and graphs, while the research questions were analyzed with Mean and Standard Deviation.
The formula for percentage is shown as:
% = f/N x 100/1
Where f = frequency of respondent's response
N = Total Number of responses of the sample
100 = Consistency in the percentage of respondents for each item contained in questions.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**
**Presentation of Data**
**Chart 1.    Respondents by Gender**
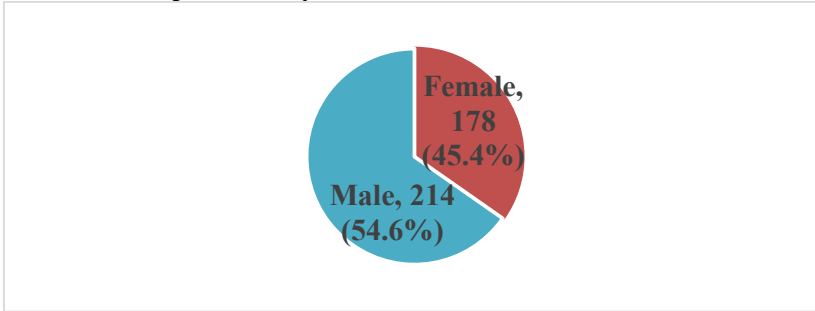


**Source**: Researcher's Field Work Data (2023).
From the pie chart above, it shows that Male respondents in the study were 214 (54.6%), while Female respondents are 178 (45.4%).

**Table 3: Age Distribution of Respondents**

| Age Bracket | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 18-24 | 71 | 18 |
| 25-29 | 118 | 30.2 |
| 30-35 | 80 | 20.4 |
| 36 and above | 123 | 31.4 |
| Total | **392** | **100.0** |

Source: Researcher's Field Work (2023).
From the table above, it shows that respondents within the age bracket of 18-24 years are 71(18%); 25-29 years 118(30.2%); 30-35 years 80(20.4%) and 36 years upward 123(31.4%).

**Chart 2.  Marital Status of Respondents**
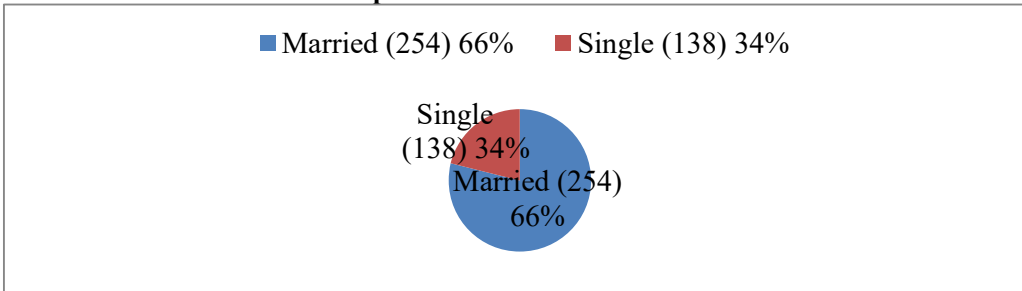


**Source**: Researcher's Field Work Data (2023)
From the above pie chart, which reveals the marital status of respondents, it is shown that respondents that are married are 254 (66%) and respondents which are single are 138 (34%).

**Chart 4.1.3 Religion of Respondents**
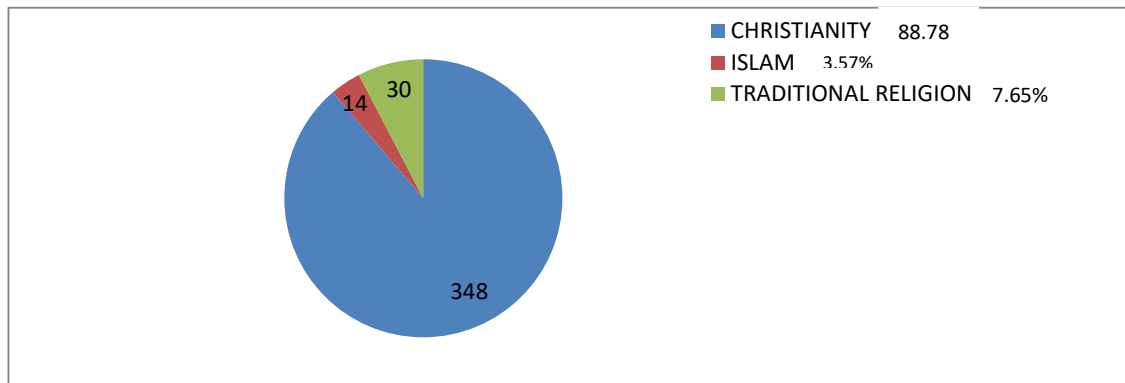


**Source:** Researcher's Field Work Data (2023)

From the above pie chart, which reveals the religious status of the research subjects, it is shown that respondents who have Christianity as their religion are 348 (88.78%) and respondents who have Islam and Traditional Religion as their mode of worship are 14 (3.57%) and 30 (7.65 %) respectively.

**Chart 3. Occupation of Respondents**
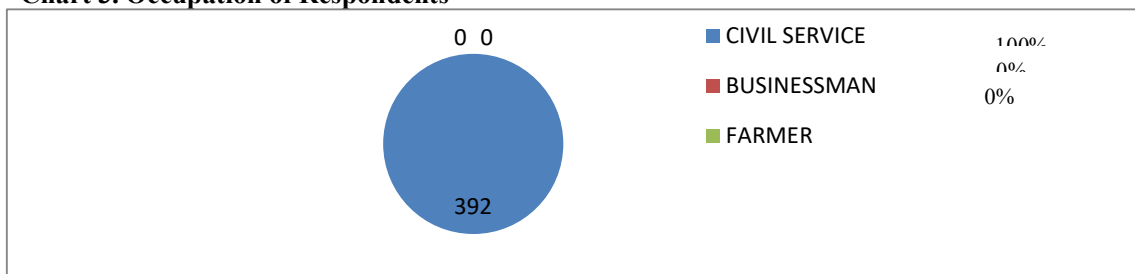


From the above pie chart, which reveals the occupational status of the research participants, it is shown that respondents who have Civil Service as their nature of work are 392 (100%) and respondents who have Businessman and Farmer as their occupations are 0 (0%) and 0 (0 %) respectively.

**Table 4. Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaire**

| S/No. | Faculty | No. of Respondents | % |
|-------|---------|-------------------|---|
| 1 | Agricultural Technology | 21 | 5.36 |
| 2 | Arts | 35 | 8.92 |
| 3 | Environmental Sciences | 8 | 2.04 |
| 4 | Basic Medical Sciences | 29 | 7.39 |
| 5 | Basic Clinical Sciences | 15 | 3.83 |
| 6 | Engineering | 44 | 11.22 |
| 7 | Education | 44 | 11.22 |
| 8 | Law | 14 | 3.57 |
| 9 | Pharmacy | 29 | 7.39 |
| 10 | Sciences | 13 | 3.35 |
| 11 | Social Sciences | 23 | 5.87 |
| 12 | Management Sciences | 48 | 12.24 |
| 13 | Nursing | 35 | 8.93 |
| 14 | Clinical Sciences | 34 | 8.67 |
| | **TOTAL** | **392** | **100** |

**Source**: Field Work (2023).

From the table above, it is evident that from the 400 questionnaires that were sent out, 392 were retrieved. This number was used as the basis of our analysis.

**Data Analysis**
Formula for Grand Mean and Standard Deviation

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \mu)^2}{n}}$$

where,

$\sigma$ = population standard deviation
$\sum$ = sum of...
$\mu$ = population mean
n = number of scores in sample.

**Research Question 1:** What is the influence of collaboration on efficient job delivery amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?

**Table 5. Summary of Descriptive Statistics on the influence of collaboration on efficient job delivery amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State (N=392)**

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-----|-------|----|----|----|----|------|----|----------|
| 1 | I find it easy to collaborate with my colleagues on academic projects and research. | 80 | 262 | 40 | 10 | 3.05 | 0.64 | Agreed |
| 2 | There is a culture of openness and willingness to share knowledge among academic staff members. | 92 | 250 | 36 | 14 | 3.07 | 0.68 | Agreed |
| 3 | I have access to the necessary resources and infrastructure to facilitate collaboration with other academic staff. | 69 | 31 | 236 | 56 | 2.29 | 0.92 | Disagreed |
| 4 | Academic staff members effectively communicate and coordinate their efforts when working together on projects. | 80 | 262 | 40 | 10 | 3.05 | 0.64 | Agreed |
| 5 | There are regular opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration within the academic community. | 80 | 262 | 40 | 10 | 3.05 | 0.64 | Agreed |
| | **Grand mean** | | | | | **2.90** | **0.70** | **Agreed** |

**Source**: Researcher's Field Work (2023).

The result from Table 4. above shows the summary of descriptive statistics on the influence of collaboration on efficient job delivery amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. The result further shows that the majority of academic staff members find it easy to collaborate and share knowledge, suggesting a positive culture of openness within the institution. Academic staff members effectively communicate and coordinate their efforts during collaborative projects, contributing to efficient job delivery. There are regular opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration within the academic community, which fosters cooperation among staff members. Academic staff members generally find it easy to collaborate on academic projects and research, which is crucial for efficient job delivery. There is a perceived lack of access to necessary resources and infrastructure for facilitating collaboration among academic staff members, which could potentially hinder efficient job delivery. The grand mean indicates agreement among respondents regarding the influence of collaboration on efficient job delivery. However, addressing the issue of resource and infrastructure access may further enhance collaborative efforts among academic staff members in the institution.

**Research Question 2:** What are the attributes associated with synergy on job achievement amongst academics in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?

**Table 5: Summary of Descriptive Statistics on the attributes associated with synergy on job achievement amongst academics in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State**

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-----|-------|----|----|----|----|------|-----|----------|
| 6 | Academic staff members demonstrate a willingness to listen to and respect each other's viewpoints and ideas. | 80 | 262 | 40 | 10 | 3.05 | 0.64 | Agreed |
| 7 | Academic staff exhibit a high level of commitment to shared goals and objectives. | 92 | 250 | 36 | 14 | 3.07 | 0.68 | Agreed |
| 8 | Academic staff members demonstrate adaptability and flexibility when working together to overcome challenges. | 94 | 236 | 45 | 17 | 3.04 | 0.73 | Agreed |
| 9 | The leadership within our academic community fosters a supportive environment that encourages synergy among staff members. | 98 | 247 | 27 | 20 | 3.08 | 0.72 | Agreed |
| 10 | My colleagues possess diverse expertise and skills that complement each other well. | 96 | 249 | 22 | 25 | 3.06 | 0.74 | Agreed |
| | **Grand mean** | | | | | **3.06** | **0.74** | **Agreed** |

**Source**: Researcher's Field Work Data (2023).

The result from Table 5. above shows the summary of descriptive statistics on the attributes associated with synergy on job achievement amongst academics in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. The result also shows that respondents perceive the leadership within the academic community as supportive and conducive to fostering synergy among staff members, which is essential for job achievement. Academic staff members demonstrate a high level of commitment to shared goals and objectives, indicating alignment and collaboration toward achieving common aims. Respondents believe their colleagues possess diverse expertise and skills that complement each other well, enhancing synergy and job achievement within the academic community. Academic staff members exhibit a willingness to listen to and respect each other's viewpoints and ideas, fostering collaboration and synergy. Academic staff members demonstrate adaptability and flexibility when working together to overcome challenges, which is crucial for achieving job success. The grand mean score of 3.06 indicates agreement among respondents regarding the attributes associated with synergy on job achievement among academics. The results highlight the importance of leadership support, commitment to shared goals, diverse expertise among colleagues, mutual respect, and adaptability in fostering synergy and achieving job success within the academic community.

**Research Question 3:** What are the challenges of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?

**Table 6: Summary of Descriptive Statistics on the challenges of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State**

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-----|-------|----|----|----|----|------|-----|----------|
| 11 | Communication breakdowns hinder effective collegiality among academic staff. | 95 | 250 | 18 | 29 | 3.05 | 0.76 | Agreed |
| 12 | Some academic staff members demonstrate territorial behaviour, which impedes collegiality and collaboration. | 110 | 255 | 28 | 19 | 3.06 | 0.8 | Agreed |
| 13 | There is a lack of trust and mutual respect among some academic staff members within our department or institution. | 109 | 256 | 27 | 0 | 3.21 | 0.55 | Agreed |
| 14 | There is a perceived lack of recognition and appreciation for contributions made by certain academic staff members. | 90 | 255 | 24 | 23 | 3.05 | 0.72 | Agreed |
| 15 | Academic staff members sometimes exhibit competitiveness rather than cooperation, undermining collegiality. | 112 | 218 | 42 | 20 | 3.08 | 0.77 | Agreed |
| | **Grand mean** | | | | | **3.05** | **0.75** | **Agreed** |

**Source**: Researcher's Field Work Data (2023).

The result from Table 6. above shows the summary of descriptive statistics on the challenges of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. There is a perceived lack of trust and mutual respect among some academic staff members, which poses a significant challenge to collegiality and job production. Academic staff members sometimes exhibit competitiveness instead of cooperation, which undermines collegiality and, consequently, job production. Territorial behaviour demonstrated by some academic staff members impedes collegiality and collaboration, posing challenges to job production. Communication breakdowns hinder effective collegiality among academic staff, which can negatively impact job production. There is a perceived lack of recognition and appreciation for contributions made by certain academic staff members, which can hinder collegiality and job production. The grand mean score of 3.05 indicates agreement among respondents regarding the challenges of collegiality on job production among academic staff. The results highlight various issues such as lack of trust, competitiveness, territorial behaviour, communication breakdowns, and lack of recognition, all of which contribute to hindrances in collegiality and subsequently affect job production within the academic community.

**Research Question 4:** How can mutualism be enhanced to promote work performance amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State?

**Table 7: Summary of Descriptive Statistics on how mutualism can be enhanced to promote work performance amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State**

| S/N | Items | Mean | SD | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | Academic staff members actively share resources and expertise to support each other's professional development. | 3.05 | 0.64 | Agreed |
| 17 | There is a culture of reciprocity among academic staff members, where mutual support and assistance are readily offered. | 3.07 | 0.68 | Agreed |
| 18 | Mutualism among academic staff fosters a sense of belonging and camaraderie within our academic community. | 3.04 | 0.73 | Agreed |
| 19 | Academic staff members engage in constructive feedback and mentorship to help each other succeed in their respective roles. | 2.57 | 1.09 | Agreed |
| 20 | The leadership within our academic institution actively promotes and supports mutualism among staff members as a core value. | 3.05 | 0.64 | Agreed |
| | **Grand mean** | **3.00** | **0.73** | **Agreed** |

**Source**: Researcher's Field Work Data (2023).

The result from Table 7. above shows the summary of descriptive statistics on how mutualism can be enhanced to promote work performance amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. There is a culture of reciprocity among academic staff members, where mutual support and assistance are readily offered, contributing to the enhancement of mutualism and work performance. Academic staff members actively share resources and expertise to support each other's professional development, further promoting mutualism and improving work performance. The leadership within the academic institution actively promotes and supports mutualism among staff members as a core value, which plays a significant role in enhancing mutualism and promoting work performance. Mutualism among academic staff fosters a sense of belonging and camaraderie within the academic community, contributing positively to work performance. While academic staff members engage in constructive feedback and mentorship, there may be room for improvement in this aspect to further enhance mutualism and work performance. The grand mean score of 3.00 indicates agreement among respondents regarding how mutualism can be enhanced to promote work performance among academic staff. The results highlight various aspects such as reciprocity, resource sharing, leadership support, sense of belonging, and constructive feedback, all of which contribute to fostering mutualism and ultimately improving work performance within the academic community.

**Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between teamwork and job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.

**Table 8: Summary of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between teamwork and job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.**

|  |  | Teamwork | Job Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teamwork | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .710** |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .000 |
| Job Performance | Pearson Correlation | .710** | 1 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |  |
|  | **N** | **392** | **392** |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result from Table 8 above shows the summary of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between teamwork and job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. The result further shows that the relationship between teamwork and job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State was positive and strong (r=.710). It indicates that as teamwork increases, there will also be an increase in job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. The R-square=0.5041 shows that teamwork contributed about 50.41% to the observed variance in job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. The p-value=.000 shows that there is a significant relationship between teamwork and job performance among academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. The null hypothesis one was rejected at .05 level of significance.

## Summary

Collaboration helps academic staff to share ideas on topics of interest in order to deliver a sound lecture; Collaboration makes academic staff at Niger Delta University to effectively deliver their work prescription; Collaboration gives room for academic staff at Niger Delta University to learn more from colleagues; Collaboration serves as a platform for intellectual interaction which gives room for better job performance and Collaboration is a platform that has enhanced the job performance of academic staff at Niger Delta University.

Discipline at the workplace that promotes synergy; Interpersonal relationship which enhances synergy on job achievement; Results-oriented attributes on job achievement; Enhancement of workplace communication and feeling of entitlement as a worker.

Pride poses as a challenge of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State; envy poses as a challenge of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State; ingratitude threatens cooperation between colleagues on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State; the feeling of knowing it all plays a challenging role of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State and lLack of cooperation poses a challenge role of collegiality on job production amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State.

There should be robust mutual understanding which can promote work performance amongst academic staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State; members of academic staff at NDU Bayelsa State should adopt selfless approach in engaging each other for cooperation which can enhance job performance; pride and envy should be erased from the minds of staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State so as to have a free flow of ideas that will promote job performance; every academic staff should respect others' opinions so as to promote job performance and genuineness should be a watchword for every academic staff at Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State so as relate genuinely for a better job performance.

**Conclusion**

Teamwork as the research note earlier is as old as mankind. Even in the time of creation, God applied the concept of teamwork. The study has examined Teamwork and Job Performance amongst Academic Staff in Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State Between 2012-2022. Team is defined as a work group made up of people who see themselves as a unit and who are also seen by others as members of the same element, working together because of the jobs or tasks that they perform as a group. The people in a group additionally alluded to as team members, share information while cooperating in a steady situation to accomplish their objectives as a group. The essence of cooperation is to diminish remaining task at hand by breaking them into bits of work for each individual from the allotted group to partake in. The external factors of teamwork are the political, economic, social and technological factors that affect teamwork while the internal factors of teamwork constitute leadership style, diversity (culture, talent and personalities) communication, cohesiveness, and so on, which affects teamwork. This study has discovered that teamwork leads to better job performance at Niger Delta University of Bayelsa State. The world has moved on from emphasizing individual contributions to work, to focusing on teams. The analogy of a broom stick and the broom is apt here. It can take an hour or more to sweep a room, using a broom stick and only a few minutes to carry out the same exercise, using a full broom. Academic staff members of the Niger Delta University (NDU) are better of working collaboratively on tasks and have better chances of flipping the script on non-production by embracing teamwork. Person-to-person communication and networking will always bring out the best parts of the teaching staff of NDU, in pursuit of their objectives of impacting knowledge and contributing positively to the educational sector in Bayelsa State, specifically and, in Nigeria, as a whole.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made in accordance with the findings of the study.

i. There should be selfless cooperation amongst academic staff at the Niger Delta University, so as to promote job performance. The importance of cooperation cannot be over-emphasized. It is a veritable tool in fostering efficient job performance. Academic staff members of the NDU should embrace the spirit of cooperation.

ii. Good communication and interaction should be employed by academic staff of the Niger Delta University to promote teamwork. To facilitate collaboration and drive better results for the teaching staff of the NDU, their communication skills must be honed. There is need for them to listen to one another more often.

iii. Pride and envy should be discouraged among academic staff of Bayelsa State so as to promote job performance. Pride and envy are twin evils that can stultify any genuine effort for progress in the workplace. They should be jettisoned by all well-meaning academic staff of the NDU.

iv. There should be mutual understanding amongst the teaching staff of the Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State, in order to promote job efficiency and performance. Consistent efforts should be made to view things from each other's spectacles. No academic staff has the monopoly of knowledge.

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# A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

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**Abstract**
*The history of corruption in Nigeria can be traced to pre-independence regimes, though the scale and magnitude was not as it is now. This paper examines the history of corruption in Nigeria from the first republic to the fourth republic highlighting some practices from pre-independence regime to the present regime. The paper utilizes a secondary source of data collection and an analytical method of data analysis and argues that corruption has been the root cause why millions of Nigerians are living in abject poverty and helplessness, unemployment, insecurity, and communal conflict. The paper observes that wherever corruption occurs, it destroys the system, and the ultimate victims are the ordinary citizen and the society. It is therefore, necessary to eradicate corruption in our society before it destroy the nation.*

**Keywords**: Corruption, history, regime, scandal, looting, national development

## Introduction

Corruption is like Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) as the virus attacks and renders the body immunity hopeless, so also systemic corruption subvert the immunity of a political system destroying all its institutions, and consequently rescind its growth. This is why nothing works wherever corruption exists, no social programme or economic policy however lofty can achieve its set objective to the fullest wherever corruption virus thrives. Corruption is a global problem that costs the global economy an estimated $2.6 trillion a year which could have gone towards infrastructure delivery, health care, education, food security, employment generation, and poverty reduction (Kerry, 2016).
Corruption is by far the greatest bane of Nigerian's national, economic and political development. It is a formidable cankerworm that needs to be comprehensively eradicated if Nigeria is to regain health and begin to function maximally for the benefit of entire Nigerian people. Corruption has been the root cause to why millions of Nigerians are living in abject poverty and helplessness. Corruption is responsible for 10.5 million children of school age who cannot have access to education. School graduates are unemployed because the resources which would have been used to create employment and pay good salary for all citizens is held by corrupt individuals.

Corruption affects everybody in the society including those who perpetrate it. All over the world corruption affects people's live in a multiple of ways; it cost people's live, health, freedom, and money (World Bank, 2008). Corruption and other forms of venality endanger everything that the people hold dear, cherished, and value, as it takes the legitimacy of a nation and contribute to human trafficking, discourages honesty, accountability and investment. Corruption undermines the entire nation's corporate survival; it is demoralizing, destructive, and disempowering to a citizen.

Going by the negative effects of corruption on Nigeria's national development, this paper examines the history of corruption in Nigeria from the first republic to the fourth. The study used secondary source of data as the main sources of data. while analytical method of data analysis was employed.

**Literature Review**

From the political perspective, corruption can be seen as illegal use of public power and resources for personal gain (Mendes, 2015). The obvious examples would be elected representatives or civil servants accepting bribes and handing out favours in return. Similarly, Morris (2019) sees corruption as any act that circumvents the established rules for conducting government business, like bribery which is the act of giving money, goods or services to an official in exchange for favorable treatment. While from the socio-cultural perspective, corruption can be perceived as violation of society's norm, belief, tradition, custom, and habit, it is going against what a certain group of people cherish and valued (Morris,2012; Navot,2014).

The above definition is comprehensive within the socio-cultural perspective but, from a wider perspective outside the socio-cultural, this definition is narrow. In contrast to socio-cultural perspective, Villoria (2014) views corruption from a legal angle which involves human acts that are against the law, such as bribery, extortion, embezzlement, or manipulating elections results. Relatedly, Joda (2011) opines that corruption is not limited to cases of government officials gliding money or property for personal use, rather corruption includes, a situation whereby the general system does not work well, and the society is faced with diverse problems.

Similarly, De la (2015) provides a broader definition of corruption as an illegal use of public power and resources for private gain, which includes not only or even primarily personal gain, but the deflection of public resources and employment of public power to advance the causes of one or more private (special interest) groups.

Transparency International (2011) conceives corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. Similarly, Obasanjo (2009) states that corruption involves the giving and taking of bribe, or illegal acquisition of wealth using the resources of a public office, including the exercise of discretion. In a nutshell, corruption can be described as deviation from laydown rules and regulation, procedures as well as deviation from norms and custom of a society or organization.

**Pre-independence Regimes**

Monumental corruption was not evidence in pre-independence regimes even though, in 1955 a panel of inquiry under a judge was constituted to look into the affairs of Igbo-Etiti District Council as there was allegation of corruption. The panel found out that there was a systemic corruption in the appointment and promotion of the council staff, and in the award of contract. Furthermore, the panel found out that L 80 to L100 were requested before appointment is secured into the council, and another case a man was compelled to pay L 400 to be employed and the money was not returned when he could not get the employment. Similarly, there was a case of nepotism, the brother to the secretary to the council was hired when there were other candidates who were more qualified than him.

**Corruption in the First Republic**

Corruption in the form of stealing huge amount of money or property as was the case with the subsequent regimes was not pronounce in the first republic. Although, commissions of inquiry was set up to investigate cases of corruption from 1947 to 1966, there was no significant finding But, in 1962, Coker Commission found Obafemi Awolowo the then premier of western region guilty for been responsible for what happened with the western region marketing board when in 1954 the commission had 6.2 million, but by 1962 the board had to survived on overdraft. Similarly, the commission gave out 6.7 million as loan to National Investment Property Co Ltd, out of which only 500,000 was repaid.

Rigging of election was the major form of corruption that was apparent in the first republic, and this is because of the struggle for power to dominant one ethnic group against the other. For example, the October 1965 election in the western region was violent and corruption-prone due to the rivalry between NCNC and AG in order to gain power. Other forms of corruptions that were prevalent in the first republic as alleged by Ironsi, were abuse of procedures pertaining to contract awards, extravagance, and waste in public expenditure, overseas tour by government officials, and corrupt practices in some public corporations.

**Corruption in Ironsi Regime**

Ironsi, after resuming office in 1966 constituted a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the affairs of Railway Corporation, Electricity Corporation, Nigerian Airways and the Nigerian Port

Authority. The Commission found two ministers in the Port Authority Okotie-Eboh and Njoku of establishing companies and used their influence for securing contract for the companies. Similarly, in the Airways, Mbadiwe was guilty of interfering with the affairs by awarding contract to a company not registered with Corporate Affairs Commission. The Commission also found Mbadiwe guilty of using the Airline to send his families and friends to New York free of charge. The Commission also found Dr Ikejiani chairman Nigerian Railway Corporation of misappropriation of fund and abused of laydown procedures; the Commission also found him guilty of inflating contract worth L 75,000 to the amount of 440,000.

## Corruption in Gowon Regime

Monumental government official corruption started during the Gowon regime, as in 1974 rumor of corruption and mismanagement in high places had started making the rounds. In July 1974, Godwin Dabo accused Federal Commissioner of Communication of corrupt practices and impropriety which led to the commissioner resignation on 24 August 1974 as result of excessive pressure from the public. Another accusation was leveled against the then governor of Benue Plateau State for awarding the contract for the excess of 5.3 million naira. Gowon regime was also accused of importing 16 million metric tons of cement at a cost of N557 million naira for the defense ministry, whereas the ministry needed only 2.9 million tons of cement at a cost of N52 million.

## Corruption in Murtala/Obasanjo Regime

When General Murtala took over the leadership of the country in 1975, he instituted a panel of investigation to look into alleged graft and misuse of public funds leveled against most senior lieutenant of General Gowon notably the various state governors and federal commissioners. The outcome of the panel revealed that, all the former military governors and the former administrators of the East Central State were found to have embezzled public fund except two of the governors Rotimi and Johnson. A total of 10 million was confiscated in cash and assets from the affect officials, a Police Commissioner had his multi-million farm at Tiga Kano confiscated.

## Corruption in Shagari Regime

In spite of Shagari's establishment of a code of conduct bureau and a code of conduct tribunal as well as his promise to the nation to ensure probity and accountability in the public life, his administration was represented as one of the most corrupted, and marked the most graft stricken period of public office holders looting public treasury public with impunity, the period also witnessed the unprecedented financial recklessness of the legislators and intensive rigging of elections. The period witnessed the buildup of the nation's foreign debt from a lowly 3 billion in 1979 to a substantial and staggering 21 billion by the fall of the regime in 1980.It was also during this period that Nigeria's development process was hijacked and stagnated by contractors who not only inflated the cost of contract unabashedly, but also went ahead to collect mobilization without actually executing the contract and went free. The Tender Board of the House of Assembly painted a dirty picture of the financial recklessness and profligacy were found to have exceeded its power of awarding a contract worth 20 million as against its statutory of ₦150,000 naira (Frisch,1997).

## Corruption in Ibrahim Babangida (IBB) Regime

Many people from the academic, professional and the general public believed that, corruption was institutionalized in Nigeria during the IBB regime through its inglorious settlement syndrome. It was during the IBB regime that 10% was institutionalized in giving out a contract by the government officials. The Okigbo panel set up by the General Sani Abacha to look into the Babangida administration indicted General Babangida and the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) of a frivolous looting spree and clandestine spending (Anazodo, et al., 2012; Ijewereme & Dunmade, 2014). Ijewereme (2015) lists the following as some of the highlights of Babangida corrupt practices:

➢ US$12 billion Gulf war wind falls in 1991.
➢ 2. 30% of oil revenue diverted to frivolous uses through-out the time.
➢ Huge extra-budgetary spending: 1989 = N15.3 billion, 1990 = N23.4 billion, 1991 = N35 billion, 1992 = N44.2 billion, 1993 = N59 billion.
➢ US$200 million siphoned from the Aluminum Smelter Project.

- ➢ N400 million wasted on the Better Life Project.
- ➢ Colossal corruption at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), for example, US$101 million for the purchase of strategic storage facilitation.

## Corruption in Sani Abacha Regime

In spite of Sani Abacha promulgation of corrupt practices and Economic Decree which made it mandatory for public officers to publicly declare their assets and send it in writing to anti-corruption commission, and the set-up of failed bank tribunal as well, it does appear that it was a cover-up on Abacha large-scale stealing of public fund as it was later unfolded. Abacha was alleged to have withdrawn 750 million dollars from the London account and transferred to a personal account in Brazil through Gwarzo the National Security Adviser. Iroanusi (2006) enumerates some of the funds allegedly misappropriated my Abacha:

- ➢ 20 million dollars was misappropriated which was meant for the turnaround of Kaduna refinery
- ➢ 12 million misappropriated which was meant for peacekeeping in Bosnia
- ➢ Fraudulently reviewed contract from 5 million to 25 million
- ➢ Fraudulent transfer of 775 million dollars from NNPC to CBN and finally to private pocket
- ➢ 2.5 billion Fraud as debt buyback at Ajaokuta Steel Company where 500 million was paid while 2 billion pocketed by the Abacha

## Corruption in Abdulsalami Regime

According to Ijewereme (2015), the Abdulsalami administration is not an exception from the mass looting of the public treasury. The Christopher Kolade panel set up to review contracts, licenses, and appointments made under the Abdulsalami administration came out with a shocking revelation. The panel found beyond imaginable proportions that, though Nigeria was already neck deep in corrupt practices, the Abdulsalami administration made a mockery of any sense of discipline and probity and at a scale that practically made saints of his predecessors (Anazodo, et al., 2012). The panel specifically reviewed 4,072 contracts, 576 licenses, 807 appointments, 768 awards, and 111 approvals all made within 5 months. The panel submitted that the 4,072 contracts cost Nigeria N635.62 billion as against the N88 billion budgeted in 1998, this represents a deficit of N551 billion. The panel also revealed the depletion of the foreign reserve, which at the end of 1998 stood at US$7.6 billion but shrank to US$3.8 billion by May 1999.

## Corruption in Obasanjo Regime

When Obasanjo became the president of the federal republic Nigeria the second time, there was high expectation that the new regime will fight corruption because of the rhetoric of the president. Immediately Obasanjo was sworn in as the president, the first thing he did was to retire all the senior military officers perceived to be corrupt and the initiation of additional anti-corruption commission EFCC to fight corruption. Unfortunately, Obasanjo's rhetoric of fighting against corruption was not matched with commitment and sincerity, for instance, as the EFCC was making efforts in tackling corruption in one hand, on the other hand, the Commission allows those close to the president to continue to embezzle public fund without being checkmated by the Commission. For instance, some western diplomats were of the opinion that Nigeria lost between US$4 billion and US$8 billion annually to corruption during the 8 years of Obasanjo's regime (Human Rights Watch, 2007). Another form of corruption that characterized the Obasanjo regime includes electoral fraud, disobedience of court rulings, impeachment of governors who did not agree with him, using corruption as the weapon.

It was also during Obasanjo's regime that a Japanese construction firm, Marubeni Corporation, agreed to pay a $54.6 million criminal penalty for allegedly bribing officials of the Nigerian government to facilitate the award of the $6 billion Liquefied Natural Gas contract in Bonny to a multinational consortium. Some other acts of corruption tied to Obasanjo include, the Transcorp shares scandal, which violated the code of conduct standards for public officers, and the presidential library donations at the eve of his exit from power that pressured associates to donate money for the construction of the library. Similarly, 16 billion dollars was said to have been misappropriated by the Obasanjo government which was meant for electricity project, and another 2 billion dollars was embezzled which was meant for road project. Obasanjo was also said to widely lobby for his failed campaign to alter the constitution to get a third term by actively bribing the legislators.

**Corruption in Goodluck Regime**

President Good luck administration was described from many quarters as the most corrupt regime of all the time. Recent audit report on Jonathan's administration discovered unprecedented ghost employees in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service which amount to billions of naira wasted to fraudsters on monthly bases (Okekeocha, 2013). Daziani has been indicted by five different investigative Panel Committees at different times, yet she confidently remains in charge of the Ministry unperturbed (Melaye, 2013). This is because she has family ties with president Good luck. New allegations of corruption have begun to emerge since the departure of President Jonathan which include:

- ➢ Non-remittance of 20 billion dollars from NNPC to CBN which were assumed to be stolen and deposited in private account
- ➢ $2.2 billion illegally withdrawn from Excess Crude Oil Accounts, of which $1 billion supposedly approved by President Jonathan to fund his re-election campaign without the knowledge of the National Economic Council made up of state governors and the president and vice president.
- ➢ NEITI discovered $11.6 billion was missing from Nigeria LNG Company dividend payments.
- ➢ 60 million barrels of oil valued at $13.7 billion was stolen under the watch of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, from 2009 to 2012.
- ➢ NEITI indicates losses due to crude swaps due to subsidy and domestic crude allocation from 2005 to 2012 indicated that $11.63 billion had been paid to the NNPC but that there was no evidence of the money being remitted to the federation account.
- ➢ Diversion of 60% of $1 billion foreign loans obtained from the Chinese by the Ministry of Finance
- ➢ Massive scam in weapons and defense procurements, and misuse of 3 trillion-naira defense budget since 2011 under the guise of fighting Boko Haram
- ➢ Diversion of $2.2 million vaccination medicine fund, by Ministry of Health
- ➢ Diversion of Ebola fight fund up to 1.9 b naira
- ➢ NIMASA fraud under investigation by EFCC, inclusive of accusation of funding PDP and buying a small piece of land for 13 billion naira
- ➢ Ministry of Finance led by Okonjo-Iweala hurriedly paid $2.2 million to Health Ministry contractor in disputed invoices
- ➢ NDDC scams and multifarious scams including 2.7 billion naira worth of contracts that do not conform to the Public Procurement Act
- ➢ Police Service Commission Scam investigated by ICPC that revealed misappropriation of over 150 million naira related to election-relatedtraining. ICPC made refund recommendations, but many analysts indicated prosecution was more appropriate (Nwankwo,2013).

**Corruption in Buhari Regime**

Although, the Buhari government was built around fighting corruption as the slogan of the party, however, there were some reservations, as key officials of the government were found guilty of corruption in one government establishment or the other as indicated in some media reports. According to Transparency International, despite the avowal by the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), corruption is still waxing strong in Nigeria. In its released 2022 Corruption Perception Index, TI ranks Nigeria among the most corrupt jurisdictions in the world which implies that the anti-graft fight by the Buhari regime has lost its steam. Instead of tackling corruption menace as was the slogan of the President, corruption has become a dangerous monstrosity phenomena defying all efforts in reducing or eradicating it.

Similarly, the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Offences Commission alleged that ministries, departments and agencies padded the 2021 budget to the tune of N300 billion. The padding, which they did by duplicating projects, shot the budget to N13.59 trillion. A gain, MDAs also allegedly padded the 2022 budget with duplicated projects amounting to N100 billion. Sadly, there has been no consequences for the lawmakers and the complicit civil servants. This is aside from the N49.9 billion discovered as salaries for 'ghost workers' between January and June 2022.

In the same vein, about seven years after a federal high court sitting in Lagos ordered the prosecution of principal officers of the National Assembly indicted in the alleged N481 billion padding of the 2016 budget, not one single lawmaker and their accomplices have been arraigned. A civil society

organisation, HEDA, in 2021, compiled a list of 25 top corruption cases linked with stolen or mismanaged funds worth N900 billion, which the government was investigating but had been left dormant.

Also, Treasury looting is also going on unabated at the state and local government levels for which many state governors, past and present, LG bosses and other officials have been indicted. The pardon granted to Joshua Dariye and Jolly Nyame, ex-governors of Plateau and Taraba States, respectively, a few years into their jail terms, unmasked the graft campaign as a lost course. This has emboldened other politically exposed individuals and officials to engage in mind-boggling malfeasance.

The opacity characterizing oil revenue and receipt in the country has been known to be an enabler of corruption in the oil and gas sector. It was estimated that between January and July 2022, an average of 437,000 barrels of oil a day estimated at $10 billion were stolen by criminal entities and individuals who illicitly tap pipelines onshore and offshore in the Niger Delta region.

In the 2022 Basel Anti-Money Laundering Index, Nigeria was ranked high risk with a score of 6.77 out of 10, with the country being 17th out of 128 countries. A United States Department of Commerce report suggests that at least 40 per cent of all public sector procurement funds in Nigeria is lost to corruption.

The abuse and corruption surrounding the petrol subsidy regime is a sore point that the government has also failed to address properly. The House of Representatives estimates that Nigeria consumes between 40 and 45 million litres daily, but the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited claims it is paying subsidy on over 60 million litres per day as contained in its monthly reports to the FAAC (Oluwatuyi, 2023).

Official corruption has become monumental from the onset of the regime, for instance the former secretary to the government was sack on allegation of corruption involving 200 million naira. There was also another corruption allegation labeled against the former Accountant-General of the Federation, Idris Ahmed of allegedly misappropriating N109 billion out of which he has returned N30 billion (EFCC,2023).

Similarly, Godwin Emefiele the Governor Central Bank of Nigeria was indicted for contracting the naira redesign project to De La Rue of the UK for £205,000 pounds after the Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Plc expressed its inability to deliver within the required timeframe. The investigation further exposes that ₦61.5 billion was earmarked for the printing of new notes, with ₦31.79 billion already paid. As of August 9, 2023, ₦769 billion of the new notes were in circulation.

The Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management, and Social Development, Sadiya Umar Farouq is under investigation for allegedly laundering N37 billion (Oluwatuyi, 2023). Similarly, three other Ministers, who served under former President Muhammadu Buhari were alleged to have misappropriated an estimated N150bn. Also an investigation revealed that the N37.1bn was transferred from the Federal Government's coffers and sent to 38 different bank accounts domiciled in five legacy commercial banks belonging to or connected with Okwete. Another monumental corruption was discovered in the aviation ministry by the Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika, where he inflated the cost of the project from N1.5 trillion to N3 trillion without proper justification or evidence (Oluwatuyi, 2023).

In February 2018, a snake was accused of swallowing N36 million from the office vault of the Joint Admission Matriculation Board, Makurdi, Benue State. Again, in the same year, the Northern Senators Forum removed Senator Abdullahi Adamu as chairman of the forum for alleged financial mismanagement and maladministration as it was alleged that monkeys carted away N70 million under Adamu's watch. In the same vein, on August 14, 2022, the news went viral that some termites, living ostentatious lifestyles, stormed the storeroom of the Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund and ate up vouchers totaling N17.128 billion.

Also, the Senate Committee on Public Accounts discovered it when it interrogated the NSITF management. The Managing Director of NSITF told the committee that the vouchers and other financial documents that could help in tracking down the N17.128 billion were stored in a container that had not only been beaten by rains over the years but eaten up by termites (Alade ,2023).

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the menace of corruption in its various forms had posed a threat to the growth and development of Nigeria and its polity. Corruption has continued to wax stronger and stronger most

noticeable in the public sector where government officials right from the first republic to the administration of President Good luck about 400 billion was alleged to have stolen which more than enough can fix all the infrastructures that the Nigerian nation need (Ribadu,2010). A report from American financial research asserts that, if drastic action is not taken to eradicate corruption in Nigeria, by 2030 corruption will consume 37 % of the nation GDP which implies that, every Nigerian from now will lose 1,000 dollars to corruption and could increase to 2000 dollar by 2030? Similarly, if corruption is tackled, Nigeria may realize about 535 dollar of GDP by the year 2030.

The absence of transparency in security votes buttresses the assertion that corrupt practices are well entrenched in the polity. Expenditures in the defense and security sector continue to escape public and legislative scrutiny, and mostly occur under emergency procurement processes that lack basic anti-corruption safeguards. The fight against corruption requires strong institutions, which must be free from undue executive, legislative and judiciary interference.  For an effective corruption fight, the anti-graft agencies need larger capacity to take on the leviathan of corruption.

To quicken justice dispensation, the government should create specialized anti-corruption courts to hasten the trial of cases. Judges should be properly incentivized to mitigate corruption while punishment for corruption should equate the magnitude of offence committed.

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# THE VISUAL IS THE ADVERTISING MESSAGE: THE USE OF IMAGES AND COLOURS IN PRINT ADVERTS FOR MADE IN NIGERIA FOOD PRODUCTS

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**Abstract**
*Visuals have come to assume a central place in our contemporary world, thanks partly to the ubiquity of such technologies as the Internet and the social media, which facilitate the proliferation of visuals in both virtual and physical spaces. The human mind has grown to processed information passed out through images faster than information conveyed in writing. In line with this, most communicators, including advertisers/marketers have sought to deploy catchy images and appropriate colours to (i) sell their products, ideas and services; (ii) position their brands, and (iii) increase sales. In this paper, attention is given to how Nigerian manufacturers in the food and beverage industry deploy images to advertise their products and to ultimately increase sales. The paper argues that Nigerian manufacturers proceed by using print advert that do not only differentiate their products from the others, but also implicitly show the weaknesses of other products in competition in the market. They always find it necessary to give the viewer or potential buyer a visual depiction of their products, in the guise of appetizer and "bait". They seek to lead the buyer/user into salivating in anticipation. They design their print adverts and packaging in a way as to artfully combine typographic elegance, craftsmanship and more especially mouth-watering visuals.*

**Keywords:** Food, beverage, industry, print advertising, marketing, messaging, visual

**Introduction**

Product packages are most often structurally designed as advertising copies. A good number of them are even kinds of adverting copies in miniature or playing similar function, as they are craftily composed with text (title, subtitle, slogan, body), product logo, signs and most importantly, visuals. Like in the context of advertising copy writing, the space devoted to visual images is most often considerable. This space generally constitutes 60 to 70 percent of the principal face of the package or of the total extent of the package. In line with this, the visual could rightly be regarded as a cardinal constitutive component of a package design. The centrality of visual images in package design is re-enforced by the fact that images (essentially photographs) are important and consequential media for different categories of communication, especially the persuasive ones. In tandem with this, it is often argued that an image – say a photo, a drawing or cartoon – speaks volumes. As Becker (2003, p. 149) succinctly puts it, "pictures [visuals] are said to be the most common way of spreading information, of making an impact, of expressing oneself, of influencing others". Rossiter (1982, p.102) similarly stresses the superiority of the visual image to the text in print (notably package design) and audio-visual advertising communication, as regards creating brand images in the mind of the consumer. He insightfully notes that: "pictures have a well-known superiority over words when it comes to learning (important for brand awareness and brand beliefs) (sic) The superiority holds regardless of whether the

learning task pertains to short-term or long-term memory, or to recognition responses or recall responses". With close reference to Paivio's dual-coding theory, Rossiter (1982) further contends that a leading explanation of picture's superiority to text is that, "pictures generally result in a visual representation as well as a verbal one, whereas words are less likely to result in the former. Long-term visual memory, unlike long-term verbal memory, appears to have virtually unlimited capacity, deteriorates very slowly, or, at all, and shows no primacy or recent effects" (p.102).

Despite their centrality in print and audio-visual advertising messaging, visual images are not always (automatically or inevitably) mobilized in package design. Their use is somehow dictated by intuitive, pragmatic and commercial factors. Such use or choice very much depends on communication context, availability of relevant material resources (for instance enough finances for the advertising/marketing campaign), and pragmatic and creative judgment on the part of the designer. These use or choice of visuals is equally governed by a wide range of artistic principles/traditions, for instance colour codes or conventions. This means that the use of specific types of visual images is bound to be dictated by the envisaged background (the main colour of the package). Based on such codes, as well as on individual manufacturers' policies, visuals are sometimes not used at all in the designing of certain packages. However, visuals seem to be recurrently employed in food package design and food advertising. Following this logic, a good number of food products made in Nigeria noticeably have their packages constructed with colorful visuals, sometimes manipulated, shaped and fine-tuned in varied but specific ways. This is usually with the aim catching the attention of (potential) consumers at the sales point.

More than any constitutive ingredient of the package layout, visuals are definitely susceptible to positively or negatively influence consumers' perception of the product on promotion. Actually, the power of images in package design is seen in the fact that they (the images) graphically give a number of clues of the characteristics, proprieties and virtues of the product being advertised. Corroborating this truism, Wany and Mu-Chien (2013, pp.1-2) contend that the visual images implemented in a package design profoundly enhance the quality of a package. With this, the package is duly considered a self-promotion tool of marketing that attracts consumers' attention, and which has proven to be stimulating sales volume. In effect, a product may not have gone through any advertising, yet its sales volume and market share will both continue to grow, thanks to its packaging, and thanks especially to the systematic use of visuals and colour. A good implementation of visuals and colour in a package design can therefore properly communicate a product for better comprehension. In line with the foregoing, the present article examines how the use of visuals and colours contribute in communicating Nigerian products and manufacturers for better comprehension in the local markets. The paper specifically explores various approaches to the implementation of visuals and colours in food package design in Nigeria.

**The Place of the Image (Visuals) in Modern Culture**

The present era could be regarded as one of image explosion. It is, in fact, an era characterized by the centrality of image flow and visual technologies in both public and private media spheres. Being intimately associated with revolution in media technologies, this great image explosion, has caused audiences to be tremendously surrounded and even bombarded by various sorts of images and visual communications. Such multifaceted visual displays, serve various purposes. one of which is visual persuasion. In effect, through the instrumentality of advertising/marketing communication, the visual image has assumed the function of a strategic medium through which specific messages are sent and much (un)desired impact is exerted on the audience or the receivers. No doubt, most communication scholars today admit that pictures are serious ways of spreading messages, influencing others and impacting attitudes. These perceptions stem from the popular belief that there is an inextricable link between seeing and believing. As notes by Eaves (2014), people tend to be "more interested in seeing information rather than reading about it". Eaves equally attributes the centrality of image flow in today's world to the fact that we are living in a very busy era, where there is no time to devote to any complex and long exercise pertaining to text decoding. He observers that:

> Given that we're increasingly becoming more dependent on mobile devices, it makes
> sense that we are even more inclined to choosing content that's easy on the eye. We're a
> generation of busy people and we don't have the time to read through an entire 600-word

article using our smartphones or tablets. We want high quality images, interesting info-graphics, and fun videos to give us the information we need (P. 89).

In addition to this, pictures are considered superior channels of communication to words with regard to inducing evaluative responses. Such superiority is seen in their powers to accurately communicate emotions. Meanwhile, as Rossiter (1982) insightfully remarks, "emotions drive the basic motivations that energize behaviour" and this may partly justify why TV and cinema, which capture the full (gestural) emotional range, are so effective in influencing purchase behaviour.

The conceptions and definitions of visuals with respect to truth and reality have varied over time, and have chiefly depended on the postulations of different schools of thought, especially those influential within the field of the arts. In accordance with Plato's theories, a visual image, for instance, a painting and other pictorial representations could be viewed as some forms of imitation of realities. A common conception of the phenomenon of visual image has been that, it is an expression of reality. However, with the constant revolution in image technology, visuals are hardly unarguably viewed as plausible representation of realities. The truth claim of visual images has seriously been reduced. Therefore, today, the growing public awareness of the possibility to use computers and other sophisticated technologies in view of manipulating images and the proliferation of television programmes that blend staged and authentic video footage constitute threats to the authority of visual images in the modern world. In effect, the prevalence of such procedures as image blocking, mixed-media, photo montage and their like, in line with technological media revolution and post-modernist paradigm shift have created a veritable crisis in the new visual culture. Such a crisis is described by Karim (2003, p.149) who notes that the new technologies and forms of display tremendously alter conceptions of the image itself and its authority. This postulation can for instance be illustrated with conflicts over the photograph and its representational authority in the "digital age", as well as with debates over the forms and significance of post-modern art. Indicators of post-modernism in visual manipulation include irony, playfulness, parody, self-reflexivity and the like. Visual implementation done in line with post-modernism tend to "mediate a sense of multiplicity, fragmentation, instability of meaning, dis-sensus, the breakdown of grand theories as either narratives of emancipation or speculation (Waugh, 1992,p.49).

**Implementation of Visuals in Advertising and Package Design**
Advertising is an art of message delivery and systematic persuasion which rests on using a wide rage captivating visual and verbal artifacts. In effect, as it longs to subtly influence behaviours/attitudes in favour of a given product, idea or service, it is ideally founded on techniques of creating strong mental imageries, positive images of the product in the mind of the consumer. The use of attractive and motivational images and "picture words", is therefore cardinal in any advertising effort since the act of integrating visual content in any form of marketing campaigns permits the differentiation of a business or product from the rest in competition. Such a fruitful approach also gives viewers and potential consumers a quick view of a brand's main points, while drawing them into a complex and bigger conversation (Eaves 2014, Akabogu 2013, Wang & Chou 2007; Rossiter 1982). Individual consumers are often surrounded and even overwhelmed by a myriad of ubiquitous information and there is need for a system which permits rapid and very efficient encoding and decoding of complex information. Herein come visuals which stand a great chance to enable consumers to have such complex information at a glance. Eaves (2014) insightfully observes that visuals have the advantage of engaging viewers almost instantly and the impression they (visuals) leave in the mind of the consumers lasts longer than mere words. In line with this, visuals are vital or most often indispensable to package design – the same as they are to other medium of advertising communication. Sometimes, they are even more important than text. Eaves aptly justifies this fact with the manner in which the human brain is wired. He notes that:

> Processing print isn't something the human brain was built for. The printed word is a human artifact. It's very convenient and it's worked very well for us for 5,000 years, but it's an invention of human beings. By contrast, Mother Nature has built into our brain our ability to see the visual world and interpret it

This therefore means that the innate ability of man to process visual information is what motivates him to preferably choose content with photos or videos over plain text articles. However, for visuals to have greater impact on the human mind, a wide range of approaches are to be adopted by designers. The implementation of visuals in advertising messages greatly depends on the nature of each media used for the purpose (to advertise). Each media has its distinctive characteristics which warrant situational and intelligent implementation and evaluations of visuals. With close reference to semiotics, Messaris (2006) corroborates this fact thus:

> It is impossible to analyze (semiotically), to evaluate (structurally), and to discuss (contextually) film and television images that, unlike paintings, photographs, slides, and so forth, are in motion, incorporate sound, and are generated by distinctly different visual communication media, furnished by and operated with unique to their own idiosyncratic nature, instruments, materials, and techniques. Perceptually, cognitively, and compositionally the images produced by the various visual communications media (such as film, video, holograms, and computer-generated images) differ substantially. They are perceived, recognized, and composed differently.

Generally, a number of careful approaches or techniques must be observed in visual implementation in advertising messages, irrespective of the medium employed. Some of these techniques include the use of (i) realistic (concrete) visuals, (ii) interactive visuals (particularly in audio-visual media), (iii) colour images, and (iv) high imagery visuals. It has been demonstrated that realistic and concrete visuals are relatively superior for learning as well as for attracting and holding the attention of consumers for many reasons (see Figures 1 and 2 below). Two of these reasons are that " first, people can "relate" to realistic depictions better than to abstract ones, which is in turn probably a function of their imagery value regardless of their specific content.



**Figure 2 : A Realistic Image of Sip Alive Zobo Drink**
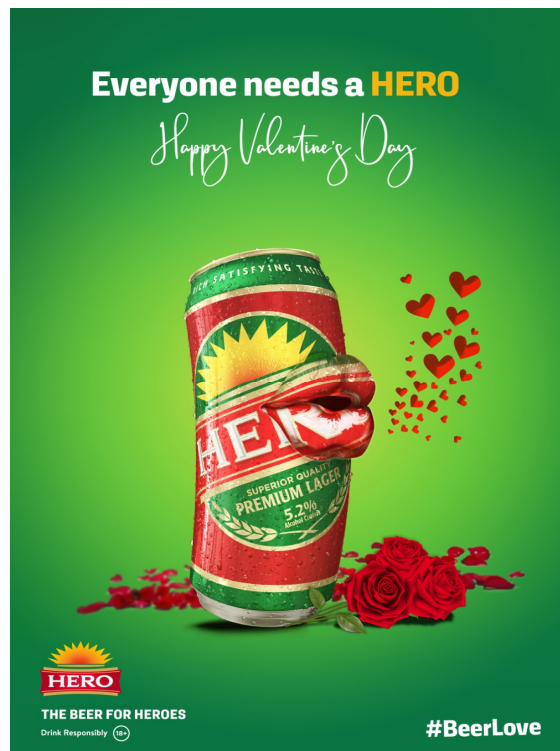
**Figure 1 : An Unrealistic Image of Hero**

**Figure 3** Interactive Visual which relates Tomato Ketchup to its uses

Second, following the dual-coding theory, people can more easily attach a verbal label to realistic visual material. Older children and adults automatically assign verbal labels to all but the most complex and novel pictorial stimuli and thus double-code these stimuli (Wang & Chou 2007; Rossiter 1982). Similarly, interactive visuals successfully relate products to usage context on one hand and to users on another hand (see Figure 3 below). In line with this, they show users relating with the product or the product in action in the usage context. Such is principally achieved in audio-visual advertising.

Another important approach is to preferably use colour visual rather than black and white as research has demonstrated that colour images have potential of triggering emotional motivation (Kaszubowski 2012; Coles et al. 2003). However, black and white visual may still be sufficient for information provision. Kaszubowski (2012, p.63) notes that:

> Packaging professionals have always known that different colors can evoke different emotions and feelings when used on certain packages; they only needed some solid evidence to support these theories. … [package studies have shown] that large color changes to an existing package can increase the likelihood that new customers will consider the product for purchase. However, the package color must be consistent with the brand's original identity.

Particularly in print advertising and package design, priority should be given to the size and position of the visual. Larger visuals tend to attract more attention than smaller ones. The visual should also be placed in the copy or on the package in a way as to be seen before the headline or before the textual elements of the copy are read (see Figures 1-3 above). This again may be achieved by magnifying the size of the visuals. Prioritizing the visual is strategic as it encourages a picture-word, rather than a word-picture learning context, which is fruitful in learning and is very much in line with theories which stipulate that the more people view the visual content of a message, the higher the chances are of such viewers, buying the product on promotion or obtaining the advertised services.

The effective implementation of visuals in print advertising and package design also places emphasis on holding rather than just getting the attention of potential consumers. This will enable the recognition and recall of pictorial stimuli to be higher, that is from 2 to 2.6 seconds. Attention-holding is very important for evaluative response to advertising message. Attention-holding also implies the use of familiar and relevant stimuli, though research in psychology has equally demonstrated that novelty has great potential to catch the attention of viewers and potential consumers. This has represented a kind of dilemma in advertising message construction as designers are most often confronted with the

need to combine to somewhat contradictory elements (the familiar and the novel) in the design of their advertising copies or product package.

**Visuals in Food Marketing and Food Package Design**

Food advertising is a remarkable and prominent feature of global product marketing. In line with this, some studies (notably Brenhardt et al. 2013; Kelly et al. 2010; Akabogu 2013 and Young & Hoedebeck 2015) have associated the ubiquity of food marketing in most countries of the world with deplorable phenomena among which are (children) obesity. While reviewing a number of studies on food marking, Kelly et al (2010) contend that food and beverages constitute the most highly advertised products and that confectionery, pre-sugared breakfast cereals and fast-food restaurants account for over half of all food advertisements in most countries across the world. Food marketing thus successfully generates positive beliefs about advertised foods and often tremendously influences consumers' food preferences, purchase requests, and consumption. According to the tabloid *How Design* (2013), food represents a central part of our culture, so it is not surprising that:

> There's been an explosion of great food packaging designs to go along with the rise in food products. Whether it's an artisanal jam or a mass-retail prepared meal, excellent product packaging design plays a huge role in making a sale. A well-designed label, box or bag stands out on the shelf in a big-box grocery—and it tells the story of a small-batch product at a farmers' market or neighborhood shop

In other words, an excellent food package design or print advert does not only differentiate a product from the others, it implicitly shows the weaknesses of other products in competition in the market.

One solid instrument responsible for effective differentiation of a product from other brands in competition is the visual content. Food package designers always find it necessary to give the viewer or potential buyer a visual description of the product, in the guise of an appetizer and "bait". They seek to lead the buyer/user into salivating in anticipation (see Figure 4 below). This is in line with the fact that "foodie" consumers mostly shop for food products that are visually presented as tasty, healthful and of high quality. Design geeks similarly look at food packaging which artfully combined typographic elegance, craftsmanship and more especially, mouth-watering visuals (Wang & Chou 2007, Endong & Evuline 2015, Endong 2015). As Dorn (2012) notes, it is the visual component(s) of the package which give(s) full force to the textual ingredients.

A food product must come in an appealing food package design. The words found in every packaging are considered powerful along with the visuals that come with it. An effective packaging must persuade consumers, connecting with their minds and emotions. Hence, food branding greatly depends on catchy words and powerful visuals, considering the graphics used in representing your products. Excessive words in packaging should be avoided because it tends to be boring and loses the consumers interest. To achieve effective and attractive food package design, use of precise, powerful, and short group of words are very significant to consumers. Attractive and interesting visuals are integrated considering the total package design to achieve a product's unique identity.



Figure 4 : A visual of Indomie Noodles

Crafty and enticing food packaging therefore hinges on placing an attractive (eye-catchy and appealing) image of the product at a strategic corner of the package, or opening/creating a widow on the package through which the product is subtly exhibited. Putting the best face of a product may sometimes entail image manipulation, photo-montage and various forms of image and colour blocking (see Figure 2 above). In theory, the visual content of a package facilitates initial evaluation of the product by the consumer.

A better evaluation of food products is facilitated by clear packages. However, such approach in packages is suitable for natural products such as fruits, vegetables, appetizers and the like which, when still in good state, naturally have appealing appearances. Young and Hoedebeck (2015) corroborate this fact thus:

> [Some] foods have a natural visual appeal and can earn added attention on retail shelves. Healthy snacks, like granola and trail mixes, housed in clear packaging capture notice on retail shelves with plump fruits and nuts showing through. Colorful fresh vegetables, like carrot sticks and bagged salads, are attention-getters in refrigerated areas. Pet treats can show off their dog bone, bacon strip, T-bone, pig-in-a-blanket and other fanciful shapes. Food manufacturers considering clear packaging often evaluate their products' visual appearance and might even adjust certain recipes to include bigger or more colorful ingredients, such as large fruit chips and raisins.

Visible products provide a wide range of vital visual information to the potential buyer. Such information may permit the viewers and potential buyers gauge the freshness or succulent nature of a given product on promotion by sight. This is far more reliably than inscription on package on the expiring date of the product. As Young and Hoedebeck (2015) put it, "opening a window to packaged foods, then, becomes an effective way to convey information about food product attributes, such as freshness, consistency, size and colour". However, the new *nano* and $Al_2O_3$ materials which make the creation of clear windows possible cannot protect a good category of food products from contamination or cannot be as effective as conventional aluminum foil and metalized film (Young & Hoedebeck 2015; FAO 2014). Based on this, the approach consisting in opening a window to exhibit the product is to be deemed intelligent. Such an approach may require package testing, adequate budgeting and high deal of planning.

**Colour Use in Food Packaging**

As earlier highlighted, proper implementation of colour is a key determinant factor of effective food package design. In effect, colour greatly influenced consumers' perception of the product. Some studies have demonstrated that a good number of consumers often associate (bright) colour(s) with freshness, quality and taste (Wang & Chou 2007; Rossiter 1982). So, through a good choice of colour, a designer may "give life" to his package and entice consumers. However the designer is always faced with a multiplicity of challenges related to the varying and dynamic meaning of colours with respect to time and cultures as well as to the adverse effects an aberrant decoding these colours may have on the perception and commercialization of the food product. Indeed, in food packaging, different colours can evoke concurrent feelings and emotions in consumers or potential buyers' mind. Kaszubowski (2012, P.62), reviews that in different countries and cultures, colours often have many different meanings. "Just one colour blunder could turn an entire country away from a specific product. A culture's distaste for a particular product due to its package can also lead to the consumer's dissatisfaction with the company itself". Colour meanings are equally very dynamic as they change with time. In effect, years ago, the green colour was relatively associated with unpleasant images such as vomit. But, today, the meaning have positively changed as green is now seen as the colour of nature, life, healthiness, fertility and abundance. In line with this, consumers often "view green colored packaging as having fewer calories, more protein, and less fat" (Dada 2012,P.19; Kaszubowski 2012, P.63). The black colour has similarly witnessed a fluctuation in its meaning over time. In fact, years ago, the black colour used to be related to death, depression and sadness. Today, black is used by many designers to convey a sense of elegance, wealth, and refinement. Kaszubowski (2012, P.62) strongly opines that; "although black is not very popular in food packaging, it is still used to make other colours in the package stand out". Designers equally use the yellow colour to characterize its lemon flavor, and also incorporate black into

the label to signify elegance. Colour use in food package design is therefore supposed to be done according to laid down patterns or established harmonies.

Relatively, new trends in design have favoured a number of post-modernist approaches to the use of colour, notably colour blocking/blogging and a whole lot of other uncontrollable "artistic" innovations. Colour blogging is an approach consisting in using colours more expressively, in total disregard to traditional colour "rules" and harmonies. In line with such a post-modernist current, colour implementation by a number of package designers is in a way as to "violate" or deconstruct traditional colour codes. In Esekong (2013, P.149) words, the phenomenon cuts across various aspects/domains of design. He notes that "artist and designers seem to be breaking colour barriers more than ever by using several 'loud', bright and unrelated colour" on packages. In the visual fields, colour blocking is believed by a number of observers to have potentials of creating desired effects. However, relatively little attention has been given to the effects such an art of colour usage may have in print advertising and particularly in food package design. Viewed from the complexities encounters in package design, it is commendable to always hinge on research and demographics to determine the approach to the use of both the visuals and colours in laying out the package as well as to determine the workability of a package. A product may fail, if an inappropriate colour scheme is adopted.

**Conclusion**

Visuals have come to assume a central place in our contemporary worlds, thanks partly to the ubiquity of such technologies as the Internet and the Social media, which facilitate the proliferation of images in both the virtual and physical spaces of the world. The human mind has grown to processed information passed out through images faster than information conveyed in writing. In line with this, most communicators, including advertisers/marketers have sought to deploy catchy images and appropriate colors to (i) sell their products, ideas and services, (ii) position their brands, and (iii) increase sales.

In this paper, attention has been given to how Nigerian manufacturers in the food and beverage industry deploy images to advertise their products and to ultimately increase sales. The paper has argued that Nigerian manufacturers proceed by using print adverts that do not only differentiate their products from the others but also implicitly show the weaknesses of other products in competition in the market. They always find it necessity to give the viewer or potential buyer a visual depiction of their products, in the guise of appetizer and "bait". They seek to lead the buyer/user into salivating in anticipation. They design their print adverts and packaging in a way as to artfully combine typographic elegance, craftsmanship and more especially mouth-watering visuals.

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# OIL THEFT AND FOOD SECURITY IN GOKANA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA (2012-2023)

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**Abstract**

*This study examined the relationship between oil theft and food security in Gokana and explored its implications. In the course of the study six research questions and six objectives were put forth to aid in unbundling the research burdens. We adopted the political ecology theory. The study equally adopted a triangulation method. The population of the study being 328,500 which is the population of Gokana Local Government Area, the sample size of 400 was determined using Taro Yamane formula. To arrive at the sample respondents, multi-stage approach was used while frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the socio-demographic data and research questions. The oil theft activities were found to have resulted in several adverse consequences for food security in Gokana. Firstly, the grand mean ratio of 2.96 established the fact of oil theft in Gokana as perpetrated through pipeline vandalism, illegal bunkering, illegal refineries, sea piracy and the illegal connection on pipelines. The subsequent grand mean of 3.03 revealed that the high prevalence of oil theft did lead to a reduction in the rate of food availability as it led to poor production of the farmlands, pollution of rivers and creeks, destruction of farmlands through fire disaster from the activities of illegal refineries among others. Additionally, the grand mean ratio of 3.12 further indicated that the oil theft and the activities surrounding the problem negatively affected food accessibility in Gokana LGA amongst others. The study recommends among others that it is necessary for government in conjunction with oil companies to carry out a broad-based public awareness campaign to educate the people of the area on the dangers of oil theft on their livelihood.*

**Keywords:** Niger Delta, oil theft, food security, illegal bunkering, illegal refining, pollution

## Introduction

The importance of oil to Nigeria's security, economic survival and political stability cannot be overemphasized as the nation depends mainly on oil revenue for her economic survival. The recent increase in oil theft, illegal bunkering, illegal non-standard refineries, piracy and other forms of criminality in the Niger Delta suggests that the fragile peace established by the Amnesty Programme is now at risk, and the region seems to be sliding back into instability. The apparent insoluble instability in the Niger Delta, even in its post-amnesty phase, is a sort of retribution for decades of abuse of the land and people of the Niger Delta (Okoli, 2013). The increase of crude oil theft and illegal bunkering in the Niger Delta is a threat to economic viability of Nigeria, and a challenge that is critical to the wellbeing of the oil and gas industry that drives the Nigerian economy.

Nigeria is one of the most vulnerable countries and the most severely impacted of oil theft, as the burden is felt in our daily lives either directly or indirectly (Etuonovbe, 2009). For instance, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and National Economic Council (NEC) raised serious concerns about the rate of oil theft (Ehikioya, 2019). Significant number of crude oil pipelines have been vandalized by militant groups in the pretext for resource control and by criminal elements who aimed at jeopardizing the country's source of revenue. According to statistics, in 2000 alone, over 200,000 to 300,000 barrels of crude were stolen per day while in 2003 to 2008 apparently N14 trillion was lost to crude oil theft. Also, in 2011, Nigeria recorded a daily crude oil theft of over 150,000 and 200,000 barrels of crude oil being the equivalent of Gabon and Ghana's daily oil production amounting to over $120m stolen from Nigeria on a daily basis. According to the Managing Director of Pipeline Product Marketing Company (PPMC), Haruna Momoh, Nigeria recently lost N160bn to oil theft pipeline vandals at Arepo, Ogun State, Ijedodo, Ijegun and Epe in Lagos.

Despite community concerns about the impact of pipeline vandalism, oil theft and illegal refining of crude oil still persist and it has affected the quality of fish and farm produce. Recently, there is an alarming rate of food scarcity across communities and states in the Niger Delta, such as Rivers,

Edo, Delta, Abia, Imo, Akwa Ibom and Bayelsa States. However, these oil-producing states and their local communities where oil production activities are carried out are experiencing low agricultural yield such as Alode, Alesa, Okari, Ekerekana, Gokana communities, Umuechem, Igbo-Etche, Okeragu, Ubeta, Odiagbedi, Obagi, and Omoku communities in Rivers State. Ironically, these are agricultural communities that produce their own food in terms of crops, rearing of animals and fishing. Food production or agricultural yield was very high and the people subsisted on their environment with complete natural nutritional values in the past.

In the target area for this study, the people are subsistence farmers and partly fishermen, but the output of their farm produce are not encouraging today when compared to the past years. In fact, in the period 1960 to 1980s, there were varieties of animals, plants and seafood in the state. Today, some species of the animals, plants and seafood are extinct and others are in a state of destruction. To support this, Isa (2008) posits that the presence of petroleum products on land and on leaves of plants penetrates the leaves and interfere with its functioning by reducing transpiration and photosynthesis. That is, where the pollution is light, the leaves become yellow and drop soon after. Also, under heavy pollution, the plant and the soil are affected.

**Statement of the Problem**

Oil and food play pivotal roles in lives of individuals and nations. While oil is required daily on the world stage to power machineries of economies, the human operators of those economies are sustained by food for survival, energy and growth. Food provides the fibre for thinking and manufacturing of machineries of economies. Naaneh and Tolani (2014) maintain that it is akin to a cottage industry with a capacity for massive employment but remains "a private gain and a public disaster." The concept of public disaster was again taken up by Behnassi et al, (2013) and concluded that the activities of the local refiners greatly impacted on farmlands and fishing areas of the host communities.

Ekpenyong & Samuel (2020) researched the topic *Assessment of oil spillage and livelihood performance in the Niger Delta region: A case study of Gokana Local Government Area, Nigeria*. The study used environmental sustainable development theory to analyze the missing links in the research work. The study reinforced the data in several researched studies on oil spills and its impact on the livelihood of the local populations in the Niger Delta region. Findings from the study affirmed that oil spillage adversely affected agricultural productivity. For instance as indicated in the analysis, Cassava production has declined compared to era of pre-oil spillage with an accepted mean and standard deviation scores of 4.01 and 2.01 respectively.

Oil theft and food insecurity in Gokana Local Government Area is a topic that remains largely understudied in the literature reviewed above. Despite its importance in understanding the dynamics of food insecurity in the region, there is a gap in the literature on the subject matter. Gokana is a rural local government area in Rivers State, Nigeria and is known to be a major source of crude oil production. This area is particularly vulnerable to oil theft, which can lead to significant reduction in agricultural production and the subsequent food insecurity. The literature available is lacking in research that explores the relationship between oil theft and food insecurity in Gokana. Research is needed to shed light on the causes and consequences of oil theft in the region, and to develop effective strategies for reducing food insecurity due to oil theft. In addition, research should also focus on the socio-economic implications of oil theft and its effects on the local population in Gokana. Such research could help to inform policy makers and aid in the development of more effective strategies to reduce oil theft and food insecurity in the region. The broad aim of this study is to assess the prevalence of oil theft on food security in Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State. The specific objectives are to:
  i.   Identify the nature and trend of crude oil theft in Gokana
  ii.  Examine the ways oil theft has affected food availability in Gokana
  iii. Investigate how crude oil theft has impacted access to food in Gokana
  iv.  Assess the impacts of crude oil theft on food utilization in Gokana
  v.   Examine the impacts of crude oil theft on food utilization in Gokana
  vi.  Investigate how the communities respond to oil theft and food insecurity challenges in Gokana.

It is in view of the foregoing that this study was designed and is guided by the following research questions:
i.   What is the nature and trend of crude oil theft in Gokana?

ii.   In what ways has oil theft affected food availability in Gokana?
iii.  How has crude oil theft impacted access to food in Gokana?
iv.   What are the impacts of crude oil theft on food utilization in Gokana?
v.    What are the impacts of crude oil theft on food stability in Gokana?
vi.   How do communities respond to oil theft and food insecurity challenges in Gokana?

**Literature Review**

Bebeteidoh, et al. (2020) examined the *Sustained impact of the activities of local crude oil refiners on their host communities in Nigeria*. This research investigated the impact of the activities of the local refiners on their host communities' farmlands, rivers and estuaries. A quantitative research method was adopted in this study through the administration of questionnaires to local stakeholders (chiefs, the youth, farmers, traders, fishermen/fisherwomen and residents of affected communities). Quantitative data was collected from three communities in the Niger Delta with local refineries and the data was analysed using descriptive and inferential (Chi Square and Correlation) methods. The study demonstrated the high impact of the activities of the refiners on farmlands and fishing areas of the host communities and made recommendations to all stakeholders in the upstream and downstream sectors of the petroleum industry.

In an attempt to explain the devastating effect of crude oil on Ibeno River, Akwa Ibom State, Njoku and Njoku (2010) argued that the rate at which the rivers were being polluted by human and industrial activities was alarming and called for immediate concern. The study took three samples from the Ibeno River to the laboratory for proper analysis of the physio-chemical parameters. And they noted the different oil spills and the different level of impact; in which the impact was considered dependent on the type of oil spilled, the location of the spill, the species of wildlife in the area, the timing of the breeding circle and even the weather during which the spill occurred. Njoku and Njoku (2010), also noted that the impact of oil spill on vegetation is huge on plant. When a plant is completely covered in oil, it usually dies because it can no longer take in oxygen or release carbon dioxide as photosynthesis is hindered. Some of the impacts of the oil spill affect man on the long run. For instance, it constitutes hazards to man through the eating of contaminated sea foods; decrease of fisheries resources, modification of the ecosystem and modification of habitats as well delaying and preventing of re-colonization.

In another study undertaken by Umar and Othman (2017), the importance of oil wealth on Nigeria's economy was established showing an ugly experience of decades of over dependence on oil. Despite crude oil being the only resources open for export in Nigeria, there has been frequent attacks from vandals on pipelines transporting petroleum products. The study focused on unraveling the causes and consequences of crude oil pipeline vandalism for the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It adopted the descriptive statistics design and 269 respondents were purposively and randomly selected from across the Niger Delta States. The outcome of the research explained the existence of a significant and positive relationship between poor management, inadequate governance and environmental degradation. In terms of the relationship between marginalization and vandalism, the study established that it was negative. Umar and Othman (2017) further observed that vandalism has destroyed arable agricultural land and has caused huge losses to the indigenes and on the Nigerian economy. In view of the challenges, they concluded by recommending for institutional reform through improving infrastructural provision to the local people.

Obot, et al. (2010) conducted a study in Akwa Ibom State to understand the relationship between oil spillage and fishing activities in the area. The study used copies of questionnaire to collect data from a 240 stratified sampled population and the Pearson correlation statistical method was used to analyze the data. Though Obot, et al. observed no significant relationship between oil spillage and fishing activities, an inverse relationship was discovered in the study locale. The study further discovered that increase oil spillages could negatively affect fishing activities in the study area.

Ogwu (2012) undertook a study to analyze the impact of oil and gas pipelines on the environment and settlements from the perspective of environmental justice, using a case of oil producing communities of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The study adopted case study method with three case study areas. A total of 6 group discussions, 30 in-depth interviews and 2 workshops were conducted. The analysis of the findings indicated that oil and gas pipeline network has not improved the environmental economic conditions of the communities hosting the pipelines. The study also disclosed that lack of involvement

of the locals and appropriate recognition accorded to some groups and stakeholders in the management of oil and gas pipeline projects were significantly related to the level of sabotage. The study advocated that a new approach, based on environmental justice system that promotes inclusion of necessary stakeholders, including the physical planners and would incorporate local knowledge and experience into environmental management of the region.

Lawal & Ese (2012) assessed the environmental impact of pipeline vandalism and oil theft on Nigerian landscape with specific interest in the Niger Delta. They were interested in the Niger Delta due to the high level of environmental degradation going on in the Niger Delta. And the study was designed to know the level of the causes of pipeline vandalization and its environmental impact in the Niger Delta region. The information used for the study was got through primary and secondary sources. Data were collated from 100 oil company's officials and another 100 from the host communities within the Niger Delta region. The analysis of the data were done with simple percentages and the result showed that there was high rate of pipeline vandalism in the Niger Delta and the incidence of pipeline vandalism being caused by long history of neglect, marginalization and repression of the people.

Again, another study was conducted in the Niger Delta by Bereiweriso and Okeke (2013) to understand the causes, environmental impacts and the mitigation measures to the impacts of oil spills. They agreed that oil spillage led to pollution which fouled the environment by natural phenomenon and man-made causes. The effect of spilled crude oil could be short term or long term, depending on the quantity of oil spilled. And when spilled into the river or farmlands, the oil takes different means to get to the receptor which made the task of remediation a rigorous exercise.

Nwalado, et al. (2011) investigated the impacts of pipeline vandalism on economic development in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design approach. One hundred members of staff of NNPC under the auspices of PPMC were drawn for the study and questionnaire instrument was used to get the required information from the respondents. The analysis of the study done with the aid of Chi-Square indicated that the study disagreed with the fact that there is a relationship between crude oil pipelines vandalization and economic development. Rather, they posited that relationship exists between the human losses and the contribution of the human beings to the economy. The study concluded with some key policy recommendations. Such recommendations included the locations of the pipeline right of ways (ROW) which should be cleared to at least a width of 25 meters and which also should be placed on both air and land surveillance operations.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study adopted the political ecology perspective to establish the remote causes of oil theft and the challenges of food security the Niger Delta and Gokana in particular. Political ecology is an interdisciplinary approach that intersects the disciplines of political science, environmental science, and economics to analyze relationships between political, economic, and ecological systems (Robbins, 2004). It seeks to understand how human societies interact with their natural environment, and how this interaction shapes and is shaped by political, economic, and social forces. This approach has been used to examine a range of issues, including resource management, climate change, and food insecurity.

The nexus between theory of political ecology and oil theft has been explored in recent research. For example, according to Kuye (2018), "political ecology is a framework that seeks to provide an understanding of how power relations among states, corporations, individuals, and other stakeholders shape the political struggle over access to and control of oil resources" (p. 6). This framework has been used to explain the phenomenon of oil theft in the Niger Delta, a region of Nigeria that is heavily reliant on oil production. Kuye (2018) argued that the prevalence of oil theft in the region can be explained by the dynamics of power and control between the federal government and local communities, as well as between multinational corporations and local elites. Additionally, Kuye (2018) posited that global economic forces and the lack of investment in local infrastructure have also contributed to the prevalence of oil theft in the region. Thus, the theory of political ecology provides a useful framework for understanding the nexus between oil theft and power dynamics in the Niger Delta of which Gokana Local Government Area is not exempted. In addition, the economic, political, and social turmoil caused by oil theft and related activities has resulted in a lack of access to food for many communities in the region (Baruwa, 2012). Thus, political ecology theory can provide insight into how oil theft and its associated activities have had a detrimental effect on food security in the Gokana Local Government Area.

**Methodology**

The study adopted a triangulation method approach. The population of this study comprised the entire population of Gokana, Local Government Area who are directly affected by oil theft and the consequent food insecurity. According to National Bureau of Statistics (2016) projection, Gokana has a total population of Three Hundred and Twenty-Eight Thousand, Five Hundred (328,500). The sample size of this study is 400 using the Taro Yamane (1967).

The researcher through his research assistants was able to identify the real farmers within the region and others who depended on fishing for their sustenance. Being a participant observer, purposive sampling guided our selection of the communities visited as they have been epicentres of devastated farmlands, streams and creeks due to oil theft. These communities have also witnessed oil spills, oil theft, cult clashes and inter-communal wars at one stage or another.

The purposive sampling technique that guided the choice of communities gave credence to a combination of convenience or accidental sampling technique as well as snow ball sampling technique. The accidental sampling technique so mentioned is not to be mistaken for a haphazard sojourn through the communities as the tour was guided by the stratification of the people into farmers, fishermen, traders, council of chiefs, oil thieves/cult members and secondary/primary school teachers. Each of these got a minimum of six slots of the 40 allotted to most communities. These communities are: K.Dere, B.Dere, Bomju, Lewe, Mogho, Bodo, Biara. Nwebiara, Deken. Deyor and Barako respectively.

Two main sources of data collection were used to generate data for this study. These included primary and secondary sources. The primary data are those which were collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happened to be original, using methods such as Questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and Key Informant Interview (KII). Secondary sources were also used which included published or unpublished data. Others were books, magazines and newspapers, public records and statistics, historical documents, technical and trade journals etc. The study adopted the following methods of data analysis: Simple percentage, mean and standard deviation as well as thematic analysis for the qualitative data. Descriptive statistics were employed also to analyze the demographic data while mean and standard deviation were adopted to analyze the research questions. Moreover, thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data.

**Data Analysis**

**Research Question 1:** What is the nature and trend of oil theft in Gokana?

**Table 1** *The nature and trend of oil theft in Gokana (N=389, Criterion mean =2.50)*

| S/N | Item | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | STD | Decision Rule |
|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|---------------|
| 1 | Pipeline vandalism | 89 | 211 | 81 | 8 | 2.97 | 0.72 | **Accepted** |
| 2 | Illegal bunkering | 95 | 192 | 83 | 19 | 2.93 | 0.80 | **Accepted** |
| 3 | Non-standard refineries/kpofire | 96 | 202 | 83 | 8 | 2.99 | 0.73 | **Accepted** |
| 4 | Sea piracy | 138 | 198 | 48 | 4 | 3.21 | 0.69 | **Accepted** |
| 5 | Illegal insertion and connection on petroleum pipelines | 73 | 176 | 100 | 40 | 2.72 | 0.88 | **Accepted** |
| **Grand Total** | | | | | | **2.96** | **0.76** | **Accepted** |

**Source:** Fieldwork Survey (2022)

Table 1 above presented the analysis of the nature and trend of oil theft in Gokana. The mean ratio of 2.72 and standard deviation of 0.72 indicated that the breaking of pipelines otherwise known as pipeline vandalism exists in Gokana. The mean ratio of 2.93 and standard deviation of 0.80 also indicated illegal bunkering business also exists in Gokana Local Government Area and this remains a form of oil theft activities. Again, the mean ratio of 2.99 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.73 established that illegal refineries known as kpofire existed in Gokana. Furthermore, the mean ratio above the criterion ratio of 2.50 (i.e. 3.21 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.69) indicated that sea pirates who obstruct oil transportation along the coastal communities in Gokana also constitutes a form of oil theft. The mean ratio of 2.72 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.88 further established that oil theft is carried out in the form of inserting pipes into petroleum pipelines and diverting same to other locations in Gokana. The grand mean of 2.96 and standard deviation of 0.76

established the fact of oil theft in Gokana which is perpetrated through pipeline vandalism, illegal bunkering, illegal refineries, sea piracy and the illegal connection on pipelines.

**Research Question 2:** In what ways has oil theft affected food availability in Gokana?
**Table 2.** *The extent food availability induced by oil theft in Gokana (N=389, Criterion mean =2.50)*

| S/N | Item | Mean | STD | Decision Rule |
|-----|------|------|-----|---------------|
| 6 | Pollution of farmlands | 3.12 | 0.71 | **Accepted** |
| 7 | Pollution of rivers and creeks | 3.05 | 0.74 | **Accepted** |
| 8 | Destruction of farmlands and properties through fire disasters | 2.95 | 0.72 | **Accepted** |
| 9 | Reduce manpower in farming and fishing | 2.86 | 0.80 | **Accepted** |
| 10 | Farmers and fishermen are afraid of going | 3.17 | 0.75 | **Accepted** |
| **Grand Total** | | **3.03** | **0.74** | **Accepted** |

**Source**: Fieldwork Survey (2022)

Table 2 above presented the views of the respondents on the ways in which oil theft has affected food availability in Gokana. The result indicated that the mean ratio of 3.12 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.71 established that oil pollution from the activities of non-standard refiners has polluted farmlands and led to a reduction in the rate of harvest. The mean ratio of 3.05 and standard deviation of 0.74 established that the pollution of farmlands has led to low availability of food. The mean ratio of 2.95 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.72 further indicated that oil theft has polluted the rivers and creeks in the coastal communities. Furthermore, the mean ratio of 2.86 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.80 established that oil theft has caused the death of many farmers and fishermen and as such prevented them from engaging in their agricultural activities and this has contributed to the low rate of food availability. The respondents also agreed to the fact that oil theft has caused security breach and has caused fear among the farmers. For instance, the mean ratio of 3.17 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.75 further established that oil theft created fear among the farmers and has reduced the rate of food availability. The grand mean of 3.03 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.74 revealed that oil theft has led to a reduction in the rate of food availability because it has led to poor production of the farmlands, pollution of rivers and creeks, destruction of farmlands through fire disaster from the activities of illegal refineries among others.

**Research Question 3:** How has oil theft impacted access to food in Gokana?
**Table 3.** *The impact of oil theft on access to food in Gokana (N=389, Criterion mean =2.50)*

| S/N | Item | Mean | STD | Decision Rule |
|-----|------|------|-----|---------------|
| 11 | Low interest in agrobusiness | 3.10 | 0.70 | **Accepted** |
| 12 | Poor attention to infrastructures in the rural communities occupied by vandals | 3.07 | 0.76 | **Accepted** |
| 13 | Fear of vandals and illegal refiners scared farmers away from their farms | 3.01 | 0.56 | **Accepted** |
| 14 | Increased fear among commercial drivers carrying food from farms to the market in the communities | 3.28 | 0.64 | **Accepted** |
| 15 | Increase in transport fare due to fear of accessing the area | 3.17 | 0.74 | **Accepted** |
| **Grand Total** | | **3.12** | **0.68** | **Accepted** |

**Source:** Fieldwork Survey (2022)

The Table 3 above presented the views of the respondents on how crude oil theft has impacted access to food in Gokana Local Government Area. The mean ratio of 3.10 and standard deviation of 0.70 established that the respondents agreed that oil theft has discouraged many individuals from investing in agricultural business and this has slowed down access to food in the study area. The mean ratio of 3.07 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.76 further indicated that the insecurity in the communities with pipeline vandals and other forms criminals has deterred government from fixing the infrastructures that support agricultural food accessibility in the sampled communities. Again, the mean

ratio of 3.01 and standard deviation of 0.56 also indicated that the fear of pipeline vandals and bunkerers have scared farmers away from accessing their farmlands and harvesting their crops for sale in the local markets. The mean ratio of 3.17 and standard deviation of 0.74 further indicated that the increase in transport fare due to fear of accessing the area also caused problem in accessing food from the farmlands in the study area.

**Research Question 4:** What are the impacts of oil theft on food utilization in Gokana?
**Table 4.** *The impacts of oil theft on food utilization in Gokana (N=389, Criterion mean =2.50)*

| S/N | Item | Mean | STD | Decision Rule |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | Poor production of nutritious food as a result of pollution of farmlands | 3.11 | 0.70 | **Accepted** |
| 17 | Fishes from the river are detrimental to human health as a result of the activities of oil thieves | 3.20 | 0.75 | **Accepted** |
| 18 | Oil spill affects the quality of sea foods | 2.97 | 0.72 | **Accepted** |
| 19 | Destruction of local agricultural storage during clashes between rival oil thieves | 3.03 | 0.77 | **Accepted** |
| 20 | Stealing of agricultural produce in storage by criminals engaging in oil theft | 3.29 | 0.58 | **Accepted** |
| **Grand Total** | | **3.12** | **0.70** | **Accepted** |

**Source:** Fieldwork Survey (2022)

Table 4 assessed the impacts of oil theft on food utilization in Gokana Local Government Area. The mean ratio of 3.11 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.70 indicated that the area has recorded poor production of nutritious food as a result polluted farmland. The views of the respondents on the quality of the fish and sea foods were also sampled and the mean ratio of 3.20 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.75 indicated that the pollution has contaminated the rivers and streams and has reduced the quality of the fishes. Again, the mean rate of 2.97 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.72 also indicated that the oil spill from the activities of oil thieves have affected the quality of sea food in the markets. Furthermore, the mean rate of 3.03 and the corresponding standard deviation of 0.77 indicated that the destruction of local agriculture storage during clashes between rival oil thieves have affected the utilization of agricultural produce from the upland and the coastal communities. The mean ratio of 3.29 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.58 further established that agricultural produce in storage were being stolen by criminals engaging in oil theft. The grand mean of 3.12 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.70 revealed that oil theft has led to poor food utilization in the study area. This has revealed that the oil theft constitutes one of the causal factors resulting in poor food utilization in the study communities in Gokana.

**Research Question 5:** What are the impacts of oil theft on food stability in Gokana?
**Table 5.** *The impact of oil theft on food stability in Gokana (N=389, Criterion mean =2.50)*

| S/N | Item | Mean | STD | Decision Rule |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21 | Clashes between rival cult groups reduce the rate of food supply | 3.10 | 0.73 | Accepted |
| 22 | Increase in price of transportation affects food supply to the market | 3.17 | 0.69 | Accepted |
| 23 | Activities of illegal refiners contribute to scarcity of land for farming | 2.96 | 0.81 | Accepted |
| 24 | Pollution of farmlands has affected the capacity of the farmers to invest in crop production | 2.94 | 0.77 | Accepted |
| 25 | Pollution of the coastal communities has affected the capacity of the fishermen and women to invest in the fishing business | 2.70 | 0.89 | Accepted |
| 26 | Attacks by sea pirates affect the food supply and stability | 3.04 | 0.72 | Accepted |
| **Grand Mean** | | **3.01** | **0.76** | **Accepted** |

**Source:** Fieldwork Survey (2022)

Table 5 was used to assess the role played by oil theft in food stability in Gokana. The aim was to find out if oil theft is associated with the perennial instability recorded in food supply to the markets in Gokana. The mean rate of 3.10 and standard deviation of 0.73 revealed that clashes between rival cult groups reduce food supply. Also, the mean ratio of 3.17 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.69 showed that the increase in price of transportation as a result of oil theft affects food supply to the markets. Furthermore, the mean rates of 2.96 and 2.94 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.81 and 0.77 established that the pollution of farmlands by the activities of pipeline vandals and kpofire has affected the capacity of the farmers to invest in crop production and pollution of the coastal communities has affected the capacity of the fishermen and women to invest in the fishing business. The study also assessed the issues of attacks by sea pirates and the effect on food supply and stability, the mean ratio of 3.04 and standard deviation of 0.72 revealed that the attacks on market people by sea pirates have affected the supply of food and its stability.

**Research Question 7:** How do communities respond to oil theft and food insecurity challenges in Gokana?

**Table 6.** *The communities respond to oil theft and food insecurity challenges in Gokana*

| S/N | Item | Mean | STD | Decision Rule |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 28 | Community ban on illegal refining of oil in the communities | 3.21 | 0.69 | **Accepted** |
| 29 | Community ban on cult-related activities and militancy | 3.12 | 0.61 | **Accepted** |
| 30 | Community ban on sea piracy | 3.12 | 0.74 | **Accepted** |
| 31 | Effective local governance structure | 2.97 | 0.72 | **Accepted** |
| 32 | Protest by the people against oil theft and pollution | 3.08 | 0.56 | **Accepted** |
| 33 | Giving support to government forces against oil theft | 1.91 | 0.78 | **Not Accepted** |
| 34 | Maintaining sacred lands in the communities | 1.89 | 0.74 | **Not Accepted** |
| 35 | Arrest of suspected vandals and illegal refiners | 3.19 | 0.80 | **Accepted** |
| 36 | Addressing communal and chieftaincy conflicts and having a united stand against all forms of oil theft | 3.22 | 0.73 | **Accepted** |
| **Grand Total** | | **2.85** | **0.70** | **Accepted** |

**Source**: Field Survey (2022)

Table 6 above was used to analyse the views of the respondents on the approaches commonly adopted by the communities to tackle the challenges of oil theft and food insecurity. The mean rate of 3.21 and standard deviation of 0.69 revealed that communities at different times have placed ban on illegal refining of crude in the communities. The mean rate of 3.12 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.61 also revealed that some communities have banned the activities of cult groups and militants in their communities which has deterred the criminals from carrying their illegitimate activities in the local communities. The mean rates of 3.12, 2.97 and 3.08 and the corresponding standard deviation of 0.74, 0.72 and 0.56 revealed that some communities have placed ban on sea piracy, initiated a good and effective local governance structure to mitigate criminal behaviour within their locality and also engage in series of protest against oil theft and pollution in the local communities. Furthermore, the mean ratios of 1.91 and 1.89 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.78 and 0.74 indicated that the respondents disagreed that the communities have provided support to government forces against oil theft and have maintained sacred lands in the communities.

**Analysis of Qualitative Data**

To understand the relationship between oil theft and food scarcity, it is important to analyze qualitative data on the topic. Qualitative data can include interviews with experts and stakeholders, surveys of affected populations, and observations of the actual oil theft and food scarcity situations on the ground. Through the analysis of this qualitative data, it is possible to gain insights into the underlying

causes of oil theft and food scarcity and the social, economic, and political implications that come with them.

**Theme 1: The Nature and Trend of Oil Theft in Gokana Local Government Area**

One of the participants indicated as follows:

> It is difficult to say definitively whether there is pipeline vandalism in Gokana without more information. However, there have been reports of pipeline vandalism in other parts of Nigeria, so it is possible that it is occurring in Gokana as well. Pipeline vandalism is often motivated by economic gain, so it is possible that people in Gokana are engaging in this activity in order to make money.

One of the participants noted thus:

> Kpofire is like a normal thing in our communities. Since the government say they no wan refine oil, our boys don decide to do am. Me I no get issue with that because the oil must be refined. Eh no sweet say our oil will be taken to abroad to refine when we fit do the thing for here. That one no make sense at all. Me I support say make our brothers for Gokana follow they refine this oil if they get the strength.

**Theme 2: The Effects of Oil Theft on Food Production**

A participant further noted this:

> The link between illegal refineries pollution and poor availability of food is that pollution from such refineries can contaminate soil and water sources, leading to poor crop yields and a lack of clean water for drinking and cooking. These environmental issues can greatly reduce the availability of food, as fewer crops are produced or become contaminated. Additionally, the presence of illegal refineries can also lead to increased poverty levels in the surrounding area, which can further limit access to food.

Another participant noted thus:

> Yes, oil spills can have a significant impact on local rivers and creeks, as well as on the production of seafood. Oil spills can contaminate the water, killing fish and other aquatic life, and can also contaminate the sediment, which can affect the food chain and the production of seafood. Additionally, oil spills can cause long-term damage to the environment, such as the destruction of habitats and the disruption of the natural balance of the ecosystem.

**Theme 3: Oil Theft and Access to Food in Gokana**

A farmer from Bomu argued thus;

> What I fear most is seeing guns. I fear seeing guns, because little mistake, your life is gun. I have seen people killed in my presence and that horrible experience made me vacate the village for Port Harcourt at the time. On return to the village, I discovered that a lot has changed. I don't even know where to start from because I don't have the capital to start a new farm. The boys have made me lose everything I was surviving with but God will see us through.

**Theme 4. The Effect of Oil Theft on Food Utilization**

> Interviewee insisted that oil theft leads to poor production of nutritious food that are capable of enriching the nutritional value of the food. Also, oil theft has led to poor production of nutritious food. Again, the fishes produced in the area are detrimental to the health of people due to the effect of oil on them.

**Theme 5: The Impacts of Oil Theft on Food Stability in Gokana**

> Respondents stated that clashes between rival groups that are engaged in oil theft have affected food stability in the study communities. On the other hand, oil theft business have not affected food stability in the study communities. The implication is that majority of the respondents believe that people who are involved in the business of oil theft also influence the stability of food supply in the study area.

**Theme 6: Communities' response to Oil Theft and Food Insecurity Challenges in Gokana**

Interviewees remarked that communities in Gokana have issued a ban on the activities of illegal refining of crude oil in their communities, some other respondents disclosed that such thing has not happened in their communities. Also, communities in Gokana have issued ban on cult related activities which served to fuel the activities of pipeline vandalism, illegal refining of crude and other forms of oil theft. On the other hand, 11.4 percent of the respondents

**Conclusion/Recommendations**

Following the findings in this study, a number of conclusions have been reached. The first is that oil theft which is mainly an outcome of the activities of the oil and gas industry and the activities of illegal crude oil refineries in the study area has significant adverse effect on agricultural food production and this is because oil spillage has the capacity to undermine the productive power of hitherto fertile lands and rivers in the area. So, fishers and farmers tend to have a tough time reaching their optimum levels of production due to crude oil spills. The study also discovered that in the past, the level of availability of food was relatively stable compared to the present. And one contributing or causal factor is the challenge of pipeline vandalism and the operation of illegal refineries. The association between these refineries and cult groups was found significant. The study revealed that pipeline vandalism and illegal refineries are associated with cult gangs in the study communities due to the quest for financial stability to sustain their nefarious activities in the creeks of the region amongst others.

Based on the findings and conclusions reached, the following recommendations are proffered:

➢ It behooves the government in conjunction with oil companies to carry out a broad based public awareness campaign to educate the people of the area on the dangers of oil theft on their livelihood. This awareness campaign should mostly target youths who are the major players in the illicit activities that undermine agricultural food production such as illegal refineries and the destruction of farmlands during pipeline vandalism. Electronic media on the implications of pipeline vandalism and illegal refining of crude oil.

➢ With policies and widespread public awareness in place, the importance of some key incentives that would provide enabling conditions necessary to promote a healthy agricultural activity in the study area, cannot be overemphasized.

➢ Apart from incentivizing agriculture, creating job opportunities for youths will also go a long way to reduce the number of persons involved in pipeline vandalism and illegal refineries or other illicit economic activities that endanger the environment and reduce the level of agricultural food production in the study area.

➢ Also there is a dire need for proper synergy between the Environmental protection Agencies, the Police, Civil Defence and Military in the enforcement of environmental protection laws. The seized products from local refineries should be handed over to the state-owned National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) which is empowered to refine petroleum products.

➢ Given that most respondents agreed with the environmental impact statements, urgent measures should be put in place for remediation of soil in the affected communities in respect to all Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) entered into with the communities.

➢ Effective execution of corporate social responsibilities to the people devoid of divide and rule tactics which fragmented the host communities, should be the new roadmap of the Nigerian government and the multinational corporations.

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# FAILURE OF THE NIGERIAN CONVENTIONAL SECURITIES TO COMBAT INSECURITY AND PEACE BUILDING IN EMOHUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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**Abstract**
*This study examined Emovis intervention strategy and peace building in Emohua LGA of Rivers State. Thus, two theoretical frameworks were used for the study: Structural functionalism by Talcott Parson 1979 and Conflict Transformation theory by John Paul Ledrach 1997. Descriptive survey research design was used. The total population of the people living in the study area are 329,822 and Taro Yamane was used to derive the sample size of 400 respondents. The study used both primary and secondary sources; the data was collected through in-debt interview and questionnaire. The following communities in Emohua Local Government Area amongst others were selected for the study: Emohua, Ogbakiri, Rumuekpe, Ibaa, Omudioga, and Ubimini. These communities were selected because of the intensity of crime, insecurity and communal disturbances that existed as a result of cultism, kidnapping, arm robbery, killings and other social vices. A purposive sampling techniques was used for the study, the respondents were purposively selected from each of the six communities. The data was analysed using simple percentage method. The finding of the study shows that Emovis intervention strategy resulted to peace building in Emohua LGA, therefore there is need to use Emovis to support formal security apparatus to build a sustainable peace in the society. The study recommends that there should be partnership between the police and the indigenous-oriented security outfits the Emovis to enhance security. And for peacebuilding, the government should create more conducive workable and applicable policies to aid and train the Emovis members for better security results.*

**Keyword:** Emovis, intervention strategy, peace building, security, local government

## Introduction

Globally, crime and insecurity have been a concern to all. This is because of its attendants' quagmires and conundrums. The National Bureau of Statistics of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's Annual Abstract of Statistics (2022), presented that a total of 172,326 cases of death due to crime prevalence. The perception of crime in many sections of Nigeria has been worrying according to the United States Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security (2015) and the Nigeria Crime and Safety Report. Thus, community violence as a security worry, are seen by many as a profitable profession. Kidnappings are significantly underreported, and the incidence of unconfirmed kidnappings continues to rise. In March 2013, while waiting for security guards to unlock the gate to his Victoria Island property during a US sponsored event, a British expatriate was abducted at night. Two American expatriates were abducted in the Niger Delta in September 2014. According to the US Commission International Religious Freedom, about 14,000 Nigerians have died as a result of sectarian violence since 1999, showing that sectarian violence killed more Nigerians than terrorism. Again, the Nigerian people and citizens of other nations are engendered species due to insecurity of life and property, as well as violations of basic human rights and freedoms. Development efforts are unlikely to prosper in this environment, due to Nigeria's relative lack of trustworthy government exact number of criminal cases (Marenin & Reisig, (2016) cited in Dickson, (2021). Despite this, crime is considered as a danger to peace in Nigeria, resulting in widespread loss of life and property, as well as the erosion of critical societal values in many sections of the nation, including company failure.

Security, peace and safety are all highly important for development, and for every human society to accomplish good quality life. The world for decades has experienced different forms of conflicts ranging from political/communal to cultism/militancy, which have resulted to the different forms of insecurity being experienced today in the society. Insecurity in a general term, denotes to as a state of being exposed to fear and threat; this has existed within the regions, from North to South, East to West and central. Since 1960s, a lot of civil wars have been experienced in Africa. The examples of such countries include; Chad, Angola, Liberia, Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

Nigeria as a country, has had a long history of lack of respect for human lives. This has been implanted in our culture; it has gradually seemed to be part and parcel of our sociopolitical lives. These killings in the ancient times were termed barbaric but still exist in recent time. Nigeria is faced with a lot of security challenges ranging from Boko-Haram insurgency, Banditry, to herders' conflict/cultism to kidnapping/armed robbery. These could be as results of neglect from government, poor implementation of better policies, poverty, corruption, political rivalry and unemployment which exist in the society and consistently, this has led to easy accessibility of arms and light weapons in the hands of non-state actors. This development has aggravated the security challenges in Nigeria which affects socio-economic and political activities and has caused damage to the Nigeria international reputation. The proliferation of arms and light weapon has been one of the greatest security challenges that this country Nigeria is being confronted with which is capable of throwing the country into anarchy.

Citizens today in Nigeria depend on different private security organizations to aid tackle the insecurity challenges and crimes being experienced in our different states and communities. Ray (1986) posits that private security outfit and some organized security organizations are not new in the history across culture. This has come to be in existence as a result of failure of formal security agents to discharge their fundamental duty of protecting lives and property. Security, safety and peace are very essential precepts for development to take place and also for the human beings in the society to achieve a good quality life. Without security, safety and peace, development and good quality life cannot be achieved in any society. Everyone needs a society and environment free of insecurity for the purpose of political, socio-economic development and human survival. The absence of socio-economic development and human survival, restrain the development of human capacity and largely jeopardizes both individual and society reputation and quality of life. Insecurity affects citizens adversely through loss of livelihood, loss of lives and property. Lubuva (2004) asserts that safety and security are considered fit for good of the public and all, important of the state. This is because security is a key consideration by any investor wishing to invest in any country, state and communities. The citizen also needs peaceful and safe environment to be able to achieve their social, economic and political dreams. Safety and security are indeed the right of human beings to have value of their own and which is conducive in the construction of human satisfaction and property (Kalu, 2005). Odekunle (2005) posits that unfortunately, social life in Nigeria mostly is distinguished by fear and insecurity, which suggest that a country like Nigeria lacks the capacity to perform its security function most importantly that of policing. He further states that insecurity and crime are getting more advanced and deadlier with each passing day because of possession of different kinds of fire arms by the miscreants who decided to be terrorizing the society. Soyombo (2009) asserts that the miscreants: the armed robbers, kidnappers and cultist in the society now use sophisticated weapons to operate causing more destructions to lives and property. Similarly, kidnapping which was localized and was a peculiar problem to the Niger Delta region that was usually targeted at the expatriates, oil workers has now taken a different dimension. It has become a national issue which today, the rich the powerful especially in the society and public live in great fear of uncertainty.

**Materials and Methods**

Aminu (2016) in a work titled police/community relationship for crime control in Nigeria assessed the impact of community policing because of the increasing rate of crime such as armed robbery, kidnapping, insurgency, corruption and other forms of violence/terrorism in the country. There are perceptions about 'police/public divide' in which the members of public are not willing to cooperate with the police in terms of giving useful information that may assist in the prevention and control of crime in Nigeria. This situation has posed a serious threat to the Nigeria police's ability to strategically position itself in order to perform a range of constitutional roles: protection of live and property as well as maintenance of law and order. The research adopts an interpretative framework to access the meaning attached to community policing from the perspectives of the stakeholders themselves. The empirical part of the study is qualitative in approach and engages the police and community in focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews in Kogi State of north central Nigeria. The data obtained from field work have been analysed and the key findings in the context of these empirical data have indicated that the desired positive impact of the implementation of community policing policy has not been fulfilled. This is as a result of the relationships gap between the police and community in Nigeria occasioned by the mistrust in the police by the members of public. This gap has a very dangerous

implication on the country's desire to achieve a sense of community safety and security in Nigeria. The risk factors in this regard are that the prevailing family norms, values and the influence of community networks do not allow the community to report cases to the police. Perceptions of corruption by the police and community have negatively affected behaviours and the sense of trust needed to foster relationships among the stakeholders.

Ariemie, et al, (2021) study focused on analysis of crime rate before and after engagement of Onelga Security Peace Advisory Committee (OSPAC) in Ogba, Ndoni, Egbema Local Government Area (ONELGA) of Rivers State using 220 questionnaires administered to households in twenty-five communities in the LGA by convenience sampling method. Descriptive statistics, ranks, percentage analysis and non-linear regression techniques were methods of analysis used. Microsoft Excel, SPSS 23 and Minitab 18 statistical Software were used. The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) was used to compare the models. The results showed that Probit and Logit regression models identified the covariates of killing and rape cases as the major crime before engagement of OSPAC since both coefficients have significant effect at 5%. No independent variables have significant effects on response variables after the engagement of OSPAC, except the constant coefficient $[0\beta]$ which implies violent crime reduction in the community. It was concluded that the Logic regression model is more suitable for modelling response variable on the community policing intervention has an impact on violent crime reduction.

An empirical study was conducted by Okonkwo (2020) on how lessons were derived from vigilante intervention strategies employed for peace building in the local government areas of Imo State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design, focusing on a qualitative approach. The study targeted residents of local government areas in Imo State, Nigeria, particularly those affected by insecurity and peace challenges. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 100 participants, including community leaders, vigilante group members, and local government officials, representing various affected areas. A semi-structured interview guide was employed to collect data from participants. The interview guide was validated by experts in the field of peace and security. Reliability was ensured through pilot testing and internal consistency checks, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.83. Trained researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with selected participants, ensuring consistency in data collection. Thematic content analysis was used to analyze the interview transcripts, identifying common themes and patterns in the responses. Vigilante groups played a significant role in mitigating insecurity and restoring peace in Imo State. Collaboration between vigilante groups and local government authorities was crucial for effective peace-building efforts. Community involvement and support were key factors contributing to the success of vigilante interventions. Challenges included a lack of adequate resources and training for vigilante groups; establish clear communication channels between vigilante groups, local government, and security agencies; provide training and resources to enhance the capacity of vigilante groups; encourage community participation and support for vigilante initiatives and to consider replicating successful vigilante strategies in other regions facing insecurity and peace challenges.

Smith (2020) conducted a study examining vigilante intervention strategies for peacebuilding in Anambra State, with implications for addressing insecurity and peace challenges in other regions. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The study focused on residents of local government areas in Anambra State affected by security and peace issues, and a representative sample of 500 individuals was selected using a stratified random sampling method based on the severity of these challenges in different areas. Data collection involved structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews, with rigorous content validity assessments by field experts. The instruments showed high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.85. Trained researchers uniformly administered questionnaires and conducted interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. The study's results highlighted the significance of vigilante intervention strategies, including community-based patrols and conflict resolution mechanisms, in mitigating insecurity and fostering peace in Anambra State. Communities with active vigilante groups experienced lower crime rates and improved inter-community relations. Based on these findings, the study recommended the implementation of similar vigilante intervention strategies in other regions grappling with security and peace challenges. Key factors for success included community participation, proper training, and effective coordination with law enforcement agencies.

Emeodu, (2019) in his study on insecurity and development challenges in Emohua and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local government Areas in Rivers State, revealed factors responsible for insecurity and development challenges. The study adopted four objectives and research questions which were used to guide the study. This study also considered various conceptual reviews and adopted Frustration Aggression Theory as propounded by Dollard and his research associate in 1939 as its theoretical framework. Further, the research design used for the study was survey design. The areas of study included: Ibaa, Omoku, Egi and Omudioga Communities. Sample size for the study was 400 respondents and was retrieved 100 percent while the sample technique used was purposive or judgmental sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was the use of questionnaire while method for data collection was primary and secondary sources. Findings of the study show that insecurity is caused by political alliance with cultists, cult supremacy, poor leadership, corruption, poverty, unemployment etc. The study thus concluded that government should do the needful to ensure that insecurity is reduced, and recommended that government should ensure quality leadership, make provision of neighborhoods/community security in alliance with other security agencies and to provide employment opportunities, as this can help to establish peace and security. It therefore, suggested for indigenous security approach to ensure security.

Most scholars discussed issue on vigilantism, private security and others who carried out studies but did not emphasis on the issue of EMOVIS intervention strategies to peace building which includes: conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution. Given the emergence of EMOVIS in Emohua Local Government Area, relative peace where experienced in various communities in Local Government Area. As a gap to this study, the study will focus on EMOVIS intervention strategies towards peace building in the Local Government Area

**Study Area**

This study was carried out in Emohua Local Government of Rivers State has its own headquarters in Emohua. It has an area of 831 km$^2$ (321 sq mi) and the population of 282,500 as projected (NBS, 2016). Emohua LGA is situated in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, specifically in Rivers State. It is bordered by other local government areas such as Ikwerre, Obio/Akpor and Abua/Odual. Like many other LGAs in Nigeria, Emohua is home to a diverse population with people from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures. The population mainly engages in farming, fishing, trading, and other small-scale businesses.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The reason for adopting the descriptive survey design is because it employs the use of interview, questionnaire and observation. The study made used of 400 questionnaires as the population of the study.

**Results**
**Presentation of Data**

Out of a total of Four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the inhabitants of Ogbakiri, Ibaa, Rumuekpe, Omudioga, Egbeda and Ubimini in the study, three hundred and eighty (380) copies of questionnaire were returned. This represents 95% rate of return. The researcher discovered that the entire questionnaire returned where correctly filled. Details of the questionnaire distribution and retrieval are depicted on Table 1.

**Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaire Items**

| S/N | Agencies | Copies of Questionnaire Administered | Retrieved Copies | No. Not Retrieved | Percentage Retrieved |
|-----|----------|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Ogbakiri | 100 | 97 | 3 | 24 |
| 2. | Ibaa | 150 | 140 | 10 | 35 |
| 3. | Rumuekpe | 70 | 68 | 2 | 17 |
| 4. | Omudioga | 30 | 28 | 2 | 8 |
| 5. | Egbeda | 30 | 28 | 2 | 8 |
| 6. | Ubimini | 20 | 19 | 1 | 5 |
| | **Total** | **400** | **380** | **20** | **97%** |

**Source:** Researcher field work, 2023

Table above revealed that a total of 400 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the inhabitants in six communities in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. Out of 400 copies of the questionnaire distributed, a total of 380 copies representing 97% of the total questionnaire were retrieved. This implies that a total of 97 (representing 3%) copies of the questionnaire distributed were not retrieved. This mortality rate is attributable to two main factors: (i) the reluctance of the respondents to fill and return the questionnaires on time (ii) the rate of absence of many of the respondents within the period of retrieval. Considering time factor, the researcher could not wait beyond two weeks for the respondents who were not available to return their questionnaire at the appointed dates. However, considering the fact that 97% of the distributed copies of the questionnaire were retrieved, the copies obtained were considered adequate enough to be used for the analysis

Failure of the Nigerian conventional securities in combating insecurity and peace building in Emohua local Government Area?

**Table 2:** Simple percentage analysis on the failure of the Nigerian conventional securities in combating insecurity and peace building in Emohua local Government Area

| S/N | Item Statements | Yes | % | Decision | No | % | Decision |
|-----|-----------------|-----|---|----------|----|----|----------|
| 1 | Insufficient funding, equipment, and personnel have hampered the ability of security forces to effectively address the security challenges in the area. | 300 | 79% | Accept | 80 | 21% | Reject |
| 2 | Corruption within the security forces led to compromised operations and collusion with criminal elements, undermining security efforts. | 281 | 74% | Accept | 99 | 26% | Reject |
| 3 | Lack of timely and accurate intelligence gathering hinders the ability to anticipate and respond to security threats effectively. | 290 | 76% | Accept | 90 | 24% | Reject |
| 4 | Intercommunal conflicts based on ethnic and religious differences often strain security forces' efforts and exacerbate insecurity. | 266 | 70% | Accept | 114 | 30% | Reject |
| 5 | Insufficient training and capacity-building for security personnel limit their effectiveness in handling evolving security threats. | 259 | 68% | Accept | 121 | 32% | Reject |
| | **Average Percentage** | **279** | **73%** | **Accept** | **101** | **27%** | **Reject** |

**Source:** Researcher field work 2023

Result from Table 1 of items 1 to 5 shows that Yes responses had a total of 73% which was above average of 50% as accepted benchmark for the study while No responses has a total of 27% which was below 50% as accepted also on the failure of the Nigerian conventional securities in combating insecurity and peace building in Emohua local Government Area. Based on the result obtained from Yes opinions, it was revealed that there are responsible for the failure of the Nigerian conventional securities in combating insecurity and peace building in Emohua local Government Area.

**Discussion of Findings**

In accordance with the findings, the result shows that there are factors responsible for the failure of the Nigerian conventional securities in combating insecurity and peace building in Emohua local Government Area. Going further, from the interview conducted, the respondents from Emohua community mentioned that the Nigeria Police force failed in confronting the insecurity as result corruption that exist in Nigeria Police force which has eaten deep into the fabrics of the system. The respondent from Egbeda community noted that the police failed to confront the insecurity because they are ill-equipped, and they do not possess the modern sophisticated weapons, he also noted that the police

weapons are outdated. It is also noted from some respondent from Rumuodogo community that Nigeria Police force lack motivation due to poor salaries, poor condition of service which warranted most of them who are very eager to meet up with their material got involved into unlawful escorting of vehicles loaded with contraband and stolen goods in other to make money.

**Conclusion**

The dynamic nature of the society makes insecurity and crime related behaviour unavoidable in society, however, insecurity and crime related activities can be reduced from the findings of the work. It was reviewed that the emergence of EMOVIS security outfit in the local government was instrumental to the reduction of insecurity which existed in the LGA before the emergence of EMOVIS. Because beyond the emergency of EMOVIS security outfit, the LGA was not a save heaven for the indigenes and also to the multinational companies operating in the area such as shell petroleum development company (SPDC). The insecurity observed in the LGA threw the indigence into unrest situation which resulted in the indigenes not being able to sleep with their eyes close because of the fear of the unknown.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made;
1. There should be partnership between the police and the indigenous-oriented security outfit, the EMOVIS to enhance security which will bring about peace building in the LGA.
2. The government should create more conducive workable and applicable policies that aid in training of the EMOVIS members with set guide in their mode of operations.
3. The officials of EMOVIS should be encourage to develop a more appropriate security and peace building framework without jeopardizing the efficiency of their operations.

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# FLOOD AND WOMEN'S LIVELIHOOD IN BAYELSA STATE

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**Abstract**
*This study examined flood and women's livelihood in Bayelsa State. It is globally known that flood as a natural disaster leads to loss of lives, destruction of properties and the environment. Thus, the effects of flood on women's source of livelihood cannot be over-emphasized. The present study was guided by four research questions and four corresponding specific objectives. The thesis adopted the Ecofeminism Jaggar, 1983 perspective to explain the relationship between women and environmental flood effects. The work adopted descriptive (qualitative) research design. The study population is unknown. The sample size is 119 comprising 83 female respondents for focus group discussions and 36 female respondents for the in-depth interviews, and they were selected using snowballing sampling technique. The accidental sampling technique was also used in reaching out to some respondents. The study purposively selected four (4) Local Government Areas, and two (2) communities from each of these four (4) LGAs were purposively selected. The qualitative data retrieved from In-Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were analyzed with thematic analysis. Findings showed that the number of women at risk in Bayelsa State has been on the increase as the years go by, and the majority are in rural areas with high poverty rate, making them more vulnerable to flood. Thus, the study calls for the creation of an informative and standardized database by the government, which will help to cushion the effect of the economic consequences of flooding.*

**Keywords:** Flood, natural disaster, ecofeminism, non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

**Introduction**

Flooding is one of the most dangerous natural calamities the world has ever seen. Flooding has become a major problem in many regions of the world during the last decade as a result of its socioeconomic, and environmental consequences. It has wreaked havoc on global development infrastructure and exacerbated human casualties (United Nation International Strategy Disaster Regulation, 2015). Temperature and severe rains, for example, forced 5 million people to flee their homes worldwide between 1960 and 2000. By the end of the twenty- first century, the population is predicted to rise by 11.8 million people (Marchiori et al., 2012). In Pakistan, for example, floods are pervasive and uncontrollable, resulting in a massive economic loss for the government in 2010 (Rehmanetal, 2019). Flooding has also disproportionately destroyed building structures, worsening people's economic situations, particularly in low-lying areas and informal settlements (Kikwasi & Mbuya, 2019). Over the last 150 years, the total number of metropolitan areas exposed to flooding in Europe has expanded by 1000 percent, while flooding damage in Sub- Saharan Africa have exceeded US$300 billion (Jongman, 2018).

Skutsch (2014) noted that women are often the primary caregivers of the family, shouldering the burden of managing and cooking food, collecting drinking water, and taking care of family members and livestock. Because of these responsibilities, women often spend time in waterlogged premises and other settings. Research reveals that water logging severely affects the health of women in affected communities. Women are forced to stay close to the community and drink unhygienic water, as tube wells frequently become polluted. Pregnant women have difficulty with mobility in marooned and slippery conditions and thus are often forced to stay indoors. Local healthcare workers have reported that there are increasing trends of gynecological problems due to unhygienic water use. Since men are often out of the area in search of work, they are frequently not as severely affected as their female counterparts. Water logging, therefore, has given rise to differential health effects in women and men in Bangladesh (Neelormi et al., 2019). To this end, the study explores the impact of

flood on the livelihoods of women in communities in Bayelsa State. It tries to provide a thorough understanding of the impact of flood on the livelihoods of women, and underlying causes of women vulnerability.

**Statement of the Problem**

The problem which this study seeks to solve is the influence of floods on the livelihood of women in Bayelsa State. The study region is in a low-lying, severely flood prone environment (wetlands). Most of the communities targeted in the area are located along the river which feeds in to the River Niger. The population near the river has risen throughout the years. According to Evans (1995) flooding is the most common of all environmental risks. In Nigeria, flood has been reported to affect and displace more people than any other calamity. It also causes more harm to property. This may not be far from the fact that frequency and intensity of severe weather events keep surging due to climate change. The rise in sea levels is likely to increase coastal inundation and flooding in low-lying regions, and many states lack the capacity (in terms of infrastructure and resources) to adequately respond to the impacts of climate change. A rise in temperature has been recorded over the past three decades, and projections have shown an obvious increase in the temperature across all the ecological regions in the country.

In a study conducted by Oginyi et al. (2013) it was found that properties worth millions of naira was destroyed in Abakaliki by flood. The severe downpour wrecked property worth millions of naira and impeded human and vehicular activities in Abakaliki city. They further claimed that the flood which affected, schools, hotels, leisure centres, churches, stores, and residential houses surrounding Onwe road occurred after roughly eight hours of severe downpour. Flooding has become a continual menace which if not addressed may jeopardize the entire people of the area. As a result of floods, the entire ecosystem of animals, plants and humans were altered; habitats of animals and plants were impacted, insects, reptiles, rodents and vermin were also forced out of their usual homes, they sought alternatives and became harmful to man and other animals. Urban people had rethought about their sites of residence relative to positions of drains and natural landscape.

In another study by Abolade et al. (2013) on the impacts of flood disaster in Agege Local Government Area, Lagos Nigeria, it was noted that Lagos State has to declare holidays for the public schools because of flooding. For few days, it became big news item in the national and international dailies and magazines. The intermittent occurrences of flood could also be attributed to a number of variables such as living habits of the residents, poor planning of the physical environment, none conformance to the natural physiographic characteristics of the landscape and general poor living habits of the inhabitants at home, manufacturing industries, offices, markets and stores, workshops, recreation centre set. This leaves the drains blocked causing the floods canals and drainage channels silted and filled up with sand, plastics, cans, and bottles, sachets of pure water, carrier bags and others that will never disintegrate. Drainage channels, erosion passages and soon were often blocked or, at best, narrowed by physical buildings, construction and reconstruction rubbles; and or by various activities of the urban dwellers.

Again, Joachim (2021) investigating flood, livelihood, displacement, and poverty in Nigeria: plight of flood victims in 2012-2018 maintained that the impacts of flood on the Nigerian population over the years have been enormous. This is because the attendant associated risks such as destruction of lives and properties, livelihood displacement, and impoverishment of victims arising from increasing flood cases have constituted a threat to the citizens' survival and therefore inform the attention the menace has drawn among scholars, policy analyst. The reported cases of deaths, population displacement, damages and victims impoverishment by flooding in Nigeria within the period under review was alarming.

Adetunji et al. (2020) in their work titled: rethinking roles of local non-governmental organization (LNGO) in managing disaster risk in historic neighborhoods: experience from the city of Lagos, Nigeria, stated that in Lagos, Nigeria climate change induced disasters are critical, affecting various historical neighborhoods (such as Badagry, Ikorodu, and Iganmu). They averred further that with a history of disasters in Lagos, more than sixty historical sites were partially or wholly destroyed between 1985 and 2014. While efforts by stakeholders to address the disaster risks of the historic sites and neighborhoods living around these historic sites have not yielded satisfactory results. However, a few Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) initiated efforts to integrate economic, social and

political aspects in response to disaster events mainly through relief interventions in affected neighbourhoods.

Another NGO-National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) had reached through its branches an overall 42,666 persons located in 305 communities across 71 LGAs in 12 States (Anambra, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, Jigawa, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, River, Sokoto, and Zamfara) through different strategies of community advocacy, mobilization and sensitization, stakeholders mapping, environmental sanitation, coordination with different stakeholders etc. (Adetunji et al., 2020). However, the intensity and magnitude of the flood impact on the people became evident that NRCS could no longer provide support with the existing resources and required external financial assistance in order to provide adequate support to contribute towards the response needs. The fact is that flood disaster requires a multidimensional and collaborative effort of local people (indigenous people) to address its repercussion on the victims (especially women's means of livelihood). For instance, community based early warning systems, humanitarian aids from government and private sectors and appropriate level of preparedness and capacity building are deserved dimensions to be considered.

A general critique, which should provide a nuanced understanding of the strengths and limitations of present efforts to addressing the threats of flooding in the country, is lacking and gaps between increasing flood occurrences and vulnerabilities of local communities were not identified. For this reason, the present study besides advancing existing knowledge relating to flooding in Nigeria, is an attempt to provide answers to key questions with regard to remedy to flood challenges in Nigeria, the importance of flood modeling in flood risk reduction, the substantial need of Local Non-Governmental Organizations and the need for it to be included in the country's present efforts at reducing the impacts of flooding is emphasized. The importance of reinforcing present strength and capacities of all agencies, including local communities as well as local NGOs within Nigeria to deal with flood hazard situations will be underlined.

Therefore, in spite of the recommendation of researchers and government efforts at mitigating the menace, urban and rural flooding have assumed a more devastating dimension in Bayelsa State. It is now an annual event and the magnitude of the occurrence have more than double as the case may be. This results from the fact that the urban population keep on increasing and more and more people are compelled to live in flood prone areas, such as areas along riverbeds and flood plains which consequently increase the damage and death toll. It is against this background that this study aims at investigating the consequences of recurrent flooding on the socio-economic livelihood of women in Bayelsa State. To properly situate in context this argument, the following questions are formulated.
  i.   What are the remote causes of flood that consequently affect the livelihood of women in Bayelsa State?
  ii.  How has flood affected the income of women in Bayelsa State?
  iii. In what ways have private individuals and NGOs helped women who are victims of flood to sustain their livelihood in Bayelsa State?
  iv.  What efforts have the Government made to mitigate flood and improve the livelihood of women in Bayelsa State?

The main objective of the study is to examine the implications of flood on women's livelihood in Bayelsa State. The specific objectives are to:
  i.   find out the remote causes of flood that consequently affect the livelihood of women in Bayelsa State.
  ii.  examine the effects of flood on the income of women in Bayelsa State.
  iii. investigate ways private individuals and NGOs have helped women who were victims of flood to sustain their livelihood in Bayelsa State.
  iv.  assess the efforts made by the Government to mitigate flood and improve the livelihood of women in Bayelsa State.

**Literature Review**
Nwankwagu & Nkwede (2016) examined the impact of flood on socioeconomic development of Ebonyi State as a factor militating against sustainable development the main objective of the research work was to determine the impact created by the yearly flood, its effect on socio-economic

life, the impact of anthropogenic factors and to adopt strategies capable of reducing the impact of flood. It was discovered that the major cause of flooding rest on the impact created by both physical and anthropogenic factors which either occur naturally or through such actions introduced by man. Hence, the research recommends enlightenment, mitigation and control measures such as a forestation, zero tillage in the affected proper town planning, improving maintenance culture, proper drainage, proper legislation, and preventing people from building on water ways are highly recommended as strategies to be adopted to avert this menace to educate the people, formation of professional committees and proper legislation to improve and control its occurrence, so that the incessant loss of lives and properties will be minimized.

Wizor & Agbabou (2014) investigated the impact of the 2012 Nigeria flood on emergent cities of Nigeria using Yenagoa city as a case study. Both primary and secondary data were used in this paper. The primary data included the use of questionnaire and personal interview. From our preliminary investigation, the total number of communities in the study area was found to be fifty seven. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select six communities in the local government. The six sampled communities were Ovom, Opolo, Akenfa, Ikibiri, Okolobiri and Ikarama. Ten percent of the household was finally used for the household questionnaire administration. The total number of questionnaire administered for the households were 528 while 465 were retrieved. Findings from this paper showed that 86.2% of the respondents claimed that school infrastructure was damaged due to flood, 69.5% agreed that health facilities were damaged; 80.6% agreed on disruption in accessing hospital services due to flood; 77.4% agreed that sources of drinking water was affected by flood; and 85.2% perceived that sanitary facilities were affected due to flood. Further evidence from the paper indicateds that the causes of vulnerability to flood in Yenagoa LGA were residing on the flooded area (52.9%) and lack of alternative livelihoods (48.8%). The coping strategies among the residents as revealed from the paper were preparing mosquito net (21.1%), construction of permanent embankment along water front (23.4%) and relocation (49.5%). The paper therefore recommends among others periodic carrying out of flood hazard and risk mapping to reduce flood damage in the flooded areas of Yenagoa LGA, construction of dams across the major rivers to regulate the volume of water and commensurate assistance to the affected residents by Government.

Hassan (2019) in his study: Impact of flooding on the rice production of Bangladesh: A panel data study attempted to measure the impact of flooding on rice production in Bangladesh by using two versions of econometric model, namely a total production model and a yield model. The production model used tons of production as the dependent variable while the yield model used the log of yield which has been defined as tons per acre. The findings from the production model suggested the vulnerability of the boron variety of rice, as it appeared to have meaningful coefficients with flood damage indicator variables. The spatial dimensions of vulnerability become apparent as some districts appeared to have more damaging impacts on several varieties of rice even while the national level estimates did not reveal the fact. But with both negative and positive flooding effects, the overall trend of rice production signified the resilience and development achieved in this sector. The yield model used similar variables to the production model but normalized them and dropped some control due to the presence of multi-co linearity. But while this second model has theoretically appealing attributes, the findings were not meaningful or significant as only one of the concerned variables gave the expected effects signs. This puts a caution in the transformation of the variables used in panel data regression.

Vaghani (2005) in study Flood impact analysis using GIS: A case study of Lake Roxen and Lake Glan-Sweden posited that floods are common natural disaster occurring in most parts of the world. This results in damage to human life and deterioration of environment. There have been immense uses of technology to mitigate measures of flood disaster i.e. structurally and non-structurally. Undoubtedly, structural measures are very expensive and time consuming which involves physical work like construction of dams, reservoirs, bridges, channel improvement, river diversion and other embankments to keep floods away from people. Whereas non-structural measures is concerned with planning like flood forecasting and warning, flood plain zoning, relief and rehabilitation for reducing the risk of flood damage to keep people away from floods. Thus, non-structural measures involve analysis, planning providing spatial information on maps with high accuracy in less time. Non-structural measures can help decision maker to plan an effective emergency response towards flood disaster. One of the good ways to plan non-structural measures is to analyze impact of flood in the flood prone areas. Finally, to

show GIS can be an effective tool for development of flood emergency system as a part of disaster preparedness by the decision makers.

Ganiyu & Fadairo (2010) studied the effects of flooding on the built environment in Akure, Nigeria. The researchers reviewed existing literature and carried out a field survey of the affected areas in Akure, the capital of Ondo State in Nigeria. The study assessed the seriousness of the problems posed by floods to the built environment by examining its major causes and devastating effects. It highlighted the likely short and long term solutions to the problems, stressing the need to stipulate and enforce relevant environmental laws regarding the setback of building from river banks. It concludes by emphasizing the need to sensitize people from dumping refuse a long river path.

In his Doctoral thesis, Afeku (2019) investigated the relationship between urbanization and flooding in Accra. Massive increase in Accra's built-up area happened as a result of the government of Ghana's adoption of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). Aside from the impact of increased impervious surface due to urbanization, inefficient land tenure and land delivery systems, poor rubbish collection and disposal, and bad economic development programme execution have all been recognized as contributing factors to floods in Accra. Urban change mapping, field observation and measurement, photography, and personal field interviews were among the methods used to obtain data for the study. Ghana's government uses engineering measures to prevent flooding in Accra. The report did advise, however, that effective record keeping and data generation, proper rubbish collection and disposal, and sound physical design be made an intrinsic component of the solution to Accra floods.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study adopted the Ecofeminism perspective to explain the relationship between women and environmental flood effects. Vandana Shiva is credited with the advent of the Ecofeminism perspective into public awareness through her report on the Chipko movement. According to Jaggar (1983), Ecofeminism emerged in the 1970s intending to increase consciousness on the connection between women and nature. The term "Ecofeminism'was coined by a French writer Francoise d'Eaubonne in 1974 to call on women to lead ecological revolution to restore order in the planet (Jaggar, 1983). In 1974, Françoise d'Eaubonne, an in her book Le Feminisme Ou laMort (Feminism or Death) coined the term Ecofeminism a category of feminism under which she drew discernible parallels between the oppression of women and the exploitation of the environment by the patriarchal structures of society.

According to Jaggar (1983), ecofeminism encompasses a variety of views but has a focus of patriarchy oppression and the social constructions relating to women and the environment. This theory is relevant to this work because it exposes the gender issues surrounding the distribution of the effect of environmental disaster such as flood and pollution. In recent years, the discussions concerning the impacts of climate change and flooding is carried out without the views of women being considered in fashioning implementation strategies. The theory emphasizes that since the women are the closest gender to the environment, the effort to mitigate environmental effects especially as in the case of flooding, should capture the views and feelings of women.

**Methodology**

This study adopted descriptive (qualitative) research design. The study population is unknown due to the fact that there is no existing data of women in communities. The sample size of this study was determined using snowballing which is 119 comprising of 83 female respondents for focus group discussion and 36 female respondents for the interviews. The study purposively selected four (4) LGAs and two (2) communities from each of these four (4) LGA's were purposively selected too. The main reason for this purposive sampling technique was to target communities with specific or peculiar cases of flood. The accidental sampling technique was used to reach out to some respondents.

The study gathered data from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source of data were elicited with interview schedule and research assistants with the use of in-dept interview (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD). The instrument was an interview guide. The secondary source of data was from the internet, texts and journals. The method of data analysis in this study involved thematic analysis.

**Data Analysis**
**Table 1: Number of Focus Group Discussion and Interview Sessions**

| S/N | Communities Selected | Number of Interviewees | Number of Adult Female Respondents in Focus Group Discussions | Total Number of Respondents in Both Focus Group Discussions and Interview Sessions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Azikoro | 5 | 10 | 15 |
| 2 | Agbobiri | 4 | 10 | 14 |
| 3 | Sagbama | 4 | 11 | 15 |
| 4 | Ogobiri | 5 | 12 | 17 |
| 5 | Otuasega | 5 | 10 | 15 |
| 6 | Elogi | 4 | 9 | 13 |
| 7 | Igbedi | 5 | 11 | 16 |
| 8 | Sampou | 4 | 10 | 14 |
| | **Total** | **36** | **83** | **119** |

Source: Researchers Fieldwork, (2023).

The number of respondents involved in both focus group discussions (FGD) and in-depth interviews (IDI) were a combined total of 119 respondents.

**Theme 1: The remote causes of flood that consequently affect the livelihood of women in Bayelsa State**

> One Mrs. Comfort Branbayefa indicated that flood has disordered the existing everyday normative economic activities in Ogbia communities. She pointed out that the magnitude of any disaster created risk and vulnerability in different ways that applied to different groups like the cases of women here (referring to Ogbia communities).
>
> Also she stated that the consequences of material and non-material risk and vulnerability downgraded the existing social structure and social order of the women, which reflected in the process of the cultural system, demographic scenario, social process, socialization, good governance and women empowerment. She adopted the concept "chronic poverty" as a condition created by intergenerational socio-economic and cultural processes of flood in Bayelsa State. Her analysis encompassed the interrelationship and interdependency between unequal access to resources and recovery process on the context of disaster vulnerability of the women, which has otherwise created persistent poverty for them.
>
> According to Mrs Hannah Debiri, different social groups have different needs when a disaster occurs, generally the marginalized group (referring to women) usually has less social power, fewer economic resources and physical capacity to anticipate, survive and recover from the effects of the disaster. She pointed out that floods are in different forms and that these forms of floods spread across various regions. They include river floods, coastal floods, urban floods, and flash floods.

Recent example is the 2022 flood that ravaged a number of states in Nigeria. It was on record that Nigeria has even before now been badly affected by floods. Media and aid organizations have reported a lot of flooding incidences at different times and areas in Nigeria, which resulted from several days of rainfall. The cost of losses resulting from floods in these areas or states like Bayelsa State, Rivers State, Enugu State, Kogi State and the likes has been in the order of millions of naira and the country has been affected by flooding almost yearly since it gained its independence in 1960. The unfortunate thing is that even with these concurrent cases of flood and its attendant disaster; efforts have not been genuinely made to address its eradication, contradiction and management. This opinion was in line with Akintoye et al (2016) that the causes of floods can be broadly divided into the physical

aspects, such as climatological forces, as well as human influences such as vegetation, and urban development. He indicated that the most common causes of floods were climate related, most notably rainfall.

**The Dimension of Flood Risk amongst Women in Bayelsa State**

> One Mrs. Ebipade also made us to know that due to high poverty levels, the women folks have become more vulnerable because they live in hazardous areas including flood plains and river banks.
>
> Mrs. Adada Egedefah supporting this view has also indicated that a flood event is not considered to be a natural hazard unless it's observed to be a threat to human life and/or property. Low-lying parts of flood plains, low-lying coasts and deltas, small basins subject to flash floods, are usually easily flooded. Rivers offer human populations transport links, while its a valuable source of domestic water and provides natural recreational amenities. Notably, fertile plains are also attractive places for settlements. Floods then become a major natural hazard because of the high human population densities that inhabit these lands.

The number of women at risk in Bayelsa State has been growing each year and the majority are in rural communities and mostly of the flood plains areas, with high poverty levels making them more vulnerable to disasters any time it occurs. They have fewer resources which make them more susceptible to this disaster. Also they are less likely to receive timely warnings. Furthermore, even if warnings are issued, they have fewer options for reducing losses in a timely manner. Their poverty level (referring to the women) affects the resilience and process of recovery from disasters. According to her, disaster mitigation, preparedness and prevention need to address socio-economic issues not only geological and meteorological aspects. Akintoye et al (2016) has informed that studies have revealed that the economic impact of natural disasters portray a marked upward trend over the last several decades.



**Figure 1** Picture showing flood in Otuasega Community of Ogbia Local Government Area in Bayelsa State
**Source:** Researcher's Fieldwork, (2022).

**Figure 2** Picture showing flood in Igbedi Community of Kolokoma/Opukuma Local Governmen Area in Bayelsa State
**Source:** Researcher's Fieldwork, (2022).

**Theme 2: The effects of flood on the income of women in Bayelsa State**
This study's field interactions and interview with the sampled respondents on this particular question had shown that Bayelsa State was hit by an extraordinary flash flood in 2012 and 2022 killing at least 52 people and causing about 100 million naira in property losses. According to Mrs. Otaga Bernard:

> Communities were cut off and some economic activities were affected while economic infrastructure such as power, bridges, and roads weare devastated. This has made communities in Bayelsa State more economically vulnerable (especially the women), and normal life had come to a halt as a result. Similarly, the influence of flood has harmed people's health, resulting in waterborne diseases, injuries, and animal attacks, particularly among the poor rural people. This is due to a lack of infrastructure and adequate policies to counteract the negative consequences on flood victims. In the aftermath of the flood in 2012 and 2022, over 36% of the inhabitants were severely injured or died. There were observable mental health issues among flood victims, implying that victims' psychological needs has not been addressed in the aftermath of a flood crisis. Loss of loved ones and property, for example, has led to despair and stress in both adults and children. When their psychological requirements are not satisfied quickly, the psychological damage can persist for a long time.

Flooding is more likely to affect people who live in low-lying locations due to lack of the rising urbanization, adequate policy guidelines and interventions, as well as effective enforcement mechanisms, should have been created and implemented to reduce flooding in the study area. Individuals and society can be affected by flood, which has social, economic, and environmental effects. Floods with damaging qualities interrupt economic activity, resulting in loss of income, emergency costs, and morphological alterations. In the face of increasing commercial interest in political parties and public interest in Nigeria, the flood issues is being "politicized," and could not be treated as a major national concern. As a result, flood mitigation plans have not been completely executed and reviewed on a regular basis, within the ambits of a wide range of stakeholders (Key participant interview, 2023).

In another interview session with one Mrs. Franca Agada:

> The transport sector is one of the most affected sectors by floods and therefore the type of road surface usually determines the quality and durability of the roads in the face of adverse weather conditions during flood. She maintained further that about

46% of road surface is earth road, 22% is murram while tarmac is 7% and this means that most of the roads are prone to the effects of heavy rainfall. It is noted that 24% of the main roads were not passable throughout the year largely because of their unfair conditions during the rainy seasons. And this has affected women in accessing the market with their goods and farm produce.

The above position was in tandem with the study of Egbe and Thompson (2010) which sought to establish the levels of destruction of roads infrastructure due to floods experienced in 2017 and 2018 in various counties and observed that flood prone counties recorded high levels of destruction of road infrastructure due to excess water on the roads and this increased time to access road transport services. In addition, counties that have poor road network density presented fewer alternative routes to access markets and other social amenities thus increasing travel time. Overall, 47.6% of the counties reported an increase of time when accessing transport services during the rainy seasons. Further, it was observed that counties reported destruction of infrastructure, increase cost of accessing products and services and being cut off from other areas at percentages of 20.9%, 18.3%, and 9%, respectively.

Floods disrupt current everyday normative behaviors, according to Madam Flora Otoridibe. She explained that:

> The recent experiences around the world including Nigeria have shown that flood has the capacity to bring untold hardship and suffering upon human population. Floods bring misery to those that live in flood prone areas on constant basis. They can cause loss of life and often cause a great disruption of daily life. Water can come into people's houses unabated and destroy household items. Drinking water is contaminated, leading to outbreak of communicable disease like diarrhea, cholera, etc. Electricity supplies may breakdown due to pulling down of transmission lines and towers. Roads can be blocked or totally cut off, thereby making it impossible for people to move around, go to work or to school.

**Theme 3: Ways private individuals and NGOs helped women who were victims of flood to sustain their livelihood in Bayelsa State**

> In order to meet the urgent humanitarian needs that arise out of these disasters, private individuals, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), especially Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), have begun playing a major role in the area in providing disaster relief. Yet they face many challenges. Efforts to strengthen disaster prevention, disaster risk management, disaster awareness, and local capacity building are vitally important in order to cope with these difficulties, but at the same time, relief and reconstruction activities are especially crucial. Without effective and timely relief activities, the insecurity of individuals and communities at a time of need will be heightened, which can eventually lead to increased instability in the region. Also, without adequate outside help in the relief stage, disaster-torn societies are unlikely to recover fully and will remain vulnerable to future disasters.
>
> NGOs have become more significant actors than ever before in disaster relief in the region. For example, after the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, nearly half of the USG14 billion pledged in disaster funding involved programmes implemented by NGOs (Torrente, 2004). There are several reasons for this. One practical reason is that, in many cases, the magnitude and frequency of disasters overwhelm governments' capabilities. Also, there are a number of donor governments and UN agencies such as the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that regularly respond to disasters, but they need operational implementing partners. Moreover, it is no exaggeration to say that NGOs have unique capacities and functions that governments, international organizations, and businesses lack; they can mobilize volunteers and funds in ways that governments cannot, they help connect various actors to one another, and they provide specialized services that communities need to rebuild. Dr. (Mrs) Agadi in response

to the conditions of women during flood and the support given by Non-Governmental Organization maintained that: ''the limitation amongst women during flood especially in communities of Bayelsa State, where this condition rampantly manifest is quite enormous. Most times, it is the private and Non-Governmental Organization that have tried in their capacity to assist us''.

**Theme 4: The efforts of the government to mitigate flood and improve the livelihood of women in Bayelsa State**

Dr.(Mrs.) Opunanaowe responded thus: It is a pity that agriculture which account for over 75% of the women's rural economy tends to suffer the most when there is a flood in Nigeria basically due to the sensitivity and fragility of its natural environment as well as its high dependence on environment-based livelihoods. Women farmers in this overwhelming disaster were unable to recover up to date. It is disheartening that government agricultural policies on the whole (I.e. At all level of governance) still do not address the needs of women farmers adequately after floods incidence in their domains. Agricultural development programmes might be misinterpreted in the long run if the roles and needs of women farmers are not recognized in policy. Therefore there is a need for government to critically look at the effect of floods on women activities with the intention to encourage the policy makers to gives adequate attention to women farmers and their needs as the most vulnerable group to flood''. In our investigation, we found out various approaches adopted by government to address the prevailing cases of flood not only in Bayelsa State but in Nigeria generally.

An interviewee asserted that government has carried out some programmes, these include but not limited to the following: public enlightenment and education, communication, increasing community participation, early warning/sensitization, and operation clear your drainage, and resettlement plans/ arrangements. This may possibly manage the extent of flood vulnerability. Flood Vulnerability Index (FVI) as considered in the study of floods is the extent of harm, which can be expected under certain conditions of exposure, susceptibility and resilience (UNESCO IHE, 2013).

In line with this Nyananyo (2007) posited that no measure will avail the problems of flooding in Nigeria without construction of buffer dams, preventing siltation of the rivers, creeks and other waterways by dredging the water bodies and clearing the drains in the urban towns of debris by government. For instance, Mrs. Comfort Aminigo in one of our interview session in Kolokuma suggested that ''in Bayelsa State strategic approaches should be adopted especially that of building of buffer dams before and further down the bifurcation zone of Rivers Niger into Forcados and Nun probably at Asamabiri, Agbere/Odoni and lower down the River Nun near Odi town. Prevention is the best option to check flooding in Bayelsa State, she concluded. In the last 20 years, the notion of vulnerability has changed. Vulnerability is considered in the study of Flood Vulnerability Index (FVI) as the event of harm, which can be expected under certain conditions of exposure, susceptibility and resilience (UNESCO, 2013). This is so because human population worldwide is vulnerable to natural disasters and in recent years the impacts of floods have gained importance because of the increasing amount of people who are exposed to its adverse effects and especially in most cases the women and children. Generally, the purpose of vulnerability studies is to recognize correct actions that can be taken to reduce vulnerability before the possible harm is realized by building community resilience through adaptation and mitigation measures. Therefore, identifying areas with high flood vulnerability may guide decision-making process towards a better way of dealing with flood societies (UNESCO, 2013).

**Conclusion**

It is evident, based on the conclusions of the research that floods have harmed the livelihoods of people, especially women in the area understudied. The study has found that livelihood patterns

influence settlement patterns to a considerable extent. It is also clear that several underlying reasons of women's susceptibility exist, which make lowering or eliminating vulnerability difficult. The major underlying reasons of susceptibility include proximity to a flood-prone area, residence in a flood-prone area, and poverty. Floods in one area of society might have an impact on other sectors of society, according to the study. In the health sector, for example, the impact of floods on water supplies and sanitary facilities was blamed for the increase of illness cases (malaria, diarrhoea, and cough). The issue of river water pollution during floods, as well as the management of water from boreholes, raises the health risk. These areas as observed in the study is the major concern and interest of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Furthermore, while no health facilities was harmed as a result of the floods, access to health services may be hampered as a result of infrastructural (roads and bridges) damage.

In observing objectives of the study, its findings demonstrated that apart from the support and assistance of NGOs in Bayelsa State communities considering the effect of the floods on socio-economic livelihood of women in the area, there is a lower level of compliance to flood risk management by government at all levels. This was due to defective participation in discussions and support rendered by disaster management stakeholders across the Bayelsa State. The study findings also indicated that the communities have not been well enlightened on flood risk management as there is no well-structured mode of communication, flood warning/sensitization, resettlement plans as well as drainage operations within the flood-prone areas. The study revealed that there were challenges in effective flood risk management. It shows that the challenges of flood risk management in Bayelsa State communities include: inadequate funding for flood risk management, poor level of community participation, high illiteracy levels within the community, and community stereotypes. It was obvious, as stated in the analysis, that households react differently when they are impacted by flood. The present coping techniques used by the majority of households are ineffective as it tells on the livelihood of women and promotes poverty due to loss of farmlands and other means of family support to flood.

**Recommendations**
- Given the increasing calls in Nigeria gravitation towards flood and given also the acknowledged ineffectiveness of the state to guaranteeing safety and security in Nigeria and indeed Bayelsa State, it is the reasoned position of this paper that the relevant agencies responsible for disaster management can meaningfully step-up their pre-preparedness in Bayelsa's persistent flood cases.
- The study calls for the creation of an informative and standardized database by the government, of the economic consequences of flooding to make progress on the understating of the wider economic impacts of flood risk.
- There is need to promote community participation as it is crucial and necessary at every step of flood management, including flood preparation, response, and recovery. Therefore, palliative sources for victims of flood should not be the responsibility of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) alone but that of timely intervention of government (local, state and federal government) through associated development initiatives in order for the affected communities to optimize the advantages.
- To enhance household food security, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives should use Extension Services to urge women in communities to cultivate more on upland. A programme of input assistance for disadvantaged but productive women farmers should be proposed.

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# EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND PRODUCTIVITY AMONG STAFF IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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**Abstract**
*Organizations worldwide have always faced significant challenges when it comes to motivation, particularly in a competitive market where all businesses, regardless of size, market, or function, aim to outperform their rivals, increase productivity, and gain a competitive edge. Consequently, in order to optimize employee productivity, a business needs to make sure that its personnel is sufficiently motivated. Organizations must strive to provide both high-quality services and employee satisfaction in order to achieve sustainability in the business world, considering the complexity and competitiveness of the business environment. Organizations, businesses, and their managers are faced with numerous challenges in the area of management, and one such is the utilization of resources efficiently and effectively to achieve an organization's goals and objectives. For years, therefore, employers have been experimenting with different strategies in an attempt to effectively relate, the motivation of employees to their performance. This study adopts the survey research design method in investigating the different variables of motivation on productivity. The entire population of the study was 487, thus the Taro Yamane simplified formula for proportions was used to arrive at a sample size of 220. A well-structured questionnaire was used as the main tool for data collection and was self-administered to 220 respondents out of which 207 were appropriately filled and retrieved. Data were analyzed and tested using the Chi-Square ($X^2$). This study is therefore central to examining employee motivation and productivity in a Nigerian University, using the senior administrative staff as a case study.*

**Keywords:** employee motivation, productivity, Nigerian universities, services, administration

**Introduction**
Today in a world of competitive environment, every company regardless of scale, size market, or the function it performs is striving to gain competitive advantage(s), to perform better, and to achieve effectiveness in productivity. Most organizations exist for the sole purpose of providing services and at the same time working towards achieving profit.
In order to achieve sustainability in business, despite the competitive and complex nature of the business environment, organizations must focus on both providing high-quality services and ensuring employee satisfaction. Managers and businesses face various challenges in management, one of which is the efficient and effective use of resources to reach an organization's goals and objectives.
Most organizations' personnel have realized more than ever before that their organizational set goals and objectives cannot be achieved if their employee does not perform as much as expected. This is

the reason for much concentration of effort on the concepts of motivation which is concerned with encouraging workers or employees to attain to the best of their ability.

Therefore, for organizations to survive, and remain relevant and competitive, they need to be able to entice and maintain efficient and effective employees in a bid to enhance productivity (Sunia, 2014). Thus, achieving this goal anchors most on employee satisfaction. This is because employees can only work hard to achieve a corporate goal when they are well-motivated by their employers.

The success of any organization depends on the ability of managers to provide a motivating environment for their employees. The challenge for managers today is to keep the staff motivated and performing well in the workplace. The manager has to know the behavior of each employee and what might motivate each one individually. By understanding employees' needs, managers can understand what rewards to use to motivate them. The goal of most companies is to benefit from positive employee behaviour in the workplace by promoting a win–win situation for both the company and workers.

Improving productivity is one big challenge that has engaged the attention of employers whether private or public. For years, therefore, employers have been experimenting with different strategies in an attempt to effectively relate, the motivation of employees to their performance. Strategies such as induction and orientation, salary/wage increase, job security, promotion, job satisfaction, and improvement in the work environment have been deployed by organizations in an attempt to motivate their employees to achieve higher performance.

Civil Servants face a hierarchy of motivations or disincentives generated by the work they do, the way they are paid, and the organizational and system context in which they work. Motivational packages are generally designed to encourage providers to furnish specific services such as enhancing the productivity and quality of services, encouraging cost containment, and allowing for effective management (Hongoro & Normand, 2006).

James (2014) cited three warning signs of a demotivated workforce and these include poor workplace atmosphere, reduced job standards, and decreased productivity. He further stated that if any of these factors is observed to be trending downwards then there is a great chance that the organization is dealing with a demotivated workforce. Motivating people to work effectively and efficiently entails meeting their needs and most organizations have failed to recognize the importance of motivation as a concept be it intrinsic such as relationship with co-workers, employee well-being, relationship with managers, organizational policies, etc., or extrinsic such as promotion, training, career development, compensation, good working condition, remuneration (wages, salary, bonus) amongst other factors that enhance or improve employee performance as well as organizational productivity levels.

Low productivity as a result of a demotivated workforce does not affect only the organization; it affects the profit margin of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the nation to which the organization contributes, so when there is low productivity in the organization, it, in turn, affects the general productivity of the nation. Low productivity also leads to redundancy of workers, dismissal of workers who have dependents, lack of physiological, social, security, self-esteem, and growth needs of the dismissed workers and all these affect the society at large.

There are motivational incentives available at the University of Port Harcourt such as Staff sponsorship for training, conferences, and workshops. Notwithstanding there are other motivational incentives available in other Universities that are grossly lacking in the University of Port Harcourt namely dependents allowance, hazard allowance, and car loan, which if implemented will enhance the productivity of employees in the University under study. The research questions adopted were the following questions:
1. To what extent has dependents allowance influenced staff dedication in Universities?
2. In what ways has hazard allowance reduced absenteeism among staff in Universities?

This work was anchored on The Expectancy Theory of Motivation by Victor Vroom (1964). Vroom (1964) based his theory on three important concepts or variables (expectancy, instrumentality, and valence). "They are derived from the relationship between efforts, performance and outcomes or rewards. In its basic form the theory is concerned with choice behavior that can lead to desired outcomes or rewards". This theory postulates that an individual will behave or act in a certain way

because they are motivated to select a specific behaviour over other behaviours due to what they expect the result of that selected behaviour will be (Oliver, 1974). In essence, the motivation of the behaviour selection is determined by the desirability of the outcome. However, at the core of the theory is the cognitive process of how an individual processes the different motivational elements. This is done before making the ultimate choice. The outcome is not the sole determining factor in making the decision of how to behave (Oliver, 1974). From the point of view of the researcher, the theory centered on expectation and performance of employees in relation to enhancing staff productivity in Nigerian Universities.

**Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive research design using motivational studies. This type of study design enabled the researcher to describe the data and characteristics of what is being studied. The study was carried out among the senior administrative staff of the University of Port Harcourt. The target population consisted of the entire senior administrative staff cadre of the University of Port Harcourt excluding the executive staff and junior staff and is put at four hundred and eighty-seven (SPATS Office, 2020). The stratified random sampling technique was utilized in this study. This was done by segmenting the workers based on their administrative cadre or designation ranging between Administrative Assistant (AA) – Administrative Officer (AO), Assistant Registrar (AR) – Senior Assistant Registrar (SAR), Principal Assistant Registrar (PAR) – Deputy Registrar (DR) and Directors – Registrar.

**Table 3.1** Correlation/Distribution of Senior Administrative Staff of the University of Port Harcourt

| DESIGNATION | MALE | FEMALE | NUMBER |
|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative Assistant (AA) | 17 | 15 | 32 |
| Administrative Officer (AO) | 33 | 37 | 70 |
| Assistant Registrar (AR) | 72 | 81 | 153 |
| Senior Assistant Registrar (SAR) | 60 | 57 | 117 |
| Principal Assistant Registrar (PAR) | 47 | 49 | 96 |
| Deputy Registrar (DR) | 7 | 9 | 16 |
| Director | - | 2 | 2 |
| Registrar | - | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **236** | **251** | **487** |

Source: SPATS Office, University of Port Harcourt (2020).

This technique is appropriate to ensure that every element in the sampling frame has an equal opportunity to be selected (Singh and Masuku, 2014). A sample size of 219.61 approximately 220 was arrived at by using the Taro Yamane simplified formula for proportions. Data for this research were obtained through two major sources, which were the primary and secondary data sources. The study depended heavily on the use of primary sourced data obtained through the use of the structured questionnaire. The questionnaires consist of two sections. Section A dealt with the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent's age, sex, marital status, religious affiliation, educational qualification, designation, and length of service. Section B dealt with the motivational variables as they relate to organizational productivity. To ascertain the validity of the instrument, questionnaires designed to tap information from the respondents were validated by relevant experts in the field, and the test of suitability of items and appropriateness of language were also determined. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by the researcher carrying out a pilot study using a test-retest method on 10 respondents of the senior administrative cadre. This population was not involved in the actual study.

The data collected for this research work was analyzed by using the descriptive statistical method which includes frequency distribution tables, percentages, and averages (Arithmetic mean) in processing and analyzing the raw data collected from the field. Furthermore, distribution tables and frequency and percentages were used for data interpretation. The chi-square ($X^2$) was used in testing the research hypotheses of this study because of its ability to determine differences between the observed frequencies of a phenomenon and the frequencies expected based on assumed hypotheses.

Various studies have examined the effect of financial and non-financial motivation on a workers' performance and productivity levels. Most of these studies have obtained different results from their analysis. For instance, Rewards that an individual receives be it financial or non-financial are very essential in understanding the concept of motivation. Previous studies have proposed that rewards lead to fulfilment and can affect a worker' behaviour, which directly influences the performance as well as productivity levels of the employee.

Abah & Nwokwu (2016) conducted a study on work place motivation and employee productivity in a Nigerian public organization. The main purpose of the study was to examine the effect of workplace motivation on employee performance in the Nigerian public organization with special attention on the South-Eastern Federal Radio Corporation Nigeria (FRCN) and to identify factors that motivate staff of FRCN Abakaliki. From the evaluation of the potency of various motivational tools and strategies, the study revealed that the attainment of organizational goals will be a mirage if the needs of the workforce are not to a reasonably extent satisfied. The study is related to the present study as it examined work place motivation (healthy working environment) and employee productivity which leads to organizational productivity.

Singh et al. (2017) conducted an empirical study measuring employee motivation and organizational performance in higher education institution in India. The main focus of the study is to investigate the relation between the employee motivation and organizational performance among higher education institutions in Uttar Pradesh. Findings revealed that rewards and allowance, management support, employee engagement, work monitoring contributes towards the increment in the motivational levels of the employee. The implication is that rationale between employee motivations and organizational performance has been identified which state that significant role is being played by motivation in increasing the performance of the academic community of the organization. The study is related to the present study as it investigated employee motivation and organizational performance.

Gift & Obindah (2020) conducted a study on the influence of motivation on organizational productivity in Bayelsa. The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of motivation on organizational productivity in private hospitals in Bayelsa State. The study adopted the descriptive survey design which allowed the researcher to collect raw data from the field. The findings of the study indicated that improvement in motivation will result to corresponding improvement in organizational productivity. This implies that organization can improve productivity by motivating and promoting their office managers. This study is related to the present study in the sense that it analyzed motivation as factor that will enhance organizational productivity.

The existing studies in this relation, amongst others have taken a general focus on performance creating a gap on issues related to productivity. It was also observed, that very few examinations have been conducted in the aspect of workforce motivation with respect to tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This study while validating some empirical works intend to bridge the gap between existing literatures by providing evidence on the effect of workplace motivation as it relates to employee productivity in Nigerian Universities. Although, employee motivation has taken place in several organizations over the years but importantly this study presents employee motivation in Nigerian Universities especially in the University of Port Harcourt as it concerns senior administrative staff. This of course, differentiates this study from previous studies of scholars.

**The Concept of Motivation**

Motivation could be broad; however, according to George and Jones (2012), there are three major components of motivation which are direction, intensity, and persistency. Direction is a goal that forces an individual to perform an act to achieve it. A goal is chosen consciously or unconsciously by an individual. There are factors that influence a person in selecting the goal, including both internal and external factors, and the final goal is the best one chosen among potential alternatives. The intensity is the level of determination or effort put by an individual in the process of achieving the goal; how hard an individual has tried, and how much energy, time, money, or any other mental or physical things have been used during the process to achieve the goal. Persistence is the ability of an individual to maintain the motivation through times even though obstacles may exist.

Vroom 1964 (cited in Shadare & Hammed, 2009) proposes that people are motivated by how much they want something and how likely they think they are to get it. He suggested that motivation

leads to efforts and that effort combined with employees' ability together with environmental factors when interplayed results to performance. This performance in turn leads to various outcomes, each of which has an associated value called valence.

**Employee Productivity**

Jennifer and George (2006) argued that the performance of workers contribute directly to an organization's level of effectiveness, efficiency and even towards the achievement of administrative goals. It also stated that a corporation's failure to certify that its workers are motivated has a negative influence on its organizational effectiveness and efficiency thereby affecting employee's productivity levels concerning expected goals and objectives. According to Antonioni (1999) a worker's level of productivity is reliant on the extent at which workers believe that certain motivational desires will be fulfilled stating that workers become demoralized as such less productive once they perceive that their desires can't be met or gratified.

Mathis & John (2003) suggested that productivity refers to a measure of the quantity and quality of work done, bearing in mind the cost of capital used, the greater the level of organizational productivity, the greater the competitive edge. This is because the costs associated with the production of goods and services are lesser. Better productivity ratios does not automatically mean that more output is manufactured; it could also mean that less workers or less financial resources and time were utilized in producing the similar output. McNamara (2003) stated that productivity may be denoted in form of quality, quantity, time and cost. He also stated that evaluating productivity has to do with measuring the length of time it takes an average employee to produce at specified level of output. Although measuring productivity may seem difficult, it is however very significant since it directly affects organizational profitability.

**Factors Affecting Employee Motivation**

Employees want to earn reasonable wages and salaries and get satisfaction for the work they do. The question remains, what motivates workers? This has been a competing question among scholars and even lay people. Many modern theories of employee motivation emphasize intrinsic rewards as being central to the motivation process, while extrinsic rewards are often seen as necessary but not sufficient (Gerhart, 2000). It has the power to magnetize, maintain, and motivate individuals toward productive performance. Fredrick Taylor and his scientific associates described money as the most fundamental factor in motivating industrial workers to achieve greater productivity. Vroom (1964) identified ten factors that motivate workers and they are career advancement opportunities, job security, good wages and salary, appreciation or recognition for a job well done, support from management, good working conditions, an understanding attitude from management, interesting work, awareness about company matters and tactful discipline.

In Herzberg's theory, motivator needs must be satisfied for motivation and satisfaction or job commitment to be high in the organization. Job dissatisfaction can also be cocktails by elevating hygiene needs, although this will not motivate satisfaction or commitment. He observed that an improvement in the hygiene factors, such as organizational policies and administration, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, insecurity, status, money, and personal life would serve to remove the impediments to a positive work attitude.

Motivating the workforce is described as the "installation of a generator in an employee". As such, the employee does not need an external stimulator or a "kick in the ass (KITA)" to propel him in the desired direction.

Some factors can also induce employee productivity such as:

• Compensation (Money): Herzberg listed money as a dissatisfier factor, the evidence points out that money can be either a motivator or dissatisfier depending on the individual's pressing needs. For example, a man with a large family could be pressed by financial burden to accept a job and to be committed to the job. As long as the need persists, it will continue to be a motivator of his behaviour. If the individual works hard but does not get what he considers to be adequate compensation for the effort rendered, he could be dissatisfied.

• Relationship with supervisor or management: If the relationship between supervisor and management with employees is not cordial, it could lead to job dissatisfaction. Management

should know that workers need to equitably balance the demands of the job against other essential factors in their lives if their job motivation is sustained.

- Personal life: A person who needs esteem will be motivated to achieve it, which could be made possible by amassing wealth and gaining recognition. When a person achieves success, he develops a sense of importance and power and gets a feeling of self-actualization as he perceives that he has full control of his destiny or environment by not relying on others. Success breeds success and reinforces a person's esteem of his capability to achieve greater success.
- Working conditions: Any job that robs people of their need for recognition, satisfaction, and accomplishment will tend to dissatisfy them. Herzberg (2000) encourages management to study the job itself (i.e. the type of work done, the nature of tasks, and the level of responsibility) rather than the conditions of work. He suggests that only this will motivate or improve workers' commitment to their assigned jobs; for management to concentrate on improvement of working conditions and environmental factors which will stave off job dissatisfaction.

**Research Findings and Discussion**

Altogether 220 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the Senior Administrative Staff of the University of Port Harcourt through the stratified sampling technique, and a total of 207 questionnaires were retrieved properly and adequately completed. Thus, this represents a response rate of 94.1%. All 207 fully completed and retrieved questionnaires were used in the analysis of this study.

**Hypothesis One:**

Null Hypothesis ($H_0$): Dependents allowance has no positive significant effect on organizational productivity.

**Identification of test statistics:**

The Chi-Square ($X^2$) will be used for this analysis

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(F_O - F_E)^2}{F_E}$$

Where $F_O$ = Observed frequency

$F_E$ = Expected frequency

**Formulation of the decision rule:**

The researcher will accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis if the Cal ($X^2$) value is less than the Tab ($X^2$) value or vice versa.

**Table 4.2.2.1** Response of dependent allowance and organizational productivity

| Questionnaire Item Number | Agree | Disagree | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8. | 175 | 32 | **207** |
| 9. | 184 | 23 | **207** |
| 10. | 180 | 27 | **207** |
| 11. | 184 | 23 | **207** |

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2020).

**Table 4.2.2.2** Chi-square ($X^2$) contingency table for dependent allowance and organizational productivity

| Questionnaire Item No. | Response | $F_O$ | $F_E$ | $F_O F_E$ | $(F_O F_E)^2$ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Agree | 175 | 170.2 | 4.8 | 23.04 | 0.14 |
| 8. | Disagree | 32 | 36.7 | -4.7 | 22.09 | 0.60 |
| | Agree | 184 | 190.5 | -6.5 | 42.25 | 0.22 |
| 9. | Disagree | 23 | 16.4 | 6.6 | 43.56 | 2.66 |
| | Agree | 180 | 164.5 | 15.5 | 240.25 | 1.46 |
| 10. | Disagree | 27 | 42.4 | -15.4 | 237.16 | 5.59 |
| | Agree | 184 | 168.5 | 15.5 | 240.25 | 1.43 |
| 11. | Disagree | 23 | 38.4 | -15.4 | 237.16 | 6.18 |
| | **Total** | | | | | **18.28** |

Source: Researcher's Computation (2020).

**Statistical decision:**

The Cal $(X^2)$ value of 18.28 was greater than the Tab $(X^2)$ value of 7.81 thus the null hypothesis which states that dependents allowance has no positive significant effect on organizational productivity was rejected and the alternate hypothesis which states that dependents allowance has positive significant effect on organizational productivity was accepted.

The finding from the study revealed that dependent allowance is a significant predictor of employee productivity. Findings also showed that dependent allowance has a maximal effect on the level of productivity of the workers at the University of Port Harcourt. This could be because factors such as dependent allowance tend to affect employee efficiency, especially in a country like Nigeria where basic amenities are lacking.

These findings correspond with the findings of Taylor & Vest (1992) in the study which investigated the influence of monetary incentives and their removal on workers' performance and productivity; it was observed that subjects in the experimental group who received monetary incentives performed better than those who did not. This implies that the University of Port Harcourt has to motivate its employees by implementing a package for dependent relations of the senior administrative staff which will curtail absenteeism and punctuality thereby leading to the productivity of the organization.

**Hypothesis Two:**

Null Hypothesis $(H_0)$: Hazard allowance has no positive significant effect on organizational productivity.

**Identification of test statistics:**

The Chi-Square $(X^2)$ will be used for this analysis

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(F_O - F_E)^2}{F_E}$$

Where $F_O$ = Observed frequency

$F_E$ = Expected frequency

**Formulation of the decision rule:**

The researcher will accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis if the Cal $(X^2)$ value is less than the Tab $(X^2)$ value or vice versa.

**Table 4.2.2.3** Response of hazard allowance and organizational productivity

| Questionnaire Item No. | Agree | Disagree | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16. | 196 | 11 | **207** |
| 17. | 189 | 18 | **207** |
| 18. | 191 | 16 | **207** |
| 19. | 196 | 11 | **207** |

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2020).

**Table 4.2.2.4** Chi-square $(X^2)$ contingency table of hazard allowance and organizational productivity

| Questionnaire Item No. | Response | $F_O$ | $F_E$ | $F_O F_E$ | $(F_O F_E)^2$ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Agree | 196 | 200.7 | -4.7 | 22.09 | 0.11 |
| 16. | Disagree | 11 | 6.2 | 4.8 | 23.04 | 3.72 |
| | Agree | 189 | 182.4 | 6.6 | 43.56 | 0.24 |
| 17. | Disagree | 18 | 24.5 | -6.5 | 42.25 | 1.72 |
| | Agree | 191 | 186.2 | 4.8 | 23.04 | 0.12 |
| 18. | Disagree | 16 | 20.7 | -4.7 | 22.09 | 1.07 |
| | Agree | 196 | 181.4 | 14.6 | 213.16 | 1.18 |
| 19. | Disagree | 11 | 25.5 | -14.5 | 210.25 | 8.25 |
| | **Total** | | | | | **16.41** |

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2020.

**Statistical decision:**

The Cal $(X^2)$ value of 16.41 was greater than the Tab $(X^2)$ value of 7.81 thus the null hypothesis which states that hazard allowance has no positive significant effect on organizational

productivity was rejected and the alternate hypothesis which states that hazard allowance has a positive significant effect on organizational productivity was accepted.

The finding from the study reveals that hazard allowance is a significant predictor of employee efficiency. Findings also showed that hazard allowance has a maximal effect on the level of efficiency of the employees at the University of Port Harcourt. This could be connected to the fact that compensation especially in the form of hazard allowance tends to motivate employee efficiency considering the hazards employees face when performing their tasks and duties.

These findings corroborate the study among 80 employees of an organization by Akerele (2001) in which he compared the relative importance of ten motivational factors such as pay, incentives, security, etc., which are extrinsic to the job and other intrinsic factors like employee well-being, responsibility, etc. This implies that the University of Port Harcourt needs to implement hazard allowance as this will motivate the senior administrative employees to make sacrifice and dedicate full attention to responsibilities thereby increasing productivity.

**Conclusion**

The motivation of employees plays one of the most vital roles in an organization's effectiveness and assertiveness which contributes to its growth and prosperity. Therefore, any employer must understand what truly motivates the employees and how to maximize the overall job performance.

This is because they are an integral part of the organization as such it is very important for organizations, in pursuit of a competitive edge, to ensure that the satisfaction of their employees is made a top priority. This is to ensure that employees display a positive attitude to work through improved performance and productivity levels. Also, it is important to note that lack of adequate motivation results in low productivity and vice versa.

The concept of motivation may be complex, particularly in the workplace, and may pose a serious challenge to managers as it is relative to individuals. This is because people differ in what they need and want as such what may be seen as a source of motivation to an individual may not seem so to another. As such, managers tend to find it extremely difficult to cope with such a dilemma in trying to figure out how to keep members of the workforce motivated. Although, several factors may affect worker productivity levels in an organization, such as organizational culture, leadership style, organizational strategy, and structure, etc. The aspect of motivation however plays a major role in improving worker productivity levels and therefore should not be underestimated. Therefore, the findings from the study show that implementation of dependents allowance can have an optimum effect on the level of productivity of the workers in the University of Port Harcourt because employees will focus more at work when they worry less about their dependent's well-being, welfare, and financial needs; employees will increase productivity when they are compensated for inadequate working condition, inappropriate health and safety measures because hazard allowance is implemented by the employers. From the findings of this study, one can deduce that dependents allowance and hazard allowance are all significant predictors of employee productivity.

Summarily, the study recommends that the University of Port Harcourt should implement a package for dependent relations of the senior administrative employees to ensure that their well-being, welfare and financial needs are catered for as much as possible, which will curtail absenteeism and punctuality thereby leading to the productivity of the organization.; and also motivate the senior administrative employees by compensating for inadequate working conditions, unfit health and safety measures especially in the form of implementing hazard allowance, so that they will make sacrifice and dedicate full attention to responsibilities thereby increasing productivity .

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# CHALLENGES OF ENERGY SECURITY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract
*Nigeria is endowed with abundant natural resources, including oil and gas reserves, which have been the primary sources of energy for the country. However, the overreliance on these resources has resulted in several challenges, such as energy insecurity, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient investment in alternative energy sources. The result is a significant gap between energy demand and supply, which has led to frequent power outages and limited access to energy for the majority of Nigerians. Thus, this paper seeks to examine the present challenges of energy security and its implications in respect to Nigeria. The methodology employed is content analysis which relied on data from secondary sources. The theoretical framework is hinged on the Resource Curse Theory. The findings revealed that one of the significant challenges facing Nigeria's energy security is the lack of investment in the energy sector. The study concludes by emphasizing on the importance and ways of improving energy security in Nigeria which will in turn drive economic development and social stability. It recommends that Nigeria should diversify its energy sources to reduce dependence on crude oil and gas. The country should explore renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro and geothermal power to provide a more sustainable energy mix.*

**Keywords**: Energy security, economic development, Nigeria, Nigeria's economic development, social stability

## Introduction
Nigeria is one of the leading oil-producing countries in the world, and its economy is heavily dependent on the oil and gas sector, which account for over 90% of the country's export revenue (Ugbaja, 2020). Despite this, Nigeria has been facing challenges in ensuring energy security, which is crucial for sustainable economic development. Energy security refers to the ability of a country to ensure the availability and affordability of energy sources to meet its domestic demand (Amadi & Emeti, 2018). Energy security is a crucial aspect of sustainable development, especially for countries that rely heavily on energy resources to drive their economies. Nigeria, as one of the largest oil-producing countries in the world, faces several challenges in maintaining energy security, which has significant implications for its economic development. In recent years, the country has struggled with power shortages, pipeline vandalism, and fluctuations in oil prices, which have all contributed to energy insecurity (Onuoha, 2020).

The challenges of energy security in Nigeria are numerous and complex. One major challenge is the inadequate infrastructure for energy production and distribution, leading to frequent power outages and shortages of petroleum products (Onuoha, 2018). Another challenge is the lack of diversity in the country's energy mix, with over-reliance on fossil fuels, particularly crude oil and gas (Ozor, 2019). This reliance on a single source of energy makes the country vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices and supply disruptions, which can have a significant impact on the economy (Okeke, 2020). The energy sector in Nigeria is also affected by the problem of oil theft and pipeline vandalism. These criminal activities lead to significant losses of revenue for the government and oil companies, as well as environmental damage and disruptions in oil and gas supply (Ogbonna, et al.,2020).

The Nigerian energy sector is plagued by issues of corruption and mismanagement, which have hampered investment in the sector and led to a decline in energy production (Ugbaja, 2020). These challenges have far-reaching implications for Nigeria's economic development, including reduced industrial productivity, increased cost of doing business, and limited foreign investment (Okeke, 2020). Another challenge is the over-reliance on oil exports as a source of revenue. The fluctuations in global oil prices have a significant impact on the Nigerian economy, which is heavily reliant on oil exports.

This reliance has led to neglect of other sectors of the economy, leading to underdevelopment and lack of diversification (Okoroafor & Nwachukwu, 2021).

Despite these challenges, there have been efforts by the Nigerian government and international organizations to address the issue of energy security. For instance, the government has embarked on various initiatives to diversify the energy mix, including promoting renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power (Amadi & Emeti, 2018). There have also been efforts to address corruption and improve governance in the energy sector (Ugbaja, 2020). Another initiative is the Power Sector Recovery Programme, which seeks to address the challenges in the electricity sector by increasing generation capacity, reducing losses, improving access to electricity, and attracting private sector investment (Ogbonna et al., 2020).

The implications of energy insecurity for Nigeria's economic development are significant. Inadequate power supply affects businesses and industries, leading to reduced productivity and increased costs. This, in turn, affects the competitiveness of Nigerian goods and services in the global market (Onuoha, 2020). Additionally, the reliance on oil exports has led to a neglect of other sectors of the economy, which could provide alternative sources of revenue and drive sustainable economic growth (Okoroafor & Nwachukwu, 2021).

Addressing these challenges will require sustained efforts by the government and other stakeholders, including increased investment in renewable energy, improvement in infrastructure, and implementation of policies that promote economic diversification and energy efficiency.

This research topic seeks to explore the challenges of energy security in Nigeria and the implications for the country's economic development. The study will examine the various factors that contribute to the challenges of energy security. It will also analyze the impact of these challenges on the economy. The findings of this study will provide insights into the measures needed to improve energy security in Nigeria and promote sustainable economic development. The paper is segmented into five sections, beginning with the introduction. The second section clarifies the relevant concepts, while the third section explains the methodology used. The fourth section discusses the subject matter, while the fifth section concludes the paper.

## Conceptual Clarifications
### Energy Security

Energy security can be defined as "the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price" (Dincer, 2018 ,p.1). This definition emphasizes the importance of three main dimensions of energy security: availability, affordability, and environmental/social sustainability. These dimensions are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, as the sustainable availability of energy sources at an affordable price is essential to ensure long-term energy security.

Sovacool (2013, p. 69) defines energy security as "the ability of a country to obtain a reliable and affordable supply of energy, whether from domestic or external sources, without experiencing undue economic, social, or political costs." This definition highlights the need to balance economic, social, and political factors in ensuring energy security.

Energy security refers to the reliable and affordable supply of energy to meet the needs of societies and individuals while ensuring the sustainability of energy systems. It is a multidimensional concept that encompasses a range of economic, social, and environmental factors (Victor, et al., 2019).

Another definition of energy security, provided by Goldthau (2014, p.1), highlights the political dimension of the concept: "the ability of a state to meet its energy needs at all times, while maintaining access to the global energy markets and ensuring that energy-related foreign policy objectives are met." This definition underscores the importance of energy security as a strategic issue that involves not only the economic and environmental dimensions but also the geopolitical and foreign policy dimensions. It also suggests that energy security is not only a matter of ensuring access to energy sources, but also of leveraging energy resources to pursue broader foreign policy objectives

According to Sovacool & Mukherjee (2011), energy security can be summed up as a nation-capacity state's to protect and guarantee that its energy requirements are satisfied in a way that is dependable, affordable, and sustainable while reducing the negative effects on the environment and upholding a decent level of social equity. This definition highlights the importance of not only ensuring a reliable and affordable supply of energy but also considering the environmental and social impacts of energy production and consumption. The International Energy Agency (IEA) defines energy security

as "the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price" (IEA, 2019). This definition emphasizes the importance of ensuring that energy is available when needed and at a price that is affordable for consumers.

According to O'Sullivan (2013), a state's ability to ensure that there are sufficient energy sources accessible, at fair rates, and with acceptable environmental and social costs, in order to meet both its domestic demand and its international commitments. This definition emphasizes the importance of considering the environmental and social impacts of energy production and consumption.

Despite the diversity of perspectives on energy security, there is a growing recognition that it is a complex and multi-faceted concept that requires a holistic approach to address its various dimensions and challenges. This includes the need to diversify energy sources, improve energy efficiency, enhance energy infrastructure, promote renewable energy, and mitigate climate change risks (Sovacool, 2011; UN, 2015).

**Economic Development**

According to Todaro & Smith (2017, p.17), economic development is "a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of poverty." Economic development involves not only the growth of national income but also the improvement of the distribution of income, the reduction of poverty, and the enhancement of human capabilities (UNDP, 1990). Todaro (2014, P.16) defines economic development as "the process of improving the quality of human life through increasing per capita income, reducing poverty, and enhancing individual and collective economic and social well-being."

Scholars have also emphasized the importance of economic development in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth. For example, Stiglitz, et al. (2009) argue that economic development should be measured not only in terms of GDP growth but also in terms of the well-being of people and the sustainability of economic growth. They propose a new measure of economic development that takes into account a wider range of social and environmental factors, known as the "Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission". North (1990) is of the opinion that "institutions matter for economic performance" (p. 3), as they provide the framework within which economic activity takes place. Institutions can include legal systems, property rights, and governance structures, and they can either facilitate or hinder economic development.

Sen (1999) emphasizes the importance of human development in economic development. He believes that economic development should not be measured solely by increases in national income, but also by improvements in the well-being of individuals, particularly the most vulnerable. Sen contends that human development involves expanding people's capabilities, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives and participate fully in society.

**Methodology**

The methodology employed for this study is content analysis. It combines conceptual evaluation, theme analysis, and theoretical presentation. The approach of this study placed a strong emphasis on qualitative information acquired from secondary sources, such as journals, government websites, and written works. Each bit of data acquired for this study is relevant to it.

**Theoretical Framework**

This paper adopts the Resource Curse theory. The Resource Curse theory posits that countries that are rich in natural resources are prone to suffer from economic and political instability, corruption, and poor economic performance. The theory suggests that the easy availability of natural resources leads to a lack of diversification in the economy, as well as a dependence on the export of these resources, which can lead to volatility in commodity prices and a lack of competitiveness in other sectors. This paper will discuss the challenges of energy security and their implications for Nigeria's economic development in light of the Resource Curse theory.

Nigeria is one of the largest oil-producing countries in the world and has a significant amount of natural gas reserves. However, despite its wealth in natural resources, the country faces several challenges in achieving energy security. These challenges include lack of adequate infrastructure, such as refineries and pipelines, which leads to a heavy reliance on imports of refined petroleum products,

as well as lack of investment in alternative sources of energy, such as renewable energy (Adenikinju, 2014).

Moreover, the country's heavy dependence on the oil sector has led to a lack of diversification in the economy, as well as a neglect of other sectors, such as agriculture and manufacturing, which could potentially drive economic growth and development. The Nigerian economy has been characterized by low productivity, high unemployment rates, and poverty, which are major impediments to economic development (Akinlo, 2016). The Resource Curse theory argues that countries that are heavily dependent on natural resources tend to experience political instability, corruption, and poor economic performance. Nigeria's experience with the oil sector has been no different. The country has been plagued by political instability, corruption, and poor economic performance for decades, despite its vast oil reserves (Ross, 2015).

Nigeria, which is one of the largest oil-producing countries in the world, has often been cited as a case study for the Resource Curse theory. Despite its vast natural resources, Nigeria has struggled with slow economic growth, high poverty rates, and political instability. One of the key challenges facing Nigeria in terms of energy security is the lack of diversification in its energy mix. The country is heavily reliant on oil and gas for its energy needs, with petroleum products accounting for over 90% of the country's total energy consumption (Adenikinju, 2014).

This heavy reliance on oil and gas has made Nigeria vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices, which can have significant implications for the country's economic development. For example, the fall in oil prices in 2014 led to a significant decline in Nigeria's revenue, which in turn led to a depreciation of the country's currency, inflation, and a rise in unemployment (Adenikinju, 2016).

The Resource Curse theory suggests that the abundance of natural resources can lead to corruption and political instability. Nigeria has struggled with corruption and political instability for decades, and this has had a significant impact on the country's economic development. Corruption has undermined institutions, led to the mismanagement of resources, and discouraged foreign investment. Political instability has also hindered economic growth by creating an uncertain business environment (Adelekan & Adelekan, 2017).

To address the challenges of energy security and promote economic development, Nigeria needs to diversify its energy mix and reduce its reliance on oil and gas. This could involve investing in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, as well as improving energy efficiency. Nigeria also needs to tackle corruption and improve governance to ensure that the benefits of its natural resources are distributed fairly and used for the country's development (Ezepue & Adeleke, 2018).

The resource curse theory provides a useful framework for understanding the challenges of energy security and economic development in Nigeria. According to the theory, countries that rely heavily on natural resources like oil and gas tend to suffer from economic volatility, corruption, and political instability (Sachs & Warner, 2001). This has certainly been the case for Nigeria, which has struggled to manage its oil wealth and translate it into sustainable economic growth. The theory also highlights the risks associated with over-reliance on a single resource, which can leave countries vulnerable to price shocks and fluctuations in global demand.

One potential weakness of this theory is that it may oversimplify the complex relationships between natural resources, economic development, and political institutions. For example, some scholars have argued that the theory does not account for the role of historical factors, such as colonialism, in shaping the economic and political institutions of resource-rich countries like Nigeria (Karl, 1997). Moreover, the theory does not offer clear policy solutions for managing the challenges of energy security and economic development, beyond advocating for diversification of the economy and improved governance.

The theory is however appropriate for the study as it provides insights into the challenges facing resource-rich countries such as Nigeria in terms of energy security and economic development.

**Challenges of Energy Security in Nigeria**

One key challenge of securing energy in Nigeria is inadequate infrastructure. The country's energy infrastructure, including power plants and transmission lines, is old and inefficient, leading to frequent power outages and low-capacity utilization (Babalola, 2021). Nigeria's energy infrastructure is insufficient to meet the demands of its growing population and economy. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Nigeria's electricity generation capacity is only about 12.5 GW,

which is insufficient to meet the country's needs (IEA, 2021). This has led to frequent power outages and has limited economic growth in the country. In addition, the lack of infrastructure for renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power, has made it difficult for Nigeria to diversify its energy mix (IEA, 2021).

The lack of investment in the energy sector has led to a significant infrastructure deficit, resulting in a low electrification rate, with more than half of Nigeria's population lacking access to electricity (Iwayemi et al., 2021). Despite the country's significant oil and gas resources, Nigeria's energy sector has been underfunded, leading to a lack of investment in energy infrastructure and the development of alternative energy sources (Onyeukwu et al., 2021). The low funding of the energy sector has also led to poor maintenance of existing energy infrastructure, resulting in frequent breakdowns and disruptions in energy supply.

Nigeria's energy sector has also been affected by security concerns, particularly in the oil and gas industry. The country has experienced significant oil theft, pipeline vandalism, and attacks on oil installations, which have disrupted oil production and export (Ezekwesili & Aljazeera, 2021). These security challenges have not only led to a decline in oil and gas production but also have a negative impact on the country's economy, as the energy sector accounts for a significant portion of Nigeria's GDP. It also discouraged investment in the sector and have limited Nigeria's ability to fully exploit its energy resources.

Corruption and mismanagement have also contributed to Nigeria's energy security challenges. According to Transparency International, Nigeria is one of the most corrupt countries in the world (Transparency International, 2021). Corruption has led to mismanagement of the country's energy resources, resulting in limited investment in energy infrastructure and a lack of accountability for those responsible for managing the sector (Ayoola, 2021). This has resulted in inefficient and unreliable energy services, hindering economic growth and development.

The pricing of energy in Nigeria has been a significant challenge, with many Nigerians unable to afford the cost of electricity. The cost of electricity in Nigeria is one of the highest in the world, which has made it unaffordable for many Nigerians, especially those in rural areas (Ugwuanyi & Ajah, 2020). This has resulted in a significant gap between energy demand and supply, with many Nigerians relying on alternative sources of energy, such as generators and firewood.

Another significant challenge facing the Nigerian energy sector is the over-reliance on fossil fuels, particularly oil and gas. Despite being a significant oil-producing country, Nigeria has not made significant progress in diversifying its energy mix. As a result, the country is vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices, which can have a significant impact on the country's economy (Ugwuanyi, et al., 2021). The continued use of fossil fuels contributes to environmental degradation and poses a significant threat to public health. In addition, the lack of a clear policy framework and regulatory environment has hindered the growth of the energy sector in Nigeria. The absence of a clear policy framework has led to a lack of direction and coherence in the development of the sector, while the absence of effective regulatory oversight has led to inefficiencies and abuse in the management of energy resources (Eboh & Edet, 2019).

Furthermore, the lack of adequate human capacity in the energy sector has been a significant challenge. Nigeria's energy sector suffers from a shortage of skilled professionals, particularly in areas such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy management (Adelekan & Adedeji, 2019). This has hindered the development of alternative energy sources and the efficient utilization of existing energy resources. Despite the critical role of energy in driving economic growth and development, the Nigerian government has not demonstrated sufficient commitment to addressing the challenges facing the energy sector (Ugwuanyi, et al., 2021). This has led to a lack of coherent policy and regulatory frameworks, inadequate funding, and insufficient investments in infrastructure.

## Impact of the Challenges of Energy Security on the Economy

One of the major impacts of the challenges of energy security is the unreliable and inadequate supply of electricity. The irregular power supply has had a severe impact on businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises, which rely heavily on electricity to operate (Eboh & Edet, 2019). The lack of reliable electricity has resulted in increased production costs, reduced productivity, and loss of revenue. This has also led to a decline in foreign investments, as investors are discouraged by the lack of reliable infrastructure, including energy supply.

The high cost of electricity has had a significant impact on the economy, particularly on the poor. The high cost of electricity has made it unaffordable for many households and businesses, leading to a reliance on alternative energy sources such as generators and firewood. This has resulted in increased environmental degradation, health hazards, and a decline in productivity, as businesses spend more money on energy than they would if electricity was affordable and reliable (Ugwuanyi & Ajah, 2020).

The manufacturing sector requires reliable and affordable energy to operate effectively. However, the challenges facing the energy sector have made it difficult for the manufacturing sector to operate at full capacity, resulting in a decline in productivity and output. This has also led to increased production costs, which are passed on to consumers, making locally produced goods less competitive compared to imported products (Ogunleye & Akinbami, 2019).

The challenges of energy security have also had a significant impact on the agricultural sector. The agricultural sector is a critical sector in the Nigerian economy, providing employment opportunities for a significant percentage of the population and contributing significantly to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, the lack of reliable and affordable energy has hindered the sector's growth and productivity, leading to a decline in output and revenue (Ugwuanyi et al., 2021). This has also hindered the sector's ability to adopt modern technologies and practices that could improve productivity and enhance food security

The transport sector is heavily reliant on fossil fuels, particularly petrol and diesel, to power vehicles. The high cost of petrol and diesel, coupled with the irregular supply of these fuels, has made it difficult for the transport sector to operate effectively. This has resulted in increased transportation costs, making goods and services more expensive, reducing consumer purchasing power and leading to inflation (Ogunleye & Akinbami, 2019).

Another impact of energy security challenges on the economy is reduced economic growth. The limited supply of energy and the increasing demand can limit economic growth, as industries and businesses cannot operate at full capacity due to insufficient energy supply. Inadequate energy supply can lead to power outages and blackouts, which can disrupt businesses and industries, leading to decreased productivity and economic growth. A study by the World Bank found that electricity shortages can reduce GDP growth by 0.9% per year in low-income countries and 0.5% per year in middle-income countries (World Bank, 2020).

Furthermore, energy security challenges can also affect a country's competitiveness in the global market. Countries that rely heavily on energy imports and are vulnerable to supply disruptions or price volatility may face challenges in competing with other countries in the global market. For instance, countries with high energy costs may struggle to produce goods and services at competitive prices, making them less competitive in the global market. According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), energy security is a critical factor for economic competitiveness, and countries that do not have a secure and affordable energy supply are at a disadvantage (WEF, 2021).

In addition, the over-reliance on fossil fuels has had a significant impact on the economy. The continued use of fossil fuels, particularly oil and gas, has made Nigeria vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices. The decline in oil prices in 2015 had a severe impact on the country's economy, leading to a recession that lasted for over a year (Ugwuanyi et al., 2021). Additionally, the use of fossil fuels contributes to environmental degradation and poses a significant threat to public health, which has an economic cost.

**Measures Needed to Improve Energy Security in Nigeria**
Energy security is essential for the sustainable development of any country. In Nigeria, the energy sector is plagued by several challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, low-capacity utilization, and inadequate investment, among others, leading to a lack of energy security. In this section, the researcher examines some measures that could be taken to improve energy security in Nigeria.

● Diversification of Energy Sources: Nigeria's energy mix is heavily reliant on fossil fuels, primarily crude oil and natural gas. However, diversifying the energy mix to include renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydropower could improve energy security in Nigeria (Oyedepo et al., 2020). The government should invest in renewable energy projects and provide incentives for private sector participation.

- Upgrade of Energy Infrastructure: The energy infrastructure in Nigeria is inadequate, leading to frequent power outages and blackouts. The government should invest in upgrading the transmission and distribution infrastructure, including the installation of smart grids and advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy losses (Abdulhakeem et al., 2020).
- Improved Energy Efficiency: Improving energy efficiency is a cost-effective measure that could reduce energy consumption and improve energy security in Nigeria. The government should implement policies and programmes to encourage energy-efficient practices in industries, homes, and public buildings (Oyedepo et al., 2020).
- Increased Investment in the Energy Sector: Nigeria's energy sector requires significant investment to improve energy security. The government should provide a conducive environment for private sector investment in the energy sector by implementing policies that reduce investment risks, provide tax incentives, and guarantee a stable regulatory environment (Abdulhakeem et al., 2020).
- Strengthened Energy Governance: The energy sector in Nigeria suffers from inadequate regulation and governance, leading to inefficiencies and corruption. The government should strengthen energy governance by implementing policies that promote transparency, accountability, and good governance in the energy sector (Oyedepo et al., 2020).
- Strengthening of Energy Research and Development: Energy research and development could lead to the development of innovative and cost-effective solutions to improve energy security in Nigeria. The government should increase funding for energy research and development and encourage collaborations between research institutions and the private sector (Abdulhakeem et al., 2020).
- Promotion of Energy Conservation: Energy conservation involves reducing energy consumption through behavioural changes, efficient technologies, and practices. The Nigerian government should promote energy conservation through awareness campaigns, energy audits, and energy efficiency labelling programmes (Oyedepo et al., 2020).
- Collaboration with International Partners: Collaboration with international partners could provide technical and financial support to improve energy security in Nigeria. The Nigerian government should establish partnerships with international organizations and governments to access funding, technology, and expertise to implement energy security measures (Oyedepo et al., 2020).

**Findings**

The challenges of energy security and their implications for Nigeria's economic development have been widely studied in academic literature. According to Akuru and Okoro (2016), energy security is a critical factor for economic growth and development in Nigeria. However, Nigeria faces numerous challenges in achieving energy security, which has significant implications for the country's economic development.

One of the significant challenges facing Nigeria's energy security is the lack of investment in the energy sector (Akuru & Okoro, 2016). Despite being one of the world's leading oil-producing countries, Nigeria's energy infrastructure is inadequate and inefficient. This has resulted in frequent power outages and blackouts, which have a significant impact on economic activities. According to Oyedepo and Oyedepo (2019), Nigeria loses an estimated \$29 billion annually due to power outages. Another challenge facing Nigeria's energy security is the overdependence on fossil fuels, particularly oil and gas (Iwayemi & Fagbenle, 2018). This overreliance has significant environmental implications, including air and water pollution, and contributes to climate change. Additionally, the volatility of global oil prices affects Nigeria's revenue from oil exports, which has a significant impact on the country's economy.

The implications of Nigeria's energy insecurity are numerous, with significant implications for the country's economic development. For instance, the inadequate and unreliable energy infrastructure has hindered industrial development, as businesses and industries are unable to operate at full capacity due to power outages (Akuru & Okoro, 2016). This, in turn, affects employment opportunities, reduces productivity, and limits economic growth.

**Conclusion**

The challenges of energy security and implications for Nigeria's economic development are complex and multi-faceted. Nigeria is facing significant challenges in ensuring energy security due to

a range of factors, including inadequate infrastructure, poor investment in the energy sector, inadequate government policies, and environmental concerns. The implications of these challenges are significant and far-reaching, as energy is a crucial input for economic growth and development. Without reliable and affordable energy, Nigeria's economy will suffer, as industries will be unable to operate efficiently and households will struggle to meet their energy needs. However, Nigeria needs to develop a comprehensive energy policy that promotes investment in the energy sector and incentivizes the development of renewable energy sources. Additionally, the government needs to address corruption and mismanagement in the energy sector and improve infrastructure to ensure reliable and affordable energy for all Nigerians. Addressing these challenges will not only improve energy security in the country, but also contribute to Nigeria's economic development and social stability.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

After considering several literatures and analyzing the contents, the following suggestions are made by the paper:

1. Nigeria should diversify its energy sources to reduce dependence on crude oil and gas. The country should explore renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro and geothermal power to provide a more sustainable energy mix.
2. Nigeria should invest in upgrading its energy infrastructure to ensure efficient transmission and distribution of energy. This includes modernizing the grid, improving storage capacity, and enhancing distribution networks to reduce energy losses.
3. Nigeria should encourage energy efficiency in industries, buildings and transportation by promoting the use of energy-efficient appliances, lighting, and building materials. This would help reduce energy demand, conserve energy resources, and cut costs for businesses and consumers.
4. Nigeria should improve access to energy for its citizens, particularly in rural areas where access to modern energy services is limited. This could be achieved through the deployment of off-grid renewable energy systems and mini-grids, which can provide reliable and affordable electricity to communities.
5. Nigeria should develop and implement sustainable energy policies that promote the development of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy access. These policies should also address issues such as energy subsidies, pricing, and regulation to ensure a level playing field for all energy sources and foster private sector investment in the energy sector.

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# RETHINKING THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE NIGER DELTA: THE EXPERIENCE OF BRASS, 1800-2022

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## Abstract

*The study investigated the role of indigenous traditional institutions in the management of conflict in Brass. This study is significant, as it revealed age long practices, as well as contemporary strategies used in the management of conflicts in Brass. The study employed the primary, secondary, and the multidisciplinary approaches in its collations and interpretations of data. It made use of the Structural functionality and Role theories in its analysis. The study, however, revealed that conflict in Brass Local Government Area takes the same pattern as in most traditional African societies. It stressed that conflicts in Brass Local Government Area, emanate from the family setting and snowballed to the larger society, where its consequences range from mild to hostile conditions. The research revealed that claims to ownership of land, conquest and territorial expansion, competition for natural resources, trade monopoly, siting of basic infrastructure, and cultism etcetera are the main causes of conflicts in Brass Local Government Area. The study, thus, argued that indigenous institutions like Kings, House Chiefs, and Family are traditional mean through which conflict are addressed in Brass Local Government Area. The study recommends that resolution of disputes can be facilitated by the active involvement of the chiefs and elders from the disputing parties, who should consistently engage in constructive dialogue and collaboratively propose viable solutions, measures, and procedures. The study concludes that conflict is a natural phenomenon that affects all societies of the world, as such, requires sincerity, competence and innovativeness in addressing it, as none innovative methods, may lead to disastrous outcomes.*

**Keywords**: Traditional institutions, conflicts, conflict management, dialogue, Niger Delta, Brass LGA

## Introduction

It is a widely accepted fact that kingship was the first form of human administration. In Africa, the institution was developed in accordance with the laws and traditions of the people and was thus, a part of their cultural legacy. The traditional institution was used in opposition to the contemporary form of governance or control that the European colonialists imposed on Africa (Mohammed, 2006).

In Nigeria, as well as in a great number of other precolonial and postcolonial African nations, the traditional institutions are held in high regard because of the role they play in maintaining peace, stability, and serenity in their various communities. For example, in a state like Bayelsa, which has had numerous social disputes and unrest, the traditional institutions have been very helpful in mediating and resolving social problems. As a consequence of this, the traditional institution continues to grow in significance, and major parties routinely rely on them to intervene in conflict situations when it is essential to do so (Brobbey, 2008).

Interestingly, the traditional institutions also act as the eyes and ears of the government on matters that are of interest to the local community. They work along with other institutions of the state

to uphold good governance. Even in our day-to-day lives, an individual who is looking to resolve a conflict may choose between formal institutions inspired by Western culture and traditional norms/institutions. This decision is seldom influenced by a number of factors, including location, the problem at hand, the individual's level of education, preference, and trust in the institution. In this sense, traditional institutions are essential to the formation as well as the management of (violent) conflict. Therefore, both the traditional institutions and the formal modern political institutions of democracy have varied degrees of effect on the internal conflicts occurring inside our society. According to Busia (1968), the traditional institution was initially and largely the focal point of governance in pre-colonial Africa. With the help of their council of elders, they performed combined legislative, administrative, judicial, religious, and military duties at every level, from the village to the state (Acquah, 2006).

The traditional institution which is well known for its vitality, endurance, and eternal relevance, was one of the most developed aspects of African civilization. According to Nweke (2012), the traditional political institution is an indigenous political arrangement through which moral leaders are selected and installed in accordance with their indigenous conventions and laws. This conventional political institution has weathered all vicissitudes and has persisted to re-define itself for greater relevance despite the changes and adjustments brought about by modernity. In the majority of Nigerian cultures and communities, it has continued to be the dominant traditional political system and continues to play an active role in the management and settlement of conflicts, particularly in the conflict-prone Niger Delta region (Abolarin, 2017, Isaac, 2003),

## Statement of the Problem

Before the arrival of the Europeans, traditional institutions served as driving forces of progress within their own spheres of influence. They were responsible for all of the tasks that were necessary for the formation of the nation. The incursion of Europeans and the adoption of Western-style institutions into our political cum economic structures, however, caused the traditional institutions to lose their significance, which in turn led to their gradual decline. In the grand scheme of things, they were consigned to the background, and some of them were utilized in the exploitative and manipulative practices directed at the indigenous people. Nonetheless, post-independence policies across much of Nigeria have sought to revitalize the indigenous traditional institution with its seeming recognition by the government and policymakers alike. This recognition is made even more concrete by the role indigenous traditional institutions play in the maintenance of a stable cum peaceful society. In many Bayelsa communities, for instance, the traditional institutions have helped to maintain/negotiate peace, by introducing and applying indigenous conflict management strategies in the handling of conflicts. Although, despite the efforts made by traditional institutions in the maintenance and settlement of disputes, not much has been recorded about them, particularly as regards to Brass Local Government Area. Against this backdrop, therefore, this study examines traditional institutions and conflict management in Brass Local Government Area from the period: 1800-2022.

## Conceptual Review
## Traditional Institution

The term "traditional institutions" refers to indigenous political arrangements in which leaders with established track records are selected and installed in accordance with the stipulations of their local laws and customs. (Orji & Olali, 2010, P.402). The institutions' primary functions are to maintain the traditions and customs of the people, as well as to mediate disputes that may arise within the community or between its members through the application of the laws and traditions that the people have developed over time.

According to Wardak (2004), traditional institutions and other types of leadership emerged from people's innate need to protect themselves and their communities. All cultures' histories show that battles were a common feature of their early history, including wars of conquest and wars fought for survival in the face of diseases, famines, famines, and natural calamities. He stated that these battles and contributions to the society's survival inevitably generated brave men who rose to become the first members of its leadership. This assumes that individuals hold leadership positions during historical eras simply because of the power and courage they displayed during battles and other interactions the society had to endure.

Traditional institution according to the Osborn Concise Law Dictionary (1976, P.40), refers to an institution or authority that is inherited and passed from one generation to the next. It is debatable, however, whether this definition encompasses the current meaning of these terms, as in Nigeria traditional authorities must also have the blessing of public authority in order to legally wield power, right, and prescribed functions.

Naagbanton (2011), sees traditional institution as an organization or institution tasked with safeguarding indigenous traditional ways of life. This includes any customary regulatory organizations that control daily life in a certain community. They include, among others, court historians, court jesters, and praise singers. They also include traditional rulers/chiefs, the lineage, the extended family, the nuclear family, the age grade, and professional guilds. Traditional leaders across the country have contributed to maintaining our national security in the past and will do so in the future.

## Conflict

The term "conflict" has a multiplicity of meanings. To many people, conflict means a destructive tendency. However, conflict must not only be viewed from this negative perspective, as conflicts, inasmuch as it can be destructive, can sometimes lead to positive outcomes. According to Ihejirika (2001), when people hear the word "conflict," images of war, fighting, misunderstanding, disagreements, anarchy, stress, crisis, aggressiveness, and so on pop into their heads between individuals, groups, communities, nations, and states. Those who view disputes negatively, as Ihejirika notes, are more likely to respond destructively to them. He suggests that keeping an optimistic outlook on disagreements is key to handling them in a productive way that leads to outcomes like more communication, better understanding, and stronger bonds.

Conflict, according to Swanstrom & Weissmann (2005), is a complex phenomenon with overlapping dynamics and processes. They also state that most individuals would compromise or negotiate if a dispute merely involved a choice between two options. However, power struggles are frequently present in conflicts, and how choices are made, how people communicate with one another, and unsolved issues from previous contacts all affect how things turn out. It's possible for many of these characteristics to be present at once, making it difficult to identify the true source of the issue.

For De Dreu & Weingart (2003), the common understanding of the term "conflict" reflects the common belief that conflict comprises not only disagreements but also incompatible aims and that it is a "win-lose" situation. In point of fact, research that ask people to answer surveys that use the term conflict without being modified in any way as to whether it is a win-lose situation or not often, indicate that conflict of various forms are negatively associated to results.

Conflict, according to Grey & Starke (1984), occurs when one person or group acts in a way that obstructs the aims of another person or organisation. Conflict will happen if conduct is accompanied by hostile emotional displays. Conflict, according to Hellriegel and Slocum (1996), is antagonism brought on by differences in goals, viewpoints, or emotions inside or between individuals, groups, departments, or organisations. The essence of opposition is to prevent someone or a group from achieving predefined goals, and doing so will surely lead to conflict because the party being prevented will immediately make an overt response. Conflict can also be defined as the expression of (overt or covert) conflicts among interdependent people.

## Conflict management

Conflict management is a broad phrase that refers to any method done to limit the horizontal and vertical escalation of a violent conflict's severity. Conflict management is based on the assumption that conflict is unavoidable and, while not always resolvable, can be controlled. Lederach (1997) asserts that the study of conflict management is essential because it aids companies in identifying and resolving issues. Conflict management is to promote positive behavioural changes among the parties involved in order to lessen current violence and prevent it from occurring again. Thus, conflict management is related to the internal procedures used by various agencies to address issues without completely removing them. Although some publications use the phrases interchangeably, it is important to understand that conflict management differs from conflict resolution when addressing problems.

According to Hughes (1998), conflict management is the act of confining, reducing, or neutralizing a dispute without necessarily finding a resolution to the issue. Wallensteen & Swanstrom (2002) define conflict management as changing harmful patterns of interaction into constructive

patterns of interaction. For Zartman (2005), effective conflict management requires the elimination of violent and violently associated activities as well as the political level transfer of responsibility for conflict resolution. In his thesis, he was challenged for a number of reasons, one of which is that non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and semi-formal organizations (track two) have become important actors and now have influence over the process of conflict resolution. In addition, it is argued that Wallensteen & Swanstrom (2002), focus on conflict management is typically placed on the military aspects of a war.

**Theoretical Framework**
**Structural Functionality theory**

Functionalism, another name for structural-functional theory, originated with Hebert Spencer's ideas (1820–1903). This is a positivist perspective that draws parallels between the human body and society. The "Functionalism" school of thought maintained that common symbols, languages, and values hold society together as a complex system of interdependent, connected pieces that cooperate to sustain stability (Durkheim, 1893). While society may be made up of individuals, Durkheim and his contemporaries felt that social facts, rather than individuals, should be the primary subject of society studies. Accordingly, social facts are all of the cultural norms that control social life, including laws, morals, values, religious beliefs, practices, fashions, and rituals (Durkheim, 1895). Every one of these social truths has a purpose in a society. For instance, a society's laws may serve the following purposes: maintaining public safety; punishing criminal activity; and shielding society from violence.

Also, Robert Merton (1910–2003) notes that social processes frequently serve several purposes. Latent functions as he stresses, are the unintended effects of a social process, whereas manifest functions are the desired or expected results of a social process. For instance, learning new things, becoming ready for the workforce, and landing a decent job that makes use of one's education are all obvious benefits of a college education. Meeting new people, getting involved in extracurricular activities, and perhaps finding a spouse or partner are examples of latent functions of your college years. Establishing a hierarchy of jobs depending on the degree of education gained is another latent function of education. Latent functions may have positive, neutral, or negative effects. Therefore, social processes that negatively impact how society functions are referred to as dysfunctions. This theory, thus, is important for Brass Local Government Area because it clarifies the intricate dynamics that shape the conflict scenario in the area.

**Land and People of Brass**

The people of Brass LGA are among the Ijaw speaking tribe of Bayelsa State, who had settled at their present home about hundreds of centuries ago. According to Alagoa (1964, p.4), the name Brass was given to natives who lived and transacted business on the Rivers Nun, Brass and St. Nicholas. According to this view, the early European traders who had earlier contacts with these people noticed that the indigenes were hard and difficult bargainers who often referred to their customers as "Barasin" literarily meaning "let go" which implied that, if the price of a product was not right, the buyers (Europeans) should leave. Following this development, the early European traders nicknamed the people as the "Barasin" people, which was later corrupted to "Brass" (Alagoa, 1964). Conversely, Ama-Ogbari (2018), however, argues that, the expression "Barasin" referred to the ungodly practice of the European traders who were fond of touching the native female traders on sensitive organs. Thus, the reaction of these female traders to this attitude of the European traders was the resultant expression "Barasin". However, a third school of thought has it that Brass, a "metal" was used extensively during trade transaction along the Rivers Nun, Brass and St. Nicholas during the early European contact, and this might have formed the background of the name "Brass". Following from the above, the name Brass might have originated from either and /or any of the above postulations. In Brass Local Government Area, the Nembe dialect of the Ijo language of the present Eastern Ijo groupings is spoken in the area. That is, Tuwon (Twon), Okpoama, Odioma, Enoama and some communities around Nembe.

In the Brass Island, we have towns like Twon (Tuwon), Okpoama and Ewoama. The towns and semi-autonomous communities in St. Nicholas Island are: Odioama, Diema, Ekebeleama and Obioku. The island of Cape Formosa is located along Twon-Brass, separated by the Brass River. The island is inhabited by some autonomous and semi-autonomous communities (Toipre, 2023). These are Liama, founded at about 1735, Egwema 1759 and Beletiema 1835. Other settlements on the island are camps

and offshoot to the original three (3) communities of Liama, Egwema, Igbabele and Beletiema. They are Liama Ama-Ogbo, Egwema Ama-Ogbo and Beletiema, Ama-Ogbo which are ancestral houses of Liama, Egwema and Beletiema respectively. Egeregre, Wagetie and Gbene were founded by the descendants of Egwema, Oginbiri, and Hununu were founded in the later part of 18th century and have close ties with Akassa (Akaha) across the River Nun (Ama-Ogbari, 2018).

There are also numerous fishing settlements founded by inhabitants of the original towns of Liama, Egwema and Beletiema. Igbabeleu was founded shortly after the establishment of Beletiema by the people Bletiema. Oruokolo was founded for the worship of a deity called Ogidi fariye. We also have Fantuo and Akassa towns. The Akassa people are found at the Nun estuary West of Brass River estuary. The people of Cape Formosa and Akassa share close link with the Twon people, a smaller settlement close to Akassa, owned by the Akassa people is fish town. The most important means of communication with the surrounding settlements are Riverine routes and in modern times road networks as well (Ayebaifiemi, 2023).

**Geographical Location**

Brass Local Government Area (BALGA), is one of the Eight (8) Local Government Areas of Bayelsa State, situated in the Eastern fringes of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It is bounded to West by Koluama on the East by St. Bartholomew and St. Nuhoas near Kula in Rivers State, on the South by the Atlantic Ocean, and to the North by Nembe Local Government Area of Bayelsa State (Ama-Ogbari, 2014). It has an estimated population of about 246,000 according to the 2006 population census, and an area of about 1,404km$^2$. Brass, is located between latitude $4,3665^0$ or $4021'59$ North and Longitude $6,4546^0$ or $6^027^117^0$ East, with an elevation of 5 meters (16 feet). Its headquarters is situated at Twon-Brass, on the Brass Island along the coastline measuring about 90km off the Bight of Bonny. Much of the area is occupied by the Eduymanon national forest, and possess a sandy beach geographical belt (Ama-Ogbari, 2018).

**History of conflicts in Brass Local Government Area**

The history of conflicts in Brass Local Government Area is traceable to the family setup. Conflicts in Brass Local Government Area, grows and extends from families to the larger society. It emanates from home which transcends into the community, then, finally to the society. Thus, scholars seldom trace the root of conflict to the family, being the basis of foundation of every existing being (Martins, et al., 2021). It is worthy of note that, conflict is usually home grown, locally owned, historically and culturally embedded, socially and religiously practised or observed as the case may be. Hence, conflict is imbedded culturally in a people's history and culture because, it is, in itself, considered by many as an unwelcomed disturbance of the people's peaceful co-existence. Since the family is the basic social unit having members as its nucleus, were two or more adults living together in the same house – holding and co-operating in various economic, social and protective activities and in the care of their own, and/or adopted children, avoiding conflicts becomes extremely impossible, since egos may tend to clash.

According to Fairchild (1964), one of the purpose and task of the family consist in the upbringing of children and the care for daily needs of members. Sadly, sexual male adjustment (impotency) or barrenness, infidelity, financial constraints, drunkenness, religious extremism and deviant behaviours all lead to problems which are true definition of instabilities, constant quarrels, stealing, lies and gossips nurtured in the family. It is in the family that the children copy good as well as bad behaviours due to proper parental care which they later manifest in the society, thus, the over pampering of children, and other times single parentage, sometimes leads to children exhibiting bad behaviours and leading to conflict in the family which may snowball to the larger society. One, thus, can argue that conflicts emanate first from the family, since it is the first moral teacher of the child. Quarrels over needs like food, shelter, clothing, sexual satisfaction, favouritism amongst wives or children instigate conflict root and are from the family. The family is thus, the first breeder of conflict where it later transmits itself into the society at large and in various magnitudes. Hence, the basic social institution having one or more men living with one or more women in a society sanctioned and more or less enduring sex relationship with socially recognized rights and obligations together with their offspring's is indeed the root genesis of conflict (Yebei, 2023).

**Causes of Conflicts in Brass Local Government Area**

According to Okaripre (2023), the causes of conflicts are multi-faceted among families, communities, towns, cities, countries and the societies at large. However, the major conflicts to be examined in this study could serve as sample of what is obtainable in Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, and that similar to other communities or societies. The causes of conflicts in Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa State like in many other regions of Nigeria and in the world are classified into economic and political causes. They include but not limited to the following: Discovery of Crude Oil (Economic Cause), Land Ownership/Expansion and Ownership of Titles, Conquest and Territorial Expansion, Competition over Natural Resources, Insensitivity to the plight of the Citizenry, Citing of Basic Amenities, Clash of Beliefs/Ideology, Trade Monopoly Cultism, Greed/Self-Interest, Absence of Truth, Chieftaincy Tussle.

**Traditional Institutions and Conflict Management**

The management of conflict using peaceful, non-violent methods has been around for a long time. In nearly all African societies, there is a preference for the peaceful settlement of disputes along the lines prescribed by the institutions and values of the community (Gaya, 2006). Violence is normally frowned at; in a few instances where it may be tolerated, the community rather than the individual has to be the sanctioning authority. The sanctioning following due process, in all civilized societies of the world, there is growing resort to the peaceful settlement of disputes. There is a great amount of peaceful and non-violent settlement of disputes taking place at various levels in many communities, families, group of houses and the local government most of which do not catch the attention of the media. A wide range of non-violent methods of managing conflicts avail to the conflict transformation society. The methods are available at the individual, family, group of houses, community and local government area levels. The peaceful methods exist in two categories. Firstly, is the proactive which entails methods that aim to prevent the occurrence of conflict in the first instance. Examples include undocumented community based trust and confidence building measures, communication, good governance, inter-arty collaboration etc. while the second category is reactive, dealing with responses to situations that have already turned conflicting or are potentially so. These include third party interventions like mediation, brokerage, conciliation, arbitration and litigation etc. (Gaya, 2006).

In Africa, particularly Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, there are structures and procedures indigenous for non-violent transformation and peace building, especially the African Alternative Dispute Resolution. However, what is conflict resolution? Conflict Resolution connotes a sense of finality, where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense (Gaya, 2006). Some conflicts especially those of resource, are permanently resolvable. From the point of view of needs, a conflict is resolved when the basic needs of the parties have been met with necessary satisfiers, and their fears have been allayed. Others, like those over values, may be non-resolvable and can at least be transformed, regulated or managed. That apart, and related to conflict resolution is conflict management. Conflict management is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict (Gaya, 2006). This term is sometimes used synonymously with "Conflict Regulation". It covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages, including those efforts made to prevent conflict by being proactive. It encompasses conflict limitation, containing and litigation (Gaya). Closely related to the above is conflict transformation. Conflict transformation stems from the recognition of the dialectical element of conflict about the inevitability of change (Gaya, 2006). It also recognizes the neutrality of conflict as such, and that conflict can be either negative or positive, but parties can transform it into positive to maximize opportunities. And the other related concept is conflict suppression, conflict suppression is used to portray the unwillingness of more powerful parties or stronger interveners who have the ability to transform or manage a conflict situation top take necessary measures leading to the management or resolution of the conflict.

Instead, they use instruments of power or force to push away the issues under the carpet or to impose a solution that is not sustainable and with which the parties are not satisfied (Gaya, 2006). Further, the African people represented by a diversity of culture and religion as applies to the Brass local government people is their practice of peace building. The diversity affects the approaches to disputes, conflict resolution and peace, building in the traditional setting. The approaches also differ as

one move from one level of conflict to another. There are variations in conflicts involving property, land, family, marriages, communities as well as those between traditionalist and Christians. In some cases, other religions have nearly completely displaced the traditional institutions and peace building methods. In others, the principles of Christianity that is predominantly practised in the Local Government Area have affected parts of the tradition, redefined and reshaped others, and left some intact. In traditional institutions and peace building, the social formation of the area determines how peace is built in Africa. In social formation and politics is where it is characterized by centralized authority and state systems headed by Paramount Rulers/Kings and Chiefs, most of them dating back centuries or decades before the inception of colonial rule in Africa. Such authoritarian state systems existed in different parts of Africa. For instance, the Ancient Brass – Nembe kingdom, Ancient Benin Kingdom, Ancient Yoruba kingdoms in Nigeria; Ashanti Kingdoms of Ghana, the Emirates of Northern Nigeria etc. In other parts, there are paramount traditional leaders known as chiefs or by some other names, as well as sub-chiefs (Gaya, 2006). It is also possible to have conglomerates of this ethnic groups.

In this social and political formation of the traditional institution in Africa, because of the powers conferred in the king, or the paramount traditional political leader, the dispute, resolution/peace building system is rigid. It takes the form of judicial arbitration, there is little negotiation and mediation as understood in the western sense. It takes also the form of conciliation as well. Typical example are to be found in the Brass-Nembe, Ogbia societies in Bayelsa State, Igbo societies too. The Mumye, Fulbe and Wuikum in Benue and Taraba State respectively. Here, there is the absence of a centralized authority and decisions are taken at family, group of houses or canoe houses, clan, cultural groups and age grade levels. Council of chiefs, and council of elders usually made up of the most elderly and senior members of the community may also decide individual and community disputes/conflicts. In this setting, conflicts/dispute resolution is informal with an air of democratization in the process and outcome (Gaya, 2006). The community feels and owns the process, dispute resolution is seen closely as a system of justice, to which the community rather than individual leaders is at the center.

Another area of discourse in traditional institution and peace building is the egalitarian political system in African Societies which was obtained during the pre-colonial African. Some of the element of the process are as follows:

▪ **Setting**

The setting for dispute resolutions in the segmented system or egalitarian system would normally be a neutral ground such as the village square, or an open hut or the town hall etc. when boundary disputes between individuals, families, clans or villages is the issue, the boundary in contention could be the venue of the meeting. In some instances, there could be deep spiritual dimensions. The venue for the resolution of conflicts could also be village or community adjudication centres such as the village square, market square, town halls etc. Those that have religious and spiritual dimensions, and which require ancestral intervention may be conducted at a traditional community shrine. The choice of the venue highlights the fact that the community is being placed and considered above any other individual or social unit.

▪ **Gender**

Women are kept out of African shrines, participants in peace making would normally but depending on the sensitivities and peculiarities of each community, be adult males. Decisions taken, however, are meant to include and affect women and children alike. In most cases, the best awards and decisions favour adult males.

▪ **Process**

The traditional African dispute resolution process would normally begin with general preparation. This involves consultations, invitations sent to the appropriate persons, the gathering of materials for rituals such as sacrificial animals, local brew for libation and for others to consume thereafter, selection of date that does not clash with events like market days or farming etc. The assemblies of the right calibre of participants followed by a call for silence, which either the town crier or an elderly member of the community would make. Silence is a representation of the sanctity and dignity of the people; the process itself if the society is a religious one as most African societies are at the moment, involves the invocation of pledges or reference to ancestors and ancestral spirits, the pouring of libation, sacrifice of a live animal etc. In some places, the spirits of the gods could be invoked to wreak havoc/calamity on the guilty who want to lie or interferes with the process, or one enemies

that may invoke the wrath of the gods against the community as the case may be, and should that be necessary.

▪ **Openness**

Conflict resolutions is conducted in the open also as a means of ensuring that subsequent generations in the country learn the process and value systems of peace building and conflict resolution. In other words, it is a socialization process for the younger generations. This is why younger persons do more of listening and observing of the seniors than participate or contribute. Indeed, young people are seen but not heard. Here, it is seen that because traditional institutions combine negotiation, arbitration, adjudication and other methods put together. It also does not have other elements such as confidentiality, the right and freedom to disagree with the mediators, flexibility, emphasis on win-win outcomes, genders sensitivity, trained and professional mediators, assurance of neutrality on the part of mediators, tackling emotional issues, signing of agreements etc. Instead with the traditional institutions, cases are open to every male member of the community. Some communities may tolerate the presence of female members. Its focus is the community rather than individual disputants, employing spiritual and community powers and traditions, gender specific orientation, elders playing a critical role, and a verdict passed on who is wrong and who being right is that of the deciding authority and not reached by parties themselves.

**Approaches Adopted by Traditional Institutions in Managing Conflicts**

Style is seen as the manner of doing or presenting things especially a fashionable one or particular way in which something is done, while management could be seen as the judicious use of means to accomplish an end (Michael, 2022). This is the skill or act of dealing with people or situations in a successful way. Hence, conflict management or handling style could be seen as a particular means of managing conflict that will bring about peace or de-escalate or that will not degenerate to a crisis situation (Michael, et al., 2022). The indigenous nature of conflict management is usually embedded right from the time which are aboriginal, locally owned, historically and culturally attacked and religiously emphasized to be observed. Hence, the dictum "I am, therefore you are, and since you are, therefore, I am" depicts the aboriginal characteristics of the nature of African community and Brass people inclusive in conflict management.

The unity of all members is reiterated and the search for peace and collective coexistence is an ultimate goal that is initiated and promoted. Management of conflict indigenously becomes effective and permanent solution based on the aboriginal system which is more effective as in resolving conflicts because the traditional people or indigenous people seek reconciliation system, which produces more effectiveness in resolving conflicts because the traditional indigenous system, seeks reconciliation, restoration and sustained relationship between standard rules as instituted (Oshita, et al., 2015).

The styles in conflict management among the Brass people is basically reconciliatory, therapeutic and in extreme cases, capital. It is because it mainly fosters peace and co-existence and also rehabilitate or compensate those deemed through injustice right form the home before venturing into the community architecture of conflict management (Keremah, 2023). Hence, the nature of indigenously style of conflict management among the Brass people is almost similar to the real African setting in conflict management. It is worthy of note that taking into consideration the period under discourse from 1800, the present Brass Local Government Area was with the present Nembe Local Government Area and the indigenous management style had some links with the Nembes as well. The indigenous management styles as practised by the Brass people are categorized by their standards which were indication of the grievances of the cases (Okutuate, 2023). The management styles as practised by the Brass people included, Oath-Taking, Mediation/Negotiation, The family, House Chief, Group of Chieftaincy Houses, Summon before a God/Goddess, Court Of Appeal – Ibidi Kiri (Adjudication/Litigation), Adjudication and Litigation, Mediation, Conciliation, Dialogue, Confrontation/Fighting, Suppression, Negotiation, Arbitration, Alternative Dispute Resolution Style (ADR).

**Fig.1:** House of Chiefs and the Opu Sekiapu (Masquerade Dancing Club)
Source: Fieldtrip (Date: 17/09/2021)



**Fig. 2:** HRM. Alfred Diete-Spiff (Amanayanabo of Twon-Brass)
Source: google.com (Date: 12/05/2023)



**Fig 3:** A Twon Brass Chief and his Council-of-Elders Settling Dispute
Source: Fieldtrip (Date: 12/08/2023)

**Challenges of Traditional Institutions in Conflict Management**

Despite the fact that traditional institutions play significant role in peace building in Brass Local government area of Bayelsa, it could be observed that it had some challenges confronting the revered institution. Some of these challenges the study can identify are as follows:

Firstly: is the issue of acceptance of the outcome of the arbitration, resolution, mediation etc. by both parties to the disputes or conflict? The judgment passed by the arbitors/jury etc. is determined by both parties to the conflict because any of them can decide not to accept it. It can decide to disagree to the judgment at it is not in its favour. Here acceptance or rejection of the judgment is based on internal convictions, respect, moral liability and good conscience by the parties involved in the conflict. Flowing form this acceptability of the judgment by the parties to the conflict is the instrument of sanction or punishment, even though the gods or ancestors, oath-taking, ancestral involvement, the traditional institution do not have the authority instrument of state to punish or sanction the guilty to bring its pronouncement to force. Related to this is the issue of enforcement of decisions reached at the end of the resolution of conflict between two parties in the dispute. A case in point is the land/boundary dispute between Kula and Adioma in Rivers and Bayelsa State respectively. Another one is the land/boundary dispute between Okpoama and Twon-Brass, it is as a result of this that land boundary conflicts in Brasss LGA had ended up in the modern court of law. Some have even gone as far as the Supreme Court for final determination. The land/boundary as well as oil conflict between Akass/Eguema, Eguema/Liama in 2012-2014 that after the intervention of the Nembe Council of chiefs just observed a truce and later hostilities starts again.

Again, one of the challenges of traditional institutions to peace building is the issue that any party to a dispute or conflict can disagree on the judgment anytime because it is not legally binding and does not have any authority and instrument of enforcement. Even if you decided to disagree or refuse compliance with the judgment, no punishment would be meted out to you. That apart, any party to a dispute can decide to withdraw from the resolution process mid-way without apologies. Further, one of the challenges of the traditional institution in peace building is because the institution does not have laid down and written documents with codes of punishment to back its resolution and setting process. This means that the traditional institution lacks written and rigid procedures laid down for the people to follow and enforce judgment. All the procedures of the traditional institution's dispute resolution are unwritten, and also, no provision for only professionals to settle disputes, it is meant for all elders, chiefs, kings, and Amanyanabos to settle disputes. That is why the young can only listen and observe but not participate in dispute resolutions. The methods are not universally known and important within the context as indicated in the conflict management. Also the procedures do not provide inclusion since cases are confined to key conflict actors (police, soldiers, civil defense, vigilante association etc.).

The method of conflict mitigation is reiterated daily through verbal medium for emphasis and observances. There is involvement of family, elders, chiefs etc. in deliberating and finding for lasting peace. Further, women are not allowed to settle conflicts in the traditional institutions in peace building in Brass LGA because they are seen as been incapable of such responsibilities. Women are to be seen but not heard in peace building traditionally. Though in some areas, where they have women groups, they can settle minor disputes amongst themselves to foster unity, brotherliness and communal peace and stability.

**Strategies to Ensuring Sustainable Peace in Brass LGA**

Conflicts and conflicts prevention have been on the top of the agenda of the United Nations, African Union, Economic Community of West Africa States etc. even individuals and corporate bodies have set up various conflict prevention mechanisms or bodies or agencies in the world because of the place of peace and security in the world. For there to be growth and development in any society, there must be relative peace and stability. Even universities, have set up institutes of peace studies and conflict resolutions because of the importance of peace. Governments over the world have even set up special institutes dedicated to the study of peace and conflict resolutions and management. However, there are strategies geared towards having such in Brass Local Government Area. Some of the strategies adopted by the Brass LGA people to ensuring sustainable peace are as follows:

- Providing conditions favourable for peace.
- Respect for human rights and fundamental freedom

- Tolerance of differences
- Culture of fairness and fair play in public affairs

Notwithstanding, for the above to be achieved the Brass people have adopted what could be referred to as the Early warning measures. Early warning generally refers to the set of activities that aim to collect, collate and analyses data, in order to detect and identify the signs of an emerging crisis before it explodes into uncontrolled violence. Early warning is therefore more than the mere exercise that consists of identifying the structural or mobilizing characteristic of an event or a phenomenon and determining whether they are or are not prone to generate conflict. But sometimes the signals or trends that appear indicative of an impending conflict to one analysts or actor may not be so to another. This depends on the differing interpretations given to early warning signals and the nature of the political and personal interests at stake in any given conflict.

The primary measure of the effectiveness of an early warning system aside from the mere function of data gathering is its ability to "trigger" rapid reactions to a degenerating crisis situation. For prompt reaction to be possible, the analysis of early signals of impending conflict has to combine with several indicators for effective sustenance of peace, some of such indicators are:

- **Personal Security:** Law and order, civil military relations, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.
- **Environmental Indicators:** Water security, natural catastrophes, epidemic and pandemics.
- **Economic Indicators:** The cost of living, inflation rate, unemployment, scarcities, good security, opportunities for access to critical resources.
- **Political Indicators:** The internal political dynamics, the political actors, institutions, processes and issues. One can investigate the level of popular participation in (an exclusion from) the decision making processes and institutions, elections, issues related to identity and citizenship.

Peace in a community particularly in Brass Local Government Area does not merely mean absence of wars. It goes beyond that, peace means a state of order within the society. It means freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions, harming in personal relations (Webster, 1998). Peace means an internal harmony and other inhuman existence. A society that is not experiencing war or social conflict could be in a state of confusion and deficient in peaceful state. This fact is important in the study of peace making. In most African societies, there are conflicts, war, lack of tranquillity, and consequently, deficiency of peace and order. An African society like Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa State is characterized by life-threatening social conflicts which have been on overtly or covertly, for decades. Most of the wars or social disturbances have been managed by various peace making bodies, yet peace has remained elusive in the continent. In fact, many African societies especially in Brass Local Government Area are facing profound and multi-faceted internal and external crises which have put the question of survival and human development on the centre stage (Ujomu, 2000).

Most attempts at resolving and restoring peace have not even succeeded in stopping overt social conflicts and wars, while the causes of these wars and conflicts continue to wax stronger underneath (Michael, 2022). The issue is what are the strategies to ensuring sustainable peace in Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa State? Some of the possible strategies are as follows: Firstly, spouses and their family members should imbibe the spirit of patience, love and tolerance in relating well to one and another in all circumstances in order to forestalled conflict from rising (Martins & Tonga, 2020).

Again, ensuring that traditional rulers, religious leaders, elders as well as educators are good agents of mitigating conflicts among their subjects. Hence, the search for collective peace are of utmost concern in conflict mitigations. This could be achieved through the formation of conflict resolution and management committees at all levels of the communities in the Local Government Area. Also, integrating traditional methods of conflict management into the peace architecture of the local government area. Again, since land ownership/boundary conflict is very prevalent in the area, communities are encouraged to engaged the services of land surveyors with the support of the Local Government Area Council to survey its land to forestall future land disputes, that apart, elders, Amanyanbos, Chiefs who are found wanting in giving false historical facts on land matters are sanctioned. Government that is the Brass Local Government Council to integrate the indigenous styles

of peace and conflict architecture with a view to achieving sustainable peace, stability and development in the area.

Parents are enjoined to give proper upbringing to their children. Parents must rise and combat conflict at the family level as first teachers of their children (Dagin, 2006). They should bring their children as seen above with sound moral values on the need to tolerate and show love to one another devoid of any family, ethnic, political and religious affiliation for peace and tolerance to prevail as a way of addressing social uprising. Parents should also as a matter of fact help to inculcate sound knowledge of the fear of God in their children. Family members, clans, friends and associates should learn to tolerate one another for the interest of peace and development to be realized. Tolerance and mutual respect must be fostered at all times (Alkali & Martins, 2018). Again, chiefs, Amayananbos, elders are strictly enjoined to give impartial and honest judgment in settling conflicts to avoid escalation of such conflicts.

**Conclusion**

This work on the traditional institutions and conflict management in Brass Local Government Area; 1800-2022, is an examination of traditional institution and her role in conflict management in the local government. The study began by giving a brief description of the historical origin and migration, environment, physical features, climate, and economic activities of the people. The study, thus, exposed the nature and patterns of conflict in Brass Local Government Area and further assessed the various indigenous conflict management strategies in Brass, as well as the role of traditional institutions in managing conflict. The study concluded by asserting that conflict in Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa is similar to those found in traditional African societies, particularly those of the Niger Delta. It further highlighted and proffered new solutions in the management of conflict in Brass, one of which is identifying early warning signals. The study also suggested that each community comprising the Brass Local Government Area, should form their own conflict resolution committee as a pre-emptive measure aimed towards fostering an atmosphere of peace.

**Recommendations**

In view of tackling conflict situations in Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa, the following are recommendations made by the researcher. They include:

➢ That the government enhance and fortify the current state structures and institutions in order to facilitate the resolution of disputes and establish early warning systems that are essential for the timely identification and effective management of conflicts, thereby preventing their escalation into violent confrontations.

➢ That resolution of disputes can be facilitated by the active involvement of the chiefs and elders from the disputing parties, who should consistently engage in constructive dialogue and collaboratively propose viable solutions, measures, and procedures.

➢ That indigenous traditional institutions strive to eliminate any form of tribal or ethnic alienation, sentiments or prejudices when addressing issues of conflicts.

➢ It is also recommended that the government undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the existing legislation pertaining to the traditional institution, or alternatively, introduce new legislation, as their incorporation may contribute to a decrease in the frequency of conflicts within the Brass Local Government Area.

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**Appendix**
**Primary Sources (Interviewees)**

| S/N | NAME | AGE | SEX | OCCUPATION | PLACE OF INTERVIEW | DATE OF INTERVIEW |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mr. Mark Ayebaifiemi | 62 | M | Teacher | Odioma | 23/07/2023 |
| 2 | Dr. Titus Toipre | 54 | M | Lecturer | Okpoama | 20/07/2023 |
| 3 | Mr. Austin Yebei | 58 | M | Broadcaster | Akassa | 28/07/2023 |
| 4 | Capt. Kingdom Okoripre (Rtd.) | 69 | M | Retired Naval Officer | Akassa | 02/06/2023 |
| 5 | Hon. Douprebo Ikuromo | 77 | M | Public Servant | Okpoama | 12/07/2023 |
| 6 | Capt. Keremah Christian (Rtd.) | 70 | M | Retired Army Officer | Nembe (Bassambiri) | 16/07/2023 |
| 7 | Mr. Okutuate Benson-Agah | 49 | M | Administrator | Okpoama | 03/06/2023 |
| 8 | Chief Beye Pogo Sherri | 60 | M | Civil Servant | Ewoama | 12/07/2023 |
| 9 | Chief Ayonimite Ikuromo | 64 | M | Businessman | Virtual Interview | 25/08/2023 |
| 10 | Mr. Jonathan Otonte | 50 | M | Businessman | Ewoama | 14/08/2023 |
| 11 | Mr. Fiepreye Ekini | 45 | M | Civil Servant | Virtual Interview | 12/07/2023 |
| 12 | Miss. Mekuma Oruabere | 52 | F | Teacher | Okpoama | 27/08/2023 |
| 13 | Mr. Tarinyo Akonu | 47 | M | Journalist | Virtual Interview | 10/08/2023 |
| 14 | Mrs. Christianah .B. Sele | 64 | F | Business woman | Ewoama | 18/06/2023 |
| 15 | Miss. Yanate Aga | NIL | F | Civil Servant | Virtual Interview | 04/07/2023 |

# COMMUNITY POLICING AND INSECURITY IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA: THE CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES

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**Abstract**
*This study examined the importance of community policing in the south east and its possible opportunities. The specific objectives of the study were to find out the challenges affecting community policing in south east and also identify the prospects of community policing in the management of security in south east, Nigeria. The study raised the following research questions: what are the possible challenges that undermine community policing in south east, Nigeria; what are the prospects of effective community policing in the management of security in south east, Nigeria. Systems theory by David Easton was used as framework of analysis for the study. The study adopted survey and purposive sampling technique as the research design and sampling technique respectively. Secondary data from journals, textbooks and online materials were used to complement information generated from questionnaire items. The data generated were presented in tables and analyzed on a 4-point Likert scale with a 2.50 criterion mean as the standard. The study found out amongst others that community policing promotes collaboration between security agencies and members of the local society; it promotes trust between the NPF and the public; and that weak criminal justice system and over centralization of the NPF command structure hinders effective community policing. Arising from the findings, the study recommends that there is need for community police education and that state security agencies must collaborate with members of the public in a bid to curb crime.*

*Keywords:* Security, community policing, south east, crime, Nigerian Police Force, peace

## Introduction

Since it is necessary for a country to advance, security is important. According to Alumona (2019), every government has the responsibility of ensuring the security of her citizens from any form of internal and external aggression. The lack of security poses a danger to people's ability to exist and may result in the loss of life and material possessions. To Oduneye (2008), security is the creation of mechanisms designed to keep a state or community safe from conflicts, kidnappings, banditry, and other forms of criminality. Security measures include efforts of the government to maintain peace, and protect its people from harm, both from inside and outside oppressions.

Ufot et al. (2014) in their study of the essential elements of security and its application in Nigeria aver that the operation and management of security in any nation is guided by certain principles, this is because of the social nature of security which is aimed at putting measures in place for the prompt assessment and neutralization of threats within the Nigerian society, building a platform for socio-economic cum political development and stability depend on security. The Nigerian Police Force is one of the constitutionally mandated institutions charged with enforcing the law and keeping the peace in Nigeria. According to Section 214 (1) of the 1999 Constitution and the Police Act, the President of Nigeria is responsible for the overall administration and coordination of the Nigeria Police Force. It further state that "there shall be a police force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigeria Police Force, and subject to the provisions of this section, no other police force shall be established for the Federation or any part thereof". The Nigeria Police Force has the authority to protect citizens and their possessions, investigate and apprehend criminals, maintain peace and order, and enforce the law within Nigeria. But it remains unclear how effective and aggressive the Nigeria Police and other security institutions have been in the south east area in light of the recent spike in criminal activity. According to Ufot et al. (2014) the Nigeria Police Force is not as effective as it might be in reducing crime, apprehending criminals, and keeping the peace in the country because of factors like  lack of training, insufficient manpower, and inadequate funding. As a result of the above, the need for community policing becomes necessary in a bid to curb the different security challenges and criminal activities within and around the south east. It is important to note that community policing encourages collaborative efforts between law enforcement organisations, their personnel, and rural inhabitants to fight neighbourhood insecurity.

To Nwolise (2016), community policing is a management strategy that calls for police and residents to work together to ensure the safety of their neighbourhoods. Building trust between residents and law enforcement is essential to addressing public safety challenges and improving protections for everyone. Community policing, as argued by Okafor & Aniche (2018) is a departure from the military's institutional approach to crime control in favour of one that relies on forming relationships with locals. Thus, the federal and state governments might use community policing as one strategy to counteract the persistent security risks in the southeast, such as assaults by unknown armed individuals, kidnappings, thievery, and bank robberies.

**Statement of the Problem**

The issue of security is just one out of many internal and external conflicting forces and issues that threaten to split Nigerian society. In January 2022, 1,486 persons in Nigeria were victims of insecurity incidents, 915 of whom were murdered and 571 of whom were abducted (Oluwole& Onuoha, 2022). While violence can occur in any part of Nigeria, Oluwole and Onuoha point out that the south-east region of the country is facing increased security challenges due to lack of national and local security structures, institutions, and personnel.

The recent rise in instability throughout the south east, especially in the states of Imo, Abia, and Enugu, highlights the inability of security institutions like the Nigeria Police Force to protect residents from criminal activities. According to Onyekulu's (2022) research on crime and security in the region, the so-called Unknown gunmen are responsible for the frequent slayings, beheadings, shootings, and kidnappings that occur in the south-east Nigeria today.  The assaults in south-east Nigeria endanger the health, safety, and prosperity of the local population. This is as a result of the Nigeria Police Force's ineffectiveness in tackling the current wave of violence by the Unknown gunmen.

At around 2:00 a.m. on April 5, 2021, The Guardian (2021) reports that militants stormed a prison in Owerri, Imo State, detonating explosives to unlock the facility's administration buildings and freeing approximately 1,844 convicts whose wardens had presumably fled for their lives. According to Sahara Reporter (2023), on December 28, 2022, terrorists in the Ihiala region of Imo State attacked the Police Divisional Headquarters using explosives.  Two police officers were shot and murdered, weapons were stolen, and the Awada Police Station in Onitsha, Anambra State, was set on fire.

In line with the aforementioned, Okeoma (2022) states that gunmen imposing a sit-at-home in Imo State murdered four people at two separate sites on the Owerri-Okigwe road while also kidnapping two foreigners monitoring the building of the road's 11th and final section. The report says that the murders took place in Umunachi and Umuna, both in the State's Isiala Mbano and Onuimo Local Government Areas. Oluwole & Onuoha (2022) argue that the ongoing insecurity concerns in the south-

east constitute a severe danger to the economic development and social stability of both Nigeria and the area. The substantial increase in criminal activity attributed to 'Unknown Gunmen' is not an isolated incident. Although the federal government has labelled the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) a terrorist group, other sources relate the assaults to separatist agitations and the oppressive state measures that followed. According to Nwogo et al. (2022), escalating acts of violence including bombings, hostage-taking, property damage, and the propagation of terror are a direct result of the inability of the Nigeria Police Force to effectively handle security procedures at the community level. According to Adewole (2021), Adamu Mohammed, Nigeria's previous Inspector General of Police, complained that his personnel lacked the necessary equipment and supplies to execute their jobs. This research was motivated by the need to find effective strategies for reducing the persistent insecurity problem in the south east area, with a focus on the communities of Imo State.

## Research Objectives
i.   To examine the challenges affecting community policing in south east, Nigeria.
ii.  To identify the prospects of community policing in the management of security in south east, Nigeria.

## Research Questions
i.   What are the possible challenges that undermine community policing in south east, Nigeria?
ii.  What are the prospects of effective community policing in the management of security in south east, Nigeria?

## Scope of the study
This study focused on community policing, its challenges and prospects in the management of insecurity in south east, Nigeria. The geographical area of this study is nine local government areas drawn from Abia State, Imo State and Enugu State. The study gathered the needed data from the residents who reside within the different communities in the selected local government areas in a bid to achieve the purpose of the study.

## Conceptual Review
### Insecurity
Most Nigerians agree that our nation's insecurity is a serious obstacle to our country's social, political, and economic progress. The lack of security designed to maintain social stability is the root cause of insecurity. Every Nigerian is deeply troubled by the widespread insecurity that exists in the country today. To back up the aforementioned claim, Ali (2013) argues that insecurity is the prevalence of worry or anxiety, resulting from the government's or leadership's incapacity to offer safety for the populace. Protecting its people and providing them with the necessities of life are the primary responsibilities of every government, wherever in the world. When governments fail to ensure the safety of their people, disorder and fear spread, and the society as a whole becomes unstable. Since the country's restoration to civil government in 1999, Soyombo (2005) writes that terrorist operations, the circulation of small arms, kidnappings, and assaults by Unknown shooters have increased Nigeria's security concerns.

We can now conclude that in the south east, insecurity is the absence of peace and the continual increase in the activities of Unknown gunmen, abduction, murders, and the other acts of violence committed at different levels, all of which produce uneasiness among the populace.

### Community Policing
In every nation, policing is a function carried out by various law enforcement agencies or institutions (Nwogo et al., 2022). Policing comprises detecting criminal activity, obtaining information via methodical and planned investigation, and then responding to or eliminating any threats to public safety that may arise. Therefore, security personnel tasked with policing are required to engage in information collection into the actions and operations of the target or organisation. According to Newburn (2004) the term "policing" encompasses the police force's duty to stand in the gap for civilians in any society by defending their lives and property against criminals.

Community policing facilitates cooperation between state security agencies and those living in rural areas. According to Mobolaji & Akim (2014) these connections allow the police to cooperate closely with community people to combat crime and unrest. Community policing, as defined by Nwogo et al. (2022) is the partnership between law enforcement and ordinary citizens aimed at minimizing public safety concerns. Community policing can only be effective with on-going partnerships between citizens and state security structures.

To Tope (2016), community policing is a systematic strategy that not only allows the police to proactively act beyond mere crime-fighting and insecurity reduction, but also allows the police to partner with the community members in setting the security precedence's in the society and fashioning ways of resolving identifiable problems in the community. More so Idowu (2013) argues that a natural step towards avoiding and regulating insecurity at the community level is to include local guards, vigilante groups, able-bodied youths, traditional rulers, and chiefs into the established police force. Therefore, we may define community policing as the concerted neighbourhood-level effort to reduce crime and strengthen community ties.

**Community Policing and its Practical Opportunities for South East, Nigeria**

The ideology of community-oriented policing is pre-emptive in nature, with an emphasis on addressing issues of crime, quality of life, and security. It entails tracking down the origins of social issues, assessing them, and fixing them permanently. Partnership with the community, creative problem-solving, and adapting to new situations are all tactics used in community policing. In contrast to the traditional policing approach of reacting to crime after they must have occurred, community policing emphasises preventive mechanisms to bring police and other citizens together in the fight against crime and other illegal activities. Community policing gives citizens a bigger voice in police operations and encourages 'grass roots' participation in the battle against crime. Typically, residents of Nigeria are seen constructing buildings for the police and supplying them with communication devices, both of which are essential to the force's efficient functioning. Community policing, according to Madaki and Kurfi (2013) is built on mutually beneficial interactions between law enforcement and the general public in which the latter receives useful information from the former with the ultimate goal of reducing crime and making the latter more effective. The police cannot sustain or maintain crime-free neighbourhoods without the voluntary efforts of the local community, making this symbiotic connection crucial (Ordu & Nnam, 2017).

According to a Punch press release by Ayeni (2021) on the merits of community policing, residents of Lekki in Lagos State pooled their resources to purchase generators and build a fully-furnished police station for the officers of the Ajiwe Police Station. The police station in question was reportedly burned down in 2021 amid #EndSARS demonstrations. This shows the the collaborative nature of members of the society living in such neighbourhood all in a bid to reducing crime in the area. Community policing as argues by Girei (2016) is good for everyone since it helps maintain a safe and prosperous community, which is good for business and improves people's quality of life. Community policing aims to foster an atmosphere where law-abiding citizens and police may work together to address local issues, share resources, discourage criminal activity, promote trust among law enforcement agencies, and enhance community well-being. According to Segrave & Ratcliffe (2004) community policing is a "philosophy with operating principles based on the assumption that changes made today will make communities safer and more attractive tomorrow." This is accomplished when traditional security agencies collaborate with the locals in a particular community to fight crime. The above suggests that community policing has tangible benefits that may contribute to the maintenance of social harmony. Kidnapping, assaults by unknown shooters, armed robbery, and other security issues may be mitigated if the south east adopts community policing.

**Theoretical Framework**
**Systems Theory**

According to Wilson & Asiegbu (2022), political science's systems theory may be traced back to David Easton's work. In his book *Political System* published in 1953, he set out to do just that. His work is often regarded as the impetus for the behaviourist school of thought in politics. According to his definition, a political system is the social process through which power is distributed via the making of laws and the implementation of decisions.

Employing the above to this study, the southeast is likened to a system with several components working in concert to advance the region's social and economic conditions. The study considers the Nigerian police and the general people to be interconnected parts of a broader system; for this reason, the study believes that the Nigerian police must work in tandem with members of civil society to ensure the safety of the south east. According to Onyeije et al. (2018) community policing is a tactics that helps the police establish trustworthy relationships with members of the immediate community. This procedure allows for the necessary coordination between the various subsystems (police and members of society) within the wider political system, with the ultimate goal of achieving the desired results. Therefore, this research adopts this theory because of its richness and flexibility as it will help the study to investigate community policing south east.

**Methodology**

The states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo in Nigeria's south east constitute the study's population; however, the study's sample size is collected only from just three (3) states (Abia, Imo and Enugu). Officers from the Nigeria Police Force and residents of the local government areas sampled throughout the three specified states were picked purposefully for their expertise in the field of community policing in Nigeria. Purposive sampling, according to Crossman (2020) is a kind of non-probability sampling in which samples are chosen depending on characteristics of a community and the research's aims. The study raised a total of 13 questions on the topic and distributed 300 copies of questionnaire to personnel of the Nigeria Police and other community members in the three states chosen for the research and also made use of secondary and primary resources so as to accomplish the study aims. With the four-point Likert scale serving as the basis for mean and standard deviation calculations, primary data were gleaned from responses and examined using statistical tables and criterion means. Affirmation or rejection of the study's questionnaire questions was based on the analysis's findings. A criterion mean is determined as follows: SA= 4; A = 3; D =2; SD = 1

Hence; criterion mean = $\dfrac{\text{Weighted total}}{\text{Sample size}}$

And;

This $\dfrac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4} =$ $\dfrac{10}{4} = 2.5$

After tallying all the points and then dividing by the total number of choices, the criteria mean of 2.50 was realised. If the mean score on a questionnaire item is less than 2.50, the study consider it to be disputed upon, whereas a mean score of 2.50 or more is considered to be agreed upon. Content analysis was used to make sense of the secondary data gathered from relevant journals, newspapers, internet resources, and textbooks.

**Data Presentation and Discussion of Findings**

**Table 1:** Questionnaire Distribution

| S/N | Sampled states | Local government areas | Number of Questionnaires Distributed. | Number of Questionnaires with errors | Number of Questionnaires Retrieved without errors and were used |
|-----|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Abia | Umuahia North, Obingwa&Osisioma | 100 copies | 20 | 80 copies |
| 2 | Imo | Ikeduru,Aboh Mbaise&Ideato South | 100 copies | 10 | 90 copies |
| 3 | Enugu | Ezeagu, Aninri&Awgu | 100 copies | 12 | 88 copies |
| | **Total** | **9** | **300** | **42** | **258** |

**Source:** Field Work, 2023

From the table 1 above, it is clear that the study selected three local government areas from the three sampled states within the south east region.

Abia State's Umuahia North, Obingwa, and Osisioma; Imo State's Ikeduru, Aboh Mbaise, and Ideato South; and Enugu State's Ezeagu, Aninri, and Awgu are all represented. One hundred research questionnaires were distributed throughout the three selected local government areas, making up a total of three hundred distributed questionnaires. The researcher successfully obtained 258 questionnaires for analysis. This includes a total of 88 copies from the state of Enugu and 80 copies from Abia.; meaning 42questionnaires returned invalid.

**Research Question 1: What are the possible challenges that undermine community policing in South East, Nigeria?** To answer research question one, data were collected from the respondents' responses on the possible challenges that undermine community policing within the south east region as shown in table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Respondents' responses on the possible challenges undermine community policing within the south east region.

| S/N | Challenges undermining community policing | SA | A | D | SD | TOTAL | MEAN | DECISION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Lack of confidence/collaboration between members of the NPF and the public | 70 (280) | 96 (288) | 32 (64) | 60 (60) | 258 (692) | 2.68 | Accepted |
| 2 | Lack of institutional support from some members of the police force | 89 (356) | 69 (207) | 23 (46) | 77 (77) | 258 (686) | 2.65 | Accepted |
| 3 | Lack of transparency/accountability on the side of the NPF | 96 (384) | 67 (201) | 39 (78) | 56 (56) | 258 (719) | 2.78 | Accepted |
| 4 | Lack of collaboration and partnership between security agents and citizens does not affect community policing | 29 (116) | 62 (186) | 98 (196) | 69 (69) | 258 (567) | 2.19 | Rejected |
| 5 | Weak criminal justice system | 83 (332) | 82 (246) | 36 (72) | 57 (57) | 258 (707) | 2.74 | Accepted |
| 6 | Over centralization of the NPF command structure | 70 (280) | 96 (288) | 32 (64) | 60 (60) | 258 (692) | 2.68 | Accepted |

**Source:** Field Work, 2023

Table 2 above contains six (6) questions related to the topic, and their interpretation was based on the frequency of replies with varying degrees of mean score on each, as will be explained more below.

Table 2 demonstrates that community policing in the south east area of Nigeria faces a number of unique threats. The data reveals that item 1 on the study questionnaire, which deals with the lack of trust and cooperation between NPF members and the general public, was acknowledged by the sampled respondents with a mean frequency of 2.68. This implies that community policing in the south east is severely hampered by a persistent lack of trust and cooperation between security forces and people of the nearby communities. Respondents generally agreed with items 2 and 3, with a mean frequency of 2.65and 2.78 respectively, but they overwhelmingly disagreed with item 4, with a mean frequency of 2.19, much below the 2.50 criteria mean level. This means that the Nigeria Police Force faces difficulties in implementing community policing due to a lack of institutional support from some officers, as well as from a lack of transparency and accountability on the part of the NPF as a whole. According to Gbenemene & Adishi (2017) community policing is impacted by allegations of corruption, perversion of justice, and cooperation between police and criminals levelled against the NPF and other security services. In addition, both Questionnaire Item No. 5 (with a mean frequency of 2.74) and Questionnaire Item No. 6 (2.68), both of which were over the 2.50 threshold mean norm, were approved by the respondents. This agrees with the view of Arase (2018) who argues that the over-centralization of the command structure has hampered the adoption of community policing in almost all subregions of the country.

**Research Question 2: What are the prospects of community policing in the management of insecurity in south east, Nigeria?** To answer the research question two, data were collected from the respondents' responses on the prospects of effective community policing in the management of insecurity in south east, Nigeria as shown in table 3 below.

**Table 3:** Respondents' responses on the prospects of community policing in the south east region.

| S/N | Prospects of community policing | SA | A | D | SD | TOTAL | MEAN | DECISION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | Community policing has no effects in the fight against insecurity | 30 (120) | 50 (150) | 92 (184) | 86 (86) | 258 (540) | 2.09 | Rejected |
| 8 | Help in the fight against crime and criminality | 88 (352) | 79 (237) | 25 (50) | 66 (66) | 258 (705) | 2.73 | Accepted |
| 9 | Improved police-community relations | 91 (364) | 89 (267) | 21 (42) | 57 (47) | 258 (720) | 2.79 | Accepted |
| 10 | Help in the control of proliferation of firearms | 70 (280) | 96 (288) | 32 (64) | 60 (60) | 258 (692) | 2.68 | Accepted |
| 11 | Reduces financial burden of government | 96 (384) | 67 (201) | 39 (78) | 56 (56) | 258 (719) | 2.78 | Accepted |
| 12 | Helps in the protection of human rights | 93 (374) | 85 (255) | 30 (60) | 50 (50) | 258 (739) | 2.86 | Accepted |
| 13 | Promote trust and partnership between security agencies and the public | 81 (324) | 96 (288) | 20 (40) | 61 (61) | 258 (713) | 2.76 | Accepted |

**Source: Field Work, 2023**

Table 3 above has seven (7) questionnaire items on the subject matter and was interpreted based on the frequency of the respondents' responses with different degree of mean score on each as discussed below.

Results from the table 3 above shows that respondents rejected questionnaire item number 7 with a mean score of 2.09 because it is below the 2.50 criterion mean standard. This proves that respondents understate the essence of community policing and the role it plays in reducing insecurity in the society. Furthermore, respondents accepted questionnaires item 8, 9,10,11,12 and 13 with mean frequencies all above the 2.50 criterion mean standard. The results prove that to a large extent, community policing improves police-community relations, help in the fight against crime and criminality, helps in the protection of human rights and as well promotes trust and partnership between security agencies and the citizens. Aropet (2012) avers that with community policing, the activities of the police are more visible to the public and this in turn reduces bias and the negative perception which the people have on the Police and other security agencies.

**Conclusion**

The results of this research show that community policing is an effective method for combating the myriad of social ills that threaten the regions and Nigeria's ability to live in harmony in the south east. Community policing offers a wide range of advantages that may contribute to societal growth if implemented properly. To effectively reduce social tragedies, however, its execution must be comprehensive and include cooperation between community members and other security authorities. In light of this, it is impossible to overstate the importance of Nigeria's community police in reducing crime and bringing about stability there, as such, it becomes apt for all hands to be on deck so as to make it work and also sustainable within the south east region and beyond.

**Recommendations**

Based on the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. First, the government, through the National Orientation Agency (NOA), has to get the word out there about what community policing is and why it's important. Citizens and security agencies alike will benefit from this as they work together to combat threats to safety in the south and beyond.

2. Second, the state's security apparatus or institutions must be ready to work together and receptive to suggestions from the public. There is therefore need for adequate and efficient communication.

3.   Third, the state security command structure has to be set up so that officers in rural regions and communities may administratively manage or address difficulties at the local level without having to worry about the chain of command or further intervention from the central authority.

4.   Fourth, we need a more effective and transparent criminal justice system. This is because many people have lost faith in our judicial system and are thus less likely to take action to combat crime and fear in their own communities.

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# INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN ETCHE ETHNIC NATIONALITY OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract**

*This study examined indigenous institutions and conflict resolution in Etche Ethnic Nationality, Rivers State. The study was guided by four research questions and four specific objectives. The study utilized social control theory by Travis Hirschi in 1969. The research used the ethnographic design. The population of the study is 350,327 and the sample size is 120 that was selected using expert technique. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique and snowballing. Participant observation, focus group discussions, semi-structured face-to-face interviews and document analysis were also employed to collect qualitative data. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data. Specifically, the study identified the common types and causes of conflict. It also explored the challenges, the mechanisms and nature/principles of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms. The main causes of land conflicts, among others, are poor demarcation of border, inheritance problem and shortage of land, marital problems, cult related issues, chieftaincy and political tussles. The findings reveal that indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms are mediation, adjudication etc. and these institutions like the kingship institution, elders etc. are more flexible than the formal court procedures. The ultimate aim of indigenous institutions for conflict resolution is to use indigenous mechanism to achieve harmony, solidarity and shared dialogue among disputants and not punishment. In the application of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms, the absence of clear policy direction as well as proper training for those practicing has been found to be limiting factors. Based on the results, the following recommendation, among others, is made: Government should provide training on indigenous conflict management system in the ethnic nationality.*

**Keywords:** Indigenous, institutions, conflict, resolution, thematic, Etche.

## Introduction

In the traditional societies, conflict exists whenever or wherever incompatible events occurred and may result in "win- lose character". Indigenous institution is designated to take care of such situation. It handles the management of the entire processes that would lead to mediation and resolution of the conflicts. The resolution, transformation and management of conflict may however produce win-win situation too. Truth is a covenant logo that disputants or parties in conflict must not miss (Otite & Albert, 2001). Conflict is as natural as the concept of peace contrary to the global or universal conception. Africans have particular ways of conceptualizing conflict. Traditional definitions of conflict regard it as "a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rival". However, conflict may generally exist wherever or whenever incompatible activities occur and may result in "win- lose character.

Prior to the colonial incursion into Africa, many African indigenous societies had a well laid down indigenous institutions of conflict resolution. There were conventions aimed at mitigating inter-human and intra/ inter-communal conflict in the various societies in Africa before colonialism. In the words of Woko & Osagie (2014), these conventions were backed by taboo which must be observed for peaceful regulation of human activities, and relationship between couples and community. In Nigeria, various indigenous conflict resolution institutions have been in place for many centuries. These indigenous conflict resolution institutions find its root in the ethnic groups of Nigeria. For instance, in Igboland before the advent of the white men, Igbos had traditional institutions like the Umunna, Umuada, Diokpa, Age Grades and Masquerades. In Northern part of Nigeria, the Emirs are seen as indigenous peace ambassadors. In Yoruba land, the position of the Obas and Alafins are paramount indigenous peace agents. The above mentioned institutions were agents of peace, instruments of

reconciliation and arbitration. They handled resolutions of conflicts and mediation in crisis situations (Oguntomisin, 1996).

The Etche people are also known to have evolved a well-established traditional dispute resolution institutions that was peculiar to their ways before the introduction of British rule. These traditional institutions were built on customs and traditions and were culturally effective for resolving conflict within their communities and kingdoms. Such institutions of dispute resolution indigenous to Etches flowed from the accumulation of information that was passed down from generation to generation. However, with the advent of modernization and western civilization, most of the traditional institutional mechanisms for conflict management and resolution are being gradually eroded. Most Etche people, especially city dwellers, prefer to use the modern method of conflict resolution which is based on litigation and retribution (Zartman, 2001).

However, regardless of their popular acceptance throughout the ethnic nationality, indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms have been in the background since the 1950s and 1960s when the colonial regime was engaged in the extensive codification and overhaul of the existing laws with the aim of unification and modernization of the laws. According to Bahta (2014), in the enactments codified at that time, indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms related to family relations and interpretations of contracts were incorporated as long as these practices did not contradict the codes.

## Statement of the Problem

Indigenous mechanisms are seen as the peace making processes and custodian of law in the society. These institutions are more respected by the people because of their influence, personality and belief. They are closer to the people they lead or represent, as a result, people tend to obey and respect their instructions (Dalhatu, 2002). Indigenous laws have been "de-facto" recognition in Nigeria and have been applied both in formal western model of courts and traditional justice processes and in relation to interpersonal and community related conflicts. However, as observed by Assefa, (2006), under the constitution, its application is however, restricted to matters of personal law and therefore its application in other matters relating to conflict does not have any legal recognition and enforcement, as the indigenous institution of conflict resolution is subordinate to the formal court.

Scholars have carried out research on related issues on conflict resolution. For instance, Uzorka (2021) studied alternative dispute resolution and development in Etche local government area; Nweke (2012) examined the trending issues of the Niger Delta and traced it to the dwindling status and eroding authority of the traditional rulers in the land. However, he failed to examine fully the reasons behind the loss of fame and respect of the traditional rulers.

Makinta (2017) made a concerted effort to trace the root of the troubles with the traditional rulers. However, he considered only two variables: conflict and its resolution. Again, much was discussed and much attention was paid on the challenges of the traditional rulers, but very little was carried out on the person, the status and the assumed roles of the traditional rulers. Gbenemene Kpae (2018), studied traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution in Ogoni and concludes that: traditional methods of conflict management involve all the processes of modern mediation, except that the process is non-retributive and is aimed at a peaceful and amicable resolution of conflicts between disputants.

However, most of these studies predominantly focused on the nature, process, and roles of elders in the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms. They did not emphasize the role of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms for maintaining social solidarity and social order of communities in Etche ethnic nationality. There is no existing study on indigenous institutions and conflict resolution in Etche ethnic nationality, hence, this study was conducted to fill the gap in knowledge.

Given the above, the following research questions are formulated to guide this study.

i. In what ways do 'the Ochie' and 'Amadioha shrine' carry out the resolution of land disputes in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State?
ii. How do Elders and family heads resolve family disputes in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State?
iii. What are the principles guiding the practice of indigenous institutional mechanisms in conflict resolution in Etche ethnic ationality, Rivers State?
iv. What are the drawbacks to indigenous institutions in conflict resolution in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State?

The main aim of the study is to examine the role of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism in settling conflicts in Etche Local Government of Rivers State. Therefore, the specific objectives of the study are to:

i. investigate the ways 'the Ochie' and 'Amadioha shrine' carry out the resolution of land disputes in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State.
ii. find out how Elders and family heads resolve family disputes in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State.
iii. examine the principles guiding the practice of indigenous institutional mechanisms in conflict resolution in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State.
iv. investigate the drawbacks to indigenous institutions in conflict resolution in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State.

**Literature Review**

Ojo-Ebenezer (2023) studied the role of traditional institutions in conflict resolution among Okija people. The specific objective of the study was to identify traditional institutions for conflict resolution in the Okija peace processes among Okija people in Ihiala local government area of Anambra State. Purposive sampling method was adopted to select four community leaders or chiefs from each of the four communities that covered the study location, making a total sample size of 16 for the study. The selection of the leaders was based on their expertise in Okija's traditional dispute resolution procedures and institutions. A qualitative technique, the in-depth interview, was used in the study to garner the primary data. The study found that the traditional institutions for conflict resolution included the Ezi (the family), Okpara (elders), Umunna (men who are born into the clan), Umuada (women who are born into a clan), or Ndi Inyom (married women), Amala (the council of elders), Traditional Religious Approach (Ogwugwu Akpu, Ogwugwu Miri, Urashi, Akpunama, Osuajana), Secret societies or the masquerades.

Orji (2022) did an analysis on the roles of traditional rulers in conflict resolutions in South Eastern Nigeria. The techniques of taking conflict resolution decisions with the aid of using traditional rulers within the traditional African societies in south east Nigeria include mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration and negotiation. It additionally consists of using extra-judicial gadgets and utilization of legal maxims to steer or persuade the disputants approximately about the implication of their conduct. It was also discovered that conflict resolution in the plural societies can be quite complex, principally because of the determinate effects of culture and language symbolism.

Hamisu et al. (2022) in their award winning study: *Influence of Traditional Institutions in Farmer Herder Conflicts Management in Borno State* sought to understanding the peculiar impact and influence of the traditional rulers in the war ravaged Borno communities. The study was conducted to assess the influence of traditional institutions in Farmer-Herder conflicts management in three selected Local Government Areas (Damboa, Jere and Magumeri LGAs) of Borno State, Nigeria. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 225 sample size respondents which include farmers (150) and herders (75) respectively. A structured questionnaire and interview schedule were used to collect data for this study which was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and PRA (Pair wise Ranking) tool. The results revealed that (89.3%) of the respondents are of the opinion that, the most preferred strategies for managing conflicts between farmers and herders in the study area are the traditional institutions.

Uzorka & Adiele (2021) examined *Alternative Dispute Resolution Strategies and Community Development in Etche Local Government Area*. The paper critically reviews alternative dispute resolution as a non-judicial mechanism for the resolution of community disputes in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State. The research method employ was purposive sampling with interview. The findings revealed that Etche traditional adjudication is fast and less expensive and that the parties involved are giving a fair hearing base on truth which sometimes is based on Etche Religious belief.

Abdulsalam et al. (2020) examined the roles of traditional rulers in conflict resolution in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study population consisted of traditional rulers in the state. The findings of the study showed that traditional rulers had many roles they play in conflict resolution in all ramifications. The study also revealed that there was no significant difference in the roles of traditional rulers in conflict resolution based on age and marital status.

**Theoretical Framework**

The Social Control Theory is used as the theoretical framework for understanding and analyzing traditional conflict management in Etche ethnic nationality. The social control theory was developed by Travis Hirschi in 1969 to understand how people become law-abiding citizens. In Etche, the deities, gods and ancestors were used as means of social control and were invoked so as to secure compliance to peace agreements. Whenever the deities were used in resolving conflicts between disputants, there was always a tendency for the parties to obey and comply with the decisions reached in *Ihi-Agbara* because disputants were generally afraid of the wrath or punishment from the ancestors. The people generally believed that the deity and ancestors had the capacity to inflict death punishment on them in case of a failure to adhere to peace agreements. As a result, the likelihood for people to disobey such peace resolution was very low. Thus in traditional Etche conflict management system, the deities or ancestors provided a means through which the people became attached and bonded to their communities, because there was a general belief in the efficacy of their punishment should disputing parties disregard decisions and/ or resolution reached in *Ihi-Agbara.* It was also believed that the wrath from the ancestors and gods were severe if invoked in murder cases and other offences that could offend the gods of the land.

**Methodology**

The study adopted ethnographic research design. The study population covers the total number of males and females in Etche and Omuma Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The total population of the study is 350,327, which represents the population of the two LGAs according to National Population Commission Projection, (2022). The sample size of the study is 400 using expert sampling method. This method was considered for the study due to the fact that the study intended to study quintessential respondents like elders, chiefs, family heads etc. The study used dual techniques of purposive sampling and snowballing sample to select ten communities for the Key Persons Interview and Focused Group Discussions consisting of elders, youths, men and women, chiefs and traditionalists.

**Table 1: Interview respondents and focus group respondents in each community**

| S/N | Communities Selected | Number of Interviewees | Number of Male Respondents in Focus Group Discussions | Number of Female Respondents in Focus Group Discussions | Number of Youth Respondents in Focus Group Discussions | Total Number of Respondents in Both Focus Group Discussions and Interview Sessions |
|-----|---------------------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Communities Selected | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| 2 | Amaji | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 11 |
| 3 | Mba | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 10 |
| 4 | Ofe | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 11 |
| 5 | Ulakwo | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 13 |
| 6 | Okehi | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 14 |
| 7 | Ozuzu | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 12 |
| 8 | Igbo | 3 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 14 |
| 9 | Igbodo | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 11 |
| 10 | Obohia | 1 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| | **Total** | | | | | **120** |

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, (2023).

This research employed qualitative research methodology mainly due to the following reasons. First, due to the nature of the research, which focuses on the community`s beliefs, opinions, attitudes and relationships. Second, this technique enables the researcher to have the critical and deeper understanding of the social phenomenon that is often carried out in a natural context. It also enables the researcher to dig deep into knowledge and skills used by indigenous conflict resolution institutions. The primary data was collected through interviews, participant observation and focus group discussions

(FGD) from community elders, women, youths, judges, police and traditional rulers. The study also made use of secondary data. Secondary data were sourced from regular and statically reports of the customary courts, and cultural offices and agricultural and rural development offices. Additionally, works of various authors and other published and unpublished documents such as books, articles and journals and internet sources were also used. The researcher utilized thematic analysis in analyzing the data.

**Data Analysis**
**Theme 1: The ways 'the Ochie' and 'Amadioha shrine' carry out the resolution of land disputes in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State**

So, one can conclude that the Etche chiefs were strong agents and organs of conflict resolution. In terms of conflict resolution and conflict resolution processes, the chiefs played modifying role with special attention to ensuring that justice was not dispersed autocratically. The chiefs were well schooled (although informally) with the peace process within the domain.

In summation, and in the words of Olaoba (2006),

> In African societies before the advent of colonialism, kings and chiefs were among the cherished personalities, who saw to the administration of justice, and the facilitation of peace and harmony. Thus the role played by the potentates and their chieftains had been instrumental to the level of progress and development in pre-colonial, African kingdoms. Some mechanisms are: Oath taking, Customary Mediation, Customary Arbitration, Customary Adjudication, Reconciliation and Uriko (Oracular Intervention).

Another interviewee asserts that:

> …when there is an issue of land disputes, such spiritualism informed the belief system of the Etches that death can never write off living inspiration and aspiration of African people in as much as there is such conceptualism of the cosmos, where spiritual forces interplay in the scheme of existence. Thus, the shrine of Amadioha was used to settled land disputes through oath taking.

From the foregoing, the art of conflict resolution is not limited to the earthly community. The spiritual community also participate. The ancestral community was charged with conflict resolution activities which are proto-type of the real physical world. In other words, the ancestral community possessed the qualities as the physical community with special reference to conflict resolution arts. It is also understood that social equilibrium and social justice maintenance is the very function of the ancestors. The implication is that the living are "subservient" to the ancestral community during the process of peace making in Etche traditional societies. The ancestors have been adjudged as indispensable personalities since they once lived in the physical earth before their transformation into the supernatural where they watch over affairs of the physical world. They possess the requisite qualities for peace-making and they bequeath this art to the living. Being all-knowing, experienced and authoritative, they possess the motivation as well as drive for conflict resolution facilitation. The living elders simply stand in the place of the ancestors with ancestors spiritually present at the conflict resolution scene. This is evidenced in the serenity of the atmosphere during a peace-making process in Etche land. In conclusion, the ancestors know the language of peace and harmony and are powerful personalities in conflict resolution process; the voice of the living elders merely represents the ancestors in Etche people's perception.

From one elderly key informant interviewee from Igbodo:

> We elders have a meeting place in every locality. We meet together when we are requested to do so. We get information about cases from conflicting parties and community members. We create opportunities for conflicting parties to have open discussion and dialogue about the conflict. We elders do our best level to resolve conflicts and restore relationships. After building consensus between the two parties, we perform rituals as a last step in the resolution process. This is often the case but not in all cases do we achieve reconciliation.

Finally, where the disputants agree to reconcile, cultural rituals are practised. Rituals have symbolic and practical significances. They have spiritual meaning and interpretation. They are ways of transforming the conflict into peaceful relationship. Community members also participate in the rituals. Rituals include oath taking (not to do further harm), as well as traditional rituals such as drinking and eating together (nriko), and animal sacrificing. This is part of the cultural belief and heritage of the local people. This ends the process and trust is established between parties that their relationship is restored.

**Theme 2: How elders and family heads resolve family disputes in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State**
In a focus group discussion, respondents remarked thus:

> Elders and family heads are very instrumental in handling family conflict. Their resolution approaches save several families of depression. They used mechanism such as Mediation. Mediation is an old method of family conflict management surrounded by secrecy. It involves non-coercive intervention of the mediators(s), called third party either to reduce or go beyond or bring conflict to peaceful settlement.

Inter-Marriages: In (FGD1) among the females, respondents posit that
traditional rulers in Etche use marriage as one of the means for the prevention, management and resolution of family conflict.
Adjudication: In Etche, adjudication involves bringing all disputants in the conflict to a meeting usually in the chambers or compounds of family heads, quarter heads and palace court as the case maybe.
Reconciliation: This was the most significant aspect of conflict resolution. It is the end product of adjudication. After the disputants have been persuaded to end the dispute, peace was restored.

**Theme 3: The principles guiding the practice of indigenous institutional mechanisms in conflict resolution in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State**
One participant pointed out that:

> Elders focus and work to restore and maintain what the two conflicting parties lost because of the conflict. The conflict breaks the normal relationship of conflicting parties as well as families and surrounding communities. We help individuals to come together, discuss their issues and resolve the conflict. The offender will compensate for any kind of harm he/she made on the victim. Finally, peace and order happens through reconciliation of the two parties where the parties are satisfied that reasonable justice has been done by elders and/ or Chiefs or any other agent of conflict resolution and once the offender admits his mistakes and makes compensation for it.

The management of conflicts amongst pre-colonial Etche as in other African societies according to Alagoa (2001) involved the following six principles:

- First, the principle of impartiality of the manager of conflict. Rulers in all Nigerian communities were expected to behave impartially in their office
- Second, the principle of fairness. That is, the poor and weak should receive a fair deal as well as the rich and powerful.
- Third, the principle of accommodation, compromise and a disposition for reconciliation, as opposed to the principle of "winner takes all" or the "zero sum game"
- Fourth, the principle of reciprocity. The spirit of accommodation must be mutual and reciprocal in order to be effective.
- Fifth, the principle of moderation and of measured action and response. It was this principle that informed the deliberate limitation of the level of violence in conflicts within Nigerian communities in the past.
- Sixth, the principle of incompatibility or separation. That is where the parties to a conflict cannot be reconciled, the best policy would be to separate them.

**Theme 4: The drawbacks to indigenous institutions in conflict resolution in Etche ethnic nationality, Rivers State**

There are no clear cut efforts, if any, to reconcile the disputants. This is corroborated by our interviewee Obiohia when he says:

> When it comes to matters outside the close family ties no serious effort is made to bring the disputants together after the judgments have been delivered and fines imposed on the guilty one. In most cases, what we witness is that the winner/winners go home rejoicing while the losers go home in bitterness, sometimes, with the threat of appealing the matter or "doing something".

This is the case mostly found in matters not bordering around family ties in Etche.

The other most important challenge is related to the absence of a policy direction and comprehensive laws that deal with the institutionalization and harmonization of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms within the country's legal system. There is lack of clear legal framework which states the role, functions and legal status of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms. Even though the Nigerian constitution recognizes traditional law where it allows citizens to use religious or customary laws in cases of personal and marital disputes, it limits them to personal and family matters excluding their application to criminal matters in spite of the fact that they are serving for many types of crimes in reality. The absence of strong laws and policies related to the validity of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and their affiliation with the formal justice system. The possibility of application of their authority are found to be serious challenges that need urgent attention by the government and policy makers. There is a need to develop a clear legal and policy framework for the utilization of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms by elders and other agents of conflict resolution in Etche.

Major findings of the study are:
- ➢ It was also discovered that there are several indigenous institutions in resolving conflict such as Onye-Ishi-Agwuru shrines, Chiefs, etc. and they use mechanisms such as oath-taking (Idu-Agbara), conciliation (Nriko), Igba-Otule ogho (compelling a thief to dance naked in the village).
- ➢ Elders and family heads settle family disputes through mediation, adjudication etc.
- ➢ There is principle of impartiality of the manager of conflict, principle of fairness amongst others.
- ➢ Lastly, the study revealed that drawbacks faced by indigenous institutions in resolving conflict include financial constraints, bribery, lack of training etc.

**Conclusion/Recommendations**

Conflict is an inherent ingredient in human society. From the distant earlier period to the current, conflict is considered as existing as a natural and integral phenomenon of human society. Thus, different society could experience different nature of conflict depending on their socio-political, cultural and economic contexts. It occurs everywhere and at every level. Conflict exists at the level of inter individual, inter-group, intra-group, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic, national and intra-continental and intercontinental. Greater percentage of the informants indicated that competition over scarce natural resources (land related matters), cult and chieftaincy tussles are the main cause of conflict in Etche communities. Besides, informants also revealed that historical and political factors, marital issues, inheritance related issues, theft, murder, breach of agreement and trust are the other causes of conflict in the study area.

Generally speaking, Etche people possess five types of traditional or indigenous conflict resolution institutions. The basic criteria for the classification are due to their functions, age and powers possessed. Therefore, the following are indigenous conflict resolution mechanism institutions in Etche Land: Elders, Chiefs, Age-grade, Ancestors, Umu Mgboroto (the first daughters' institution), Indigenous or traditional institutions also has important place in the society. In this society indigenous institution have long history about their origins, roles, types and other related issues. Based on the discussions and findings of the study, the researcher draws the conclusions in relation to the specific objectives of the study.

- It would be better if the government gives due attention to the values and social assets of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms like the modern legal system.
- Families should adhere to the resolutions made by the elders and family heads when there is a conflicting situation.

- Government should provide training for practitioners on indigenous conflict management system in the Etche ethnic nationality.
- Responsible bodies of Etche ethnic nationality should preserve indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in the study area and should give enough attention and support for other researchers who want to undertake indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms as their research topic.

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# XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON NIGERIA AND SOUTH-AFRICAN RELATIONS

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**Abstract**
*Xenophobic attacks in South Africa have not only posed a significant humanitarian concern but have also reverberated across the African continent, particularly affecting the dynamics of South Africa-Nigeria relations. Over the past decades, South Africa has witnessed sporadic outbreaks of violence targeting foreign nationals, often fueled by perceptions of competition for scarce resources and exacerbated by underlying socio-economic inequalities. In recent years, these attacks have intensified, resulting in loss of lives, displacement, and widespread condemnation both domestically and internationally. This paper delves into the implications of these attacks on the bilateral relationship between the two largest economies in Africa. By analyzing the historical context, root causes, and diplomatic responses, this study aims to provide insights into the multifaceted impact of xenophobia on socio-economic, political, and cultural ties between South Africa and Nigeria. Historically, South Africa and Nigeria have played pivotal roles in shaping the continent's political landscape, with their relationship marked by periods of cooperation, competition, and occasional tensions. However, the recurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa has strained diplomatic relations and tested the resilience of bilateral engagements. By addressing this complex issue, this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in fostering regional cooperation and solidarity within Africa.*
*Keywords:* Xenophobia, Xenophobic attacks, Relations, Nigeria, South-Africa

## Introduction

Xenophobia, seen as the fear or hatred of strangers or foreigners, has manifested in various forms throughout history, often intersecting with socio-economic, political, and cultural dynamics within societies (Smith, 2019). In the African context, xenophobic attitudes and behaviors have been particularly evident in South Africa, where waves of violence and discrimination against foreign nationals, predominantly from other African countries, have occurred periodically over the past two decades (Crush & Tawodzera, 2019). South Africa, as the continent's most industrialized economy and a major destination for migrants seeking economic opportunities and refuge, has grappled with the complexities of migration and integration (Landau, 2019). However, underlying socio-economic disparities, high unemployment rates, and perceptions of competition for resources have fueled xenophobic sentiments, leading to outbreaks of violence targeting foreign-owned businesses and communities (Tawodzera & Crush, 2020).

The implications of xenophobic attacks extend beyond domestic concerns, significantly impacting regional dynamics and inter-state relations, particularly between South Africa and Nigeria, two of Africa's largest economies and influential political actors (Campbell, 2020). Historically, the relationship between these two countries has been characterized by a mixture of cooperation, competition, and occasional tensions, reflecting divergent political trajectories and economic interests (Falola & Akinyemi, 2020). The recurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa has strained diplomatic relations between the two nations, eliciting strong reactions from Nigerian authorities and prompting calls for accountability and protection of Nigerian citizens living in South Africa (Obi, 2019). These tensions have highlighted the complexities of managing migration flows within the context of regional integration efforts, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), aimed at promoting economic cooperation and development (Ajakaiye & Elu, 2021).

Xenophobic violence in South Africa has emerged as a recurrent challenge, with profound implications for regional dynamics and inter-state relations, particularly between South Africa and Nigeria, two of Africa's largest economies and influential political actors (Crush & Tawodzera, 2019). Despite efforts to address the root causes and manifestations of xenophobia, including policy interventions and civil society advocacy, outbreaks of violence targeting foreign nationals continue to pose significant humanitarian and diplomatic concerns (Tawodzera & Crush, 2020).

The recurrence of xenophobic attacks raises critical questions about the efficacy of existing governance mechanisms and the adequacy of diplomatic responses in addressing the underlying drivers of violence and discrimination (Obi, 2019). Furthermore, the impact of xenophobic violence extends beyond immediate humanitarian crises, exacerbating social tensions, undermining regional integration efforts, and straining bilateral relations between South Africa and Nigeria (Campbell, 2020).

South Africa's internal environment has been hostile to non-nationals, particularly undocumented migrants, and as such, there is an implicit culture of impunity, which promotes popular justice in most communities. As a social problem, such outbreaks infringe the dignity as well as the rights of people in this globalized world; their reoccurrence in April 2015 has remained a great reason for concern. It should be pointed out that over the years, there are so many recorded circumstances of xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Most remarkable were those of May 2008, April 2015 and in June, August, September of 2019. In the 2008 attacks, the documented death toll was sixty people: forty foreign nationals and twenty locals. Besides the deaths, there were the displacements of over 100,000 people, close to 700 were wounded, and a number of women and girls were raped, as well as the destruction of a number of properties (Landau, 2020). Against this backdrop, understanding the implications of xenophobic attacks on South Africa-Nigeria relations is essential for elucidating the challenges and opportunities in fostering regional cooperation and solidarity within Africa. By examining the historical context, root causes, and diplomatic responses to xenophobia, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics shaping inter-state relations and migration governance on the African continent, and further examine the historical factors that have contributed to xenophobic attitudes and violence in South Africa, explore the socio-economic and political implications of xenophobic violence in South Africa, on South Africa-Nigeria relations, and ascertain the role of both governments in mitigating xenophobic violence and fostering constructive engagement between South Africa and Nigeria.

## Conceptual and Theoretical Review
### Xenophobia

The word "xenophobia" is derived from the Greek words "xenos" and "phobos" which mean "strange" or "foreign" and or fear, respectively (Crush & Ramachandran, 2019). The Merriam- Webster online dictionary defines the term xenophobia as fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign. Nyamjoh (2016, p.56) captures the definition of xenophobia in the South African context, by describing it as the intense dislike, hatred or fear of others, who are foreign. Continuing Nyamjoh argues that "xenophobia often encompasses some ethno-linguistic and cultural identifiers that form the basis of distrust and suspicion of the other". Bordeau (2020) simply defines xenophobia as the irrational fear or distrust of foreigners or strangers. In the South African context, xenophobia is manifest in negative attitudes and perceptions together with accompanying acts of hostility, violence or discrimination against foreigners. The term xenophobia is used to describe the dislike for immigrants or people who are different from oneself. As such, the term xenophobia is an outburst of discriminatory ideas, societal stereotyping and prejudices that is most times disguised with the phenomenon of nationalism (Onyido, 2018).

In South Africa, xenophobia presents certain distinct elements, including, a demonstrated fear or hatred of foreigners, accompanying violent actions and resultant loss of life and property. Harris (2002) argues that the term xenophobia must be reframed to incorporate acts, manifestations or practices such as violence or physical abuse which normally accompany dislike or fear of foreigners. Furthermore, according to Harris, xenophobia broadly describes negative social perceptions of immigrants, refugees and migrants and the resultant violent actions against them. Although xenophobic violence mostly targets foreign nationals, it can also target nationals who are seen as being foreign to the area or are perceived, albeit incorrectly, to be from another country.

Xenophobia, simply put, is the fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers; it is embodied in discriminatory attitudes and behaviour, and often culminates in violence, abuses of all types, and exhibitions of hatred (Mogekwu, 2015). Studies on xenophobia have attributed such hatred of foreigners to a number of causes: the fear of loss of social status and identity; a threat, perceived or real, to citizens' economic success; a way of reassuring the national self and its boundaries in times of national crisis (Harris, 2001); a feeling of superiority, and poor intercultural information (Mogekwu, 2015). According to the latter argument, Mogekwu (2015) states that xenophobes presumably do not have adequate information about the people they hate and, since they do not know how to deal with such people, they see them as a threat.

Xenophobia basically derives from the sense that non-citizens pose some sort of a threat to the recipients' identity or their individual rights, and is also closely connected with the concept of nationalism: the sense in each individual of membership in the political nation as an essential ingredient in his or her sense of identity (Hussein & Hitomi, 2021). To this end, a notion of citizenship can lead to xenophobia when it becomes apparent that the government does not guarantee protection of individual rights. This is all the more apparent where poverty and unemployment is rampant. Whilst xenophobia has been described as something of a global phenomenon, closely associated with the process of globalization, it has been noted that it is particularly prevalent in countries undergoing transition.

Marsella & Ring (2013) averred that xenophobia is often associated with times of economic and political instability. National economic inequality lures individuals toward countries that guarantee prospects for improved labour conditions, higher earnings or sheer survival. This explains why at some point, there was mass migration of Ghanaians into Nigeria and Southern Africans like the Malawians, Zimbabweans, Zambians and so on into South Africa. When such mass migration occurs across borders, it is often natural for the most affected host communities to react negatively. As opined by (Esses et al., 2001) the migration of large groups of people across borders can threaten the security (physical and economic) of the local population because of perceptions of economic strain or of cultural dissimilarity. International Labour Organisation (2001, p. 2) identified some modes through which xenophobia manifests. These include prejudices, attitudinal orientations and behaviours against a foreigner, which can be prompted by political incitements, declining economic conditions or concerns relating to national security, particularly in the current era of terror attacks. While foreigners are generally affected, refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants are often the central targets in xenophobic situations.

**Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa**

Prior to 1994, immigrants from elsewhere faced discrimination and even violence in South Africa. After majority rule in 1994, contrary to expectations, the incidence of xenophobia increased. Between 2000 and March 2008, at least 67 people died in what were identified as xenophobic attacks. In May 2008, a series of attacks left 62 people dead; although 21 of those killed were South African citizens. The attacks were motivated by xenophobia. In 2015, another nationwide spike in xenophobic attacks against immigrants in general prompted a number of foreign governments to begin repatriating their citizens (Anyim et al., 2019).

A Pew Research poll conducted in 2018 showed that 62% of South Africans viewed immigrants as a burden on society by taking jobs and social benefits and that 61% of South Africans thought that immigrants were more responsible for crime than other groups. Between 2010 and 2017 the immigrant community in South Africa increased from 2 million people to 4 million people. The proportion of South Africa's total population that is foreign born increased from 2.8% in 2005 to 7% in 2019, according to the United Nations International Organization for Migration, in spite of widespread xenophobia in the country. This made South Africa the largest recipient of immigrants on the African continent in 2019 (Hussein & Hitomi, 2021).

Between 1984 and the end of hostilities in that country, an estimated 50,000 to 350,000 Mozambicans fled to South Africa. While never granted refugee status they were technically allowed to settle in the bantustans or black homelands created during the apartheid system. The reality was more varied, with the homeland of Lebowa banning Mozambican settlers outright while Gazankulu welcomed the refugees with support in the form of land and equipment. Those in Gazankulu, however, found themselves confined to the homeland and liable for deportation should they officially enter South Africa, and evidence exists that their hosts denied them access to economic resources. Unrest and civil

war likewise saw large numbers of Congolese people immigrate to South Africa, many illegally, in 1993 and 1997. Subsequent studies found indications of xenophobic attitudes towards these refugees, typified by them being denied access to the primary healthcare to which they were technically entitled (Hussein & Hitomi, 2021).

Despite a lack of directly comparable data, xenophobia in South Africa is perceived to have significantly increased after the election of a Black majority government in 1994. According to a 2004 study published by the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP): The ANC government -in its attempts to overcome the divides of the past and build new forms of social cohesion, embarked on an aggressive and inclusive nation-building project. One unanticipated by-product of this project has been a growth in intolerance towards outsiders. Violence against foreign citizens and African refugees has become increasingly common and communities are divided by hostility and suspicion (Ismail & Sakariyan, 2017).

A 2004 study by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) of attitudes amongst police officers in the Johannesburg area found that 87% of respondents believed that most undocumented immigrants in Johannesburg are involved in crime, despite there being no statistical evidence to substantiate the perception. Such views combined with the vulnerability of illegal aliens led to abuse, including violence and extortion, some analysts argued. In a March 2007 meeting with Home Affairs Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, a representative of Burundian refugees in Durban; clairned that immigrants could not rely on police for protection, but instead found police mistreating them, stealing from them and making unconfirmed allegations that they sell drugs. Two years earlier, at a similar meeting in Johannesburg, Mapisa- Nqakula had admitted that refugees and asylum seekers were mistreated by police with xenophobic attitudes (Ismail & Sakariyan, 2017).

As reported by Fayomi et al., 2019, in October 2001, residents of the Zandspruit informal settlement gave Zimbabwean citizens ten days to leave the area. When the foreigners failed to leave voluntarily, they were forcefully evicted and their shacks were burned down and looted. Community members said they were angry that Zimbabweans were employed whilst locals remained jobless and blamed the foreigners for a number of crimes. No injuries were reported amongst the affected Zimbabweans.

Attacks on foreign nationals increased markedly in late-2007 and it is believed that there were at least a dozen attacks between January and May 2008. The most severe incidents occurred on 8 January 2008 when two Somali shop owners were murdered in the Eastern Cape towns of Jeffreys Bay and East London, then in March 2008 when seven people were killed including Zimbabweans, Pakistanis and a Somali national after their shops and shacks were set alight in Atteridgeville near Pretoria. On 12 May 2008 a series of riots started in the township of Alexandra (in the north-eastern part of Johannesburg) when locals attacked migrants from Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, killing two people and injuring 40 others. Some attackers were reported to have been singing Jacob Zuma's campaign song Umshini Wami (Zulu: "Bring Me My Machine Gun"). In the following weeks the violence spread, first to other settlements in the Gauteng Province, then to the coastal cities of Durban and Cape Town. Attacks were also reported in parts of the Southern Cape, Mpumalanga, the North West and Free State.

By the end of the riots 62 people were reported dead. 1400 suspects were arrested in connection with the violence. Nine months after the attacks 128 individuals had been convicted and 30 found not guilty in 105 concluded court cases. 208 cases had been withdrawn and 156 were still being heard. One year after the attacks prosecutors said that 137 people had been convicted, 182 cases had been withdrawn because witnesses or complainants had left the country, 51 cases were underway or ready for trial and 82 had been referred for further investigation. In May 2009, one year after the attacks the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (Cormsa) said that foreigners remained under threat of violence and that little had been done to address the causes of the attacks. The organisation complained of a lack of accountability for those responsible for public violence, insufficient investigations into the instigators and the lack of a public government inquiry.

In late May 2009, reports emerged regarding a possible resurgence of xenophobic related activity and the organising of attacks in the Western Cape. Reports of threats and secret meetings by local businessmen surfaced in Gugulethu, Khayelitsha and Philippi, Cape Town. Samora Machel in Philippi once again emerging as a flash-point. In Gugulethu, reports emerged of secret meetings by local businessmen discussing 'what to do about Somali shopkeepers'. The Anti- Eviction Campaign

brought these issues to the open by organising a series of anti-xenophobia meetings attempting to find the root cause of the crisis.

In November 2009, a community of 1500-2500 Zimbabwean farm workers was forcibly evicted from their homes in the informal settlements of De Doorns, a grape-farming town in the Western Cape. No persons were physically assaulted but homes were trashed and looted and this led to the biggest displacement of foreign nationals since May 2008. The Zimbabweans were then housed in a displaced persons' camp where some remained for a year until it was closed. Researchers identified the role of a ward councillor, Mpumelelo Lubisi, in inciting the attack in possible collusion with informal labour brokers who had financial interests in getting rid of their Zimbabwean competitors. South African workers also accused farmers of employing the Zimbabweans at less than minimum wage (farmers and Zimbabwean workers denied this). In 2010 the press carried numerous articles claiming that there would be massive planned xenophobic violence at the end of the 2010 Football World Cup. However this did not happen.

In July 2012 there were new attacks in parts of Cape Town and in Botshabelo in the Free State. On 30 May 2013, 25-year-old Abdi Nasir Mahmoud Good, was stoned to death. The violence was captured on a mobile phone and shared on the Internet. Three Somali shopkeepers had been killed in June 2013 and the Somali government requested the South African authorities to do more to protect their nationals. Among those murdered were two brothers who were allegedly hacked to death. The attacks led to public outery and worldwide protests by the Somali diaspora, in Cape Town, London and Minneapolis. South African Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana- Mashabane expressed the government's "strongest condemnation" of the violence which had seen looting and the death of a Somali shopkeeper. Somali Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon expressed concern for the safety of Somalis in South Africa, calling on the government there to intervene to stop violence against Somali people after deadly attacks in Pretoria and Port Elizabeth.

On 7 June 2014, a Somali national, in his 50s, was reportedly stoned to death and two others were seriously injured when the angry mob of locals attacked their shop in extension 6, late on Saturday. Three more Somalis were wounded from gunshots and shops were looted. After another round of xenophobic violence against Somali entrepreneurs in April 2015, Somalia's government announced that it would evacuate its citizens from South Africa.

In April 2015, there was an upsurge in xenophobic attacks throughout the country. The attacks started in Durban and spread to Johannesburg. Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini was accused of aggravating the attacks by saying that foreigners should "go back to their countries". Locals looted foreigners' shops and attacked immigrants in general, forcing hundreds to relocate to police stations across the country. The Malawian authorities subsequently began repatriating their nationals, and a number of other foreign governments also announced that they would evacuate their citizens. More than 300 people were arrested. On 18 April 2015, a photographer from the Sunday Times, James Oatway, photographed a brutal attack on a Mozambican man. The man, Emmanuel Sithole, died from his wounds. Four suspects were arrested within days of the publication of photographs in the edition of 19 April of The Sunday Times of the murder of Mozambican street vendor Emmanuel Sithole in Alexandra Township the previous day. Sithole's name was not included in the official list of seven victims killed in the April 2015 attacks, including an Ethiopian, a Mozambican, a Bangladeshi, a Zimbabwean and three South Africans who were all killed in KwaZulu-Natal.

Despite the government's insistence that Sithole's murder was not xenophobic, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was deployed in Alexandra Township following the publication of the images. On 23 April several thousand demonstrators marched through central Johannesburg to protest against a spate of deadly attacks on immigrants. They sang songs denouncing xenophobia and carried banners that read "We are all Africans" as migrant workers crowded balconies, shouting their support. In October 2015 there were sustained xenophobic attacks in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape. It has reported that more than 500 people were displaced and more than 300 shops and homes looted and, in some cases, destroyed altogether. In these attacks Muslims were specifically targeted. The Grahamstown xenophobic attacks that took place on 21 October 2015, and coincided with the Fees Must Fall protest at Rhodes University, lasted for several days. The attacks were instigated by the taxi drivers' protests, where the drivers were protesting over the terrible state of roads, the rise in crime and rumours of murders committed by foreigners. Their demands were that the mayor ought to

do something about their grievances. Their grievances were not addressed by the mayor (Anyim et al., 2019).

On 21 October 2015 taxi drivers attacked spaza shops owned by Pakistani, Somali, Bangladeshi and Ethiopian residents of Grahamstown. There was a mobilisation of people by the taxi drivers, with the aim of attacking and looting shops owned by foreigners. There was a rumour that insinuated that foreigners were responsible for the rampant murders in town: that an "Arab man had killed and mutilated women" around town and that the police had not done anything to address these rumours. Grahamstown residents in the townships were angry at the police for not doing anything to dispel the rumours, despite having been warned by the councillors that the residents might end up taking the law into their own hands. Thus, it was these rumours that incited the attacks on foreigners.

From 20-23 June 2016 a wave of riots hit the City of Tshwane. Although the riots were sparked by political discontent within the ANC, Somali, Pakistani and other foreign owned shops and micro enterprises were targeted for looting and a number of foreigners were attacked. On Friday 24 February 2017 a large scale and officially sanctioned anti-immigrant protest was organised and held in the Pretoria. Protesters marched to the Foreign Ministry and handed a petition to government representatives. Protesters accused immigrants of taking jobs from South Africans, causing crime, and complained that they are arrogant and they don't know how to talk to people, especially Nigerians. 136 protesters were arrested during the march.

On 25 March 2019 xenophobic riots targeting African immigrants broke out in Sydenham, Jadhu Place and Overport areas of Durban. Around one hundred people attacked businesses owned by foreign nationals resulting in around 50 people seeking shelter in a local police station and mosque. Three people were killed in the riot. A speech given by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the ANC's election manifesto for the 2019 South African general election was blamed for contributing to xenophobic feeling wherein Ramaphosa committed to cracking down on undocumented foreigners involved in criminal activities. The attacks on foreigners was criticised by both the South African government and political parties amidst calls to ensure that xenophobic sentiment was not exploited for electoral purposes (Fayomi et al., 2019).

**Chronological Trace of Nigeria and South Africa Relations**

South Africa is one of the largest countries in the world in terms of landmass and population and is bordered by Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana in the North and Swaziland and Mozambique in the Northeast (Rogerson, 2000). With a good Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about 326.541 billion, however inequality reigned supreme in the country, with corresponding poverty, unemployment and of course crime which is on the increase (Onyido, 2018). The country gained independence in 1910 but found herself grasped in apartheid rule since then till it became emancipated in 1994 (Anyim et al., 2019). Kinge & Tiobo (2016) cited in Ibrahim et al. (2019) submit that the white minority oppressed and marginalized the black populous settlers.

South Africa - Nigeria relations could be historically traced to events arising from the Sharpeville massacre of 21st March, 1960, when the South African police shot and killed 72 blacks and wounded 184 (Zabadi & Onuoha, 2012, p. 439). This event which occurred even before Nigeria's independence marked the beginning of Nigeria's confrontation against white South Africa. The Tafawa Balewa government (1960-1966) upon assumption of office in October 1. 1960 was faced with overwhelming pressure from both domestic and external sources to institute measures to check South Africa's apartheid policies. Consequently, Nigeria banned the importation of South African goods into the country and was instrumental to the political and economic sanctions passed against the white racist regime.

Furthermore, Balewa went to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference in March 1961 in London, where he spearheaded the move that led to the withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth (Dele & Ukeaja, 2019), By1962, Nigeria terminated all the privileges of Commonwealth membership which South Africans enjoyed in Nigeria. Nigeria government's anti-apartheid policy continued until the first military coup led by Major Nzeogwu in January 15, 1966 which disrupted the first republic.

According to Eze & Agena (2017), not too long after the restoration of black majority rule in South African which Nigeria was instrumental to, the relationship between the two countries experienced various hiccups thereby graduating from cooperation to competition within the African

continent. This evident battle for hegemony between both countries had seen them take contrasting position in key regional issues in Africa. Hannatu (2013) cited in Eze and Agena (2017, p. 5) observes that the following areas have taken centre stage in the supremacy battle between Nigeria and South Africa.

i.   South Africa's criticisms and backing Nigeria's expulsion from the Commonwealth of Nations in 1995 after the execution of the famous Ogoni 8 and Nigeria's response in withdrawing from participating in the 1996 African cup of Nation hosted by South Africa.

ii.  Disagreement between both countries via disparate approaches in tackling the post-election conflicts in Ivory Coast, while Nigeria adopted a belligerent posture towards Laurent Gbagbo, who refused to concede defeat after losing the country's election. South Africa provocatively sent a warship to the Gulf of Guinea in Nigeria's traditional domain/stronghold; however South Africa belatedly recognized Allassane Quattara's victory.

iii. The opposing stance of both nations over the embattled late Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi and the recognition of the government of the Transitional National Council (TNC) during the Libyan revolution. While Nigeria recognized the TNC based on the African Union Constitutive Act Principle section 14, South Africa back the embattled Gaddafi regime saying TNC was illegal.

iv.  The 2012 salient diplomatic clash between both courtiers at the all summit in January, over recognition of the government in Guinea-Bissau which Nigeria was supporting and South Africa was opposing

v.   The 2012 deportation of 125 Nigerians including legislators on the unsubstantiated claim of fake yellow fever vaccination cards and Nigeria's response in deporting 84 South Africans in 2 days, forcing South Africa to apologize.

vi.  The struggle by both countries to be the African country to occupy a permanent seat in the UN Security Council  when eventually there would be the admission of more members to accommodate all the continents.

Since the post-apartheid era began in South Africa in the year 1994, several African countries have established and sustained diplomatic, economic and socio-cultural ties with the rainbow nation. However, the one too many targeted killings of their nationals in South Africa have created a shared knowledge of South Africa as a xenophobic country. This shared knowledge has immensely shaped the action of the affected African countries, one of which is Nigeria, in their relations with South Africa. Unlike some Southern African countries e.g. Malawi which has evacuated a good number of its citizens from South Africa, Nigeria in recent past made diplomatic moves vis-à-vis the reoccurring xenophobic attacks without severing her relations with South Africa.

**Historical Factors that have Contributed to Xenophobic Attitudes and Violence in South Africa**
Several historical factors have contributed to xenophobic attitudes and violence in South Africa. Here are some key factors:

i.   **Colonial Legacy**: The legacy of colonialism in South Africa, characterized by racial segregation and discrimination, laid the groundwork for xenophobic attitudes. Colonial policies such as the Natives Land Act of 1913 and the subsequent apartheid system entrenched racial divisions and economic disparities, fostering a climate of hostility towards non-white populations.

ii.  **Apartheid Era:** The apartheid regime institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination, creating a social hierarchy that privileged white South Africans over other racial groups. Non-white populations, including Black Africans and people of Indian and mixed-race descent, were subjected to systematic oppression and marginalization, exacerbating social tensions and fostering resentment towards perceived outsiders.

iii. **Labour Migration**: The apartheid government implemented policies to control the movement of Black African labour, leading to the establishment of migrant labour systems. This resulted in the influx of workers from neighbouring countries such as Lesotho, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, who were often employed in low-skilled and poorly paid jobs. Competition for employment and resources between migrant workers and local communities contributed to xenophobic attitudes.

iv.  **Economic Inequality**: South Africa continues to grapple with deep-seated economic inequality, with a significant portion of the population living in poverty and experiencing high levels of

unemployment. Economic hardship exacerbates social tensions and creates fertile ground for scapegoating and blaming foreigners for perceived job losses and socio-economic challenges.

v. **Political Transition:** The transition from apartheid to democracy in the early 1990s brought about significant social and political changes in South Africa. While the end of apartheid symbolized hope for a more inclusive and egalitarian society, it also unleashed pent-up frustrations and grievances, including xenophobic sentiments among certain segments of the population.

vi. **Political Rhetoric:** Political rhetoric, particularly from certain political leaders and movements, has at times fueled xenophobic attitudes and violence in South Africa. Scapegoating of foreign nationals for crime, unemployment, and other social problems has been used to mobilize support and deflect attention from systemic issues.

**Socio-economic and Political Implications of Xenophobic Violence in South Africa, on South Africa-Nigeria Relations**

The socio-economic and political implications of xenophobic violence in South Africa extend beyond domestic concerns and have significant ramifications for South Africa-Nigeria relations. Here are some key implications:

i. **Diplomatic Strain**: Xenophobic violence in South Africa strains diplomatic relations between South Africa and Nigeria. Incidents of violence against Nigerian nationals and other foreigners lead to diplomatic tensions, with Nigeria condemning the attacks and demanding accountability from the South African government. This strain can hinder cooperation on regional and continental issues and impede efforts to strengthen bilateral relations.

ii. **Economic Fallout:** Xenophobic violence disrupts economic activities and investor confidence in South Africa, affecting its economy. Negative perceptions of South Africa as an unsafe destination for foreigners can deter foreign investment and tourism, leading to economic losses. Additionally, retaliatory measures or boycotts by Nigeria or other countries in response to xenophobic attacks can further impact South Africa's economy and trade relations.

iii. **Migration Policies:** Xenophobic violence prompts both South Africa and Nigeria to review their migration policies and practices. South Africa may introduce stricter immigration controls or deportation measures in response to public pressure to address concerns about job competition and social tensions. Meanwhile, Nigeria may reassess its citizens' safety and welfare in South Africa and explore measures to protect Nigerian nationals living abroad.

iv. **Regional Stability**: Xenophobic violence undermines regional stability and integration efforts within Africa. It erodes trust and solidarity among African nations and impedes progress towards the African Union's goal of achieving political and economic integration. The recurrence of xenophobic attacks in South Africa highlights broader challenges related to intra-African migration, social cohesion, and the promotion of Pan-Africanism.

v. **Cultural Relations:** Xenophobic violence strains cultural relations between South Africa and Nigeria and undermines efforts to foster cultural exchange and understanding. Negative stereotypes and prejudices perpetuated by xenophobic attitudes hinder cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation between the two nations. Addressing xenophobia is essential for promoting tolerance, diversity, and mutual respect within African societies.

**The Roles of both Governments in Mitigating Xenophobic Violence and Fostering Constructive Engagement between South Africa and Nigeria**

Both the South African and Nigerian governments have taken various measures to mitigate xenophobic violence and foster constructive engagement between the two countries. Here are some of the key roles they have played:

**South African Government:**

i. **Law Enforcement:** The South African government has deployed law enforcement agencies to quell outbreaks of xenophobic violence and maintain public order. Police presence in affected areas helps to prevent further attacks and apprehend perpetrators.

ii. **Public Condemnation:** South African officials, including the president and other government leaders, have publicly condemned xenophobic attacks and reiterated the country's commitment to promoting tolerance and inclusivity. Public statements denouncing violence send a clear message that xenophobia is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

iii. **Diplomatic Engagement**: The South African government has engaged in diplomatic dialogue with Nigerian counterparts to address concerns and grievances related to xenophobic violence. Diplomatic channels provide a platform for resolving disputes, sharing information, and coordinating joint efforts to tackle xenophobia.

iv. **Community Outreach:** Government agencies and non-governmental organizations in South Africa conduct community outreach programs to raise awareness about the dangers of xenophobia and promote intercultural understanding. These initiatives aim to foster dialogue, empathy, and solidarity among diverse communities.

v. **Legal Framework:** The South African government has reviewed and strengthened its legal framework to address hate crimes, discrimination, and xenophobia. Legislative measures may include enacting or amending laws to provide better protection for migrants' rights and punish perpetrators of xenophobic violence.

**Nigerian Government:**

i. **Diplomatic Protest**: The Nigerian government has lodged diplomatic protests with South African authorities in response to xenophobic attacks on Nigerian nationals and other foreigners. Diplomatic channels provide a means for Nigeria to express its concerns and demand accountability from the South African government.

ii. **Evacuation Assistance**: In cases of imminent danger or threat to Nigerian citizens living in South Africa, the Nigerian government has facilitated the evacuation of its citizens back to Nigeria. Evacuation efforts aim to ensure the safety and well-being of Nigerian nationals affected by xenophobic violence.

iii. **Public Awareness:** Nigerian government officials and media outlets raise public awareness about the dangers of xenophobia and the importance of promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Public education campaigns help to counteract negative stereotypes and prejudices against foreigners.

iv. **Bilateral Cooperation:** The Nigerian government engages in bilateral discussions with South Africa to address underlying issues contributing to xenophobic violence and enhance cooperation on migration, security, and economic matters. Bilateral cooperation fosters mutual understanding and joint efforts to tackle shared challenges.

v. **Humanitarian Support:** Nigeria provides humanitarian support to its citizens affected by xenophobic violence in South Africa, including assistance with repatriation, medical care, and reintegration. Humanitarian aid helps alleviate the immediate impact of xenophobic attacks on affected individuals and families.

Overall, both the South African and Nigerian governments play crucial roles in mitigating xenophobic violence and fostering constructive engagement between the two countries. By addressing the root causes of xenophobia and promoting dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect, they can work towards building a more inclusive and harmonious relationship.

**Theoretical Explication**

The theoretical framework of analysis adopted in this study is the Frustration-Aggression (F-A) Theory. The Frustration-Aggression (F-A) Theory, is a seminal theory in Psychology which has been used several times in other fields of study including clinical and social psychology, ethnology, sociology, criminology, and medical research to explain aggressive human behaviour. Central to the Frustration-Aggression theory is the tenet that there is a causal relationship between frustration and aggression. This conviction of a nexus between frustration and aggression was first held by a group of Yale University psychologists-John Dollard, Leonard W. Doob, Neal E. Miller, Orval H. Mowrer and, Robert R Sears in their co-authored monograph: Frustration and Aggression (1939).

The Frustration-Aggression Theory is relevant and found very useful in explaining and analyzing the aggressive behaviour of South African xenophobes towards African immigrants. In post-apartheid South Africa, the Frustration-Aggression Theory makes us understand that the spike in anti-foreigner violence is as a result of the frustration of unemployed and impoverished locals. Since the goal of being gainfully employed to meet basic human needs and lead a decent life has been hampered over time, the locals have taken out their frustration aggressively on African immigrants whom they

claim are getting the jobs that are in short supply in resource- endowed South Africa. Another major source of frustration for the South Africans has been the notion that foreigners bring in different kinds of contagious diseases into South Africa and pass them onto locals. Consequently, this frustration has resulted in the aggressive behaviour of South Africans towards foreign nationals living and doing business in South Africa.

**Summary**

In response to the recurring issue of xenophobic violence, both the South African and Nigerian governments have undertaken multifaceted approaches to mitigate tensions and promote constructive engagement between the two nations. The South African government has implemented a range of measures to address xenophobic violence within its borders. Law enforcement agencies have been deployed to affected areas to maintain public order and prevent further outbreaks of violence. Additionally, South African leaders, including the president and other government officials, have publicly condemned xenophobic attacks, sending a clear message that such behaviour is unacceptable and will be met with appropriate action.

Moreover, the South African government has engaged in diplomatic dialogue with Nigerian counterparts to address concerns and grievances related to xenophobic violence. Through diplomatic channels, both countries have sought to share information, coordinate responses, and strengthen cooperation on migration, security, and economic matters. These diplomatic efforts are crucial for fostering mutual understanding and resolving disputes between the two nations.

Furthermore, Nigeria has conducted public awareness campaigns to educate its citizens about the dangers of xenophobia and promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence. By raising public awareness and countering negative stereotypes and prejudices, these efforts contribute to building a more inclusive and harmonious society. In summary, the South African and Nigerian governments have played crucial roles in addressing xenophobic violence and fostering constructive engagement between the two countries. Through a combination of law enforcement measures, diplomatic dialogue, community outreach, and public awareness campaigns, both nations are working towards building a relationship based on mutual respect, cooperation, and shared prosperity.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the issue of xenophobic violence in South Africa has had far-reaching implications for the relationship between South Africa and Nigeria. Both governments have recognized the seriousness of the problem and have taken proactive steps to address it. South Africa has deployed law enforcement, condemned attacks publicly, engaged in diplomatic dialogue, conducted community outreach, and strengthened its legal framework. Similarly, Nigeria has lodged diplomatic protests, facilitated evacuations when necessary, raised public awareness, engaged in bilateral cooperation, and provided humanitarian support to affected citizens.

However, despite these efforts, xenophobic violence remains a recurring challenge, underscoring the need for sustained and collaborative action. The root causes of xenophobia, including economic inequality, historical injustices, and political rhetoric, must be addressed comprehensively. Additionally, fostering a culture of tolerance, inclusivity, and mutual respect requires concerted efforts from governments, civil society, and the broader community.

Moving forward, both South Africa and Nigeria must remain committed to promoting dialogue, cooperation, and understanding. By addressing the underlying drivers of xenophobia, strengthening diplomatic relations, and investing in social cohesion initiatives, they can work towards building a future where all individuals, regardless of nationality or background, can live and thrive in safety and dignity. The challenges posed by xenophobic violence are significant, but by standing together and upholding the principles of unity and solidarity, South Africa and Nigeria can overcome them and forge a path towards a more peaceful and prosperous future for all.

**Recommendations**

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations are outlined:
1. **Strengthen Law Enforcement**: Enhance law enforcement efforts to prevent and respond to xenophobic violence effectively. This includes improving police training on handling hate crimes,

establishing specialized units to address xenophobic incidents, and ensuring swift and impartial justice for perpetrators.

2. **Promote Dialogue and Diplomacy:** Foster sustained diplomatic dialogue and cooperation between South Africa and Nigeria to address underlying grievances and strengthen bilateral relations. Regular high-level meetings, joint initiatives, and diplomatic exchanges can help build trust and understanding between the two countries.

3. **Invest in Education and Awareness:** Increase public awareness and education campaigns to challenge stereotypes, promote tolerance, and celebrate diversity. Educational initiatives in schools, communities, and media platforms can help counteract xenophobic attitudes and foster a culture of acceptance and inclusivity.

4. **Address Socio-Economic Inequality**: Tackle the root causes of xenophobia by addressing socio-economic inequalities and promoting inclusive economic growth. Implement policies to reduce poverty, unemployment, and inequality, ensuring that all individuals have equal access to opportunities and resources regardless of nationality.

5. **Support Integration and Social Cohesion:** Invest in programs that facilitate the integration of migrants and refugees into host communities, promoting social cohesion and mutual understanding. Initiatives such as language classes, cultural exchange programs, and community-building activities can help bridge divides and foster a sense of belonging for all.

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**PORT HARCOURT JOURNAL OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT** *(ISSN: 2992-2836)*
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