JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT

ISSN: 3093-0618

Vol. 2, No. 1, March, 2026

A Publication from the Department of Philosophy
University of Uyo, Nigeria

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Printed By: **Omega Books**
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria
07032878735

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Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: January 29, 2026 **Accepted**: March 05, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Saleh, Bailey (2026). "Empirical Comparative Analysis of European Union Export of Goods and Services with Brics Export of Goods and Services, 2018-2024." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 1-8.

Article **Open Access**

EMPIRICAL COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EUROPEAN UNION EXPORT OF GOODS AND SERVICES WITH BRICS EXPORT OF GOODS AND SERVICES, 2018-2024

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Abstract
The aim of the study was to make empirical comparative analysis of European Union (EU) Export of goods and services with the BRICS between 2018 and 2024. The European Union (EU) has been dominant in terms of global export of goods and services to other countries since its establishment in 2009. However, the EU of recent, is increasingly facing a stiff challenge from the newly formed BRICS - an acronym, derived from the names of the early members, viz: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The study is a qualitative one that relied on secondary sources such as academic journals, bulletins, textbooks, scholarly papers, and internet materials for analysis. The generated data was analyzed through critical discourse method. Though the BRICS is putting up a strong performance in the area of global export of goods and services, the EU still has a comparative advantage over it. The study established that the EU has outperformed the BRICS in the exports of goods and services. For a more balanced competition, the BRICS should upscale its manufacturing and industrial sectors for the manufacture of more goods and services for exports.

Keywords: European Union, BRICS, Empirical Analysis, Goods and Services.

JEL Classification: N10, N60, O57, P16, P33.

Introduction

The European Union (EU) came into existence in 2009; to replace the defunct European Economic Community (EEC). The EU in collaboration with its traditional allies (US & Canada) have dominated global economic events for the past two hundred years. This, they did during slavery, imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism; and up to date (2025) through globalization. The enormous wealth accumulated by the EU, set the pace for sustainable economic and general development of EU member countries. Plundered human and natural resources from third world colonies, serve as the main triggers of their industrial revolution that placed the European Union at a very advantageous economic and political position over other economic blocs (BRICS inclusive) and regions of the world (Galor, 2009). As traditional forms of exploitations (slavery and colonialism) were forcefully phased out, some assertive third world countries leverage on their new found freedoms to chart a way forward for economic independence. Such third world countries like India, Brazil, Turkey, Singapore, and Indonesia and others embarked on so many policies/measures to free themselves from the shackles and traps of Western exploiters. They abandoned dependence on western products and intellectual thinking, and adopted indigenous techniques and technologies that hinged heavily on cultural civilization. They also embarked on the humble understudy of Western technologies, where they started developing their own generic versions. Such understudying and technology acquisition made some of them to develop to the extent of becoming parallel powers to the West and more specifically the EU (Iqbal, 2022; Cervellati, et-al, 2023). However, the EU which still maintains its lead in the export of goods and services, suddenly discovered that five countries of the global south, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa have not only formed a rival trans-regional economic bloc known as BRICS; but are seriously levelling-up in the area of exports of goods and services. With transparent goal, and the current clamor by more countries to join the BRICS, it should broaden its horizon of economic stride to include aggressive agricultural production for robust export of goods and services (Shameem, & Jayaprasad, 2020; Ciuriak, 2023).

Theoretical Frameworks

The comparative advantage theory and the new general economic development theory have been adopted and utilized as frameworks for the study as outlined and treated below:

Comparative Advantage Theory

The study adopted the comparative advantage theory (CAT) as one of the frameworks for the analysis. The comparative advantage theory posits that comparative advantage relates to how much productive and cost-efficient a country is over another country in the harnessing of vital resources in the production of finished goods and services for domestic consumptions and for exports. The EU countries leverage on this by specializing in production of goods where they have lower opportunity costs. Hence this theory was adopted as a theoretical framework (Alting, 1978; Dunning, 198, 1988, 2001).

New General Economic Development Theory

The theory adopted as one of the frameworks for the study is the New General Economic Development Theory (NGEDT). The NGEDT tends to lean more on the role of corporations, markets and government as the key catalyst for economic development. The trust of the NGEDT is on the pivotal role of government in harnessing surplus labour for greater productivity that will lead to the creation of wealth and of enhancing general economic development (Lee, 2020). This tends to agree with the views of Lewis on the utility of labour in productivity. Members of the BRICS are leveraging on abundant and cheap labor in their individual domestic economies to increase productive activities in their industrial and manufacturing sectors. Hence, this theory (NGEDT) was also adopted and utilized as a framework for the study (Lewis, 1954; Geoffrey, et-al, 2011; Lee, 2020; Diodato, et-al, 2022).

Methodology

The study adopted qualitative method in generating data, and so relied on secondary resources to analyse European Union Export of Goods and Services and BRICS Export of Goods and Services between 2018-2024 using descriptive and explanatory methods. Documents scrutinized to generate data for the study include: UNCTAD-Annual Reports, World Bank Open Data on Exports and BRICS-Joint Statistical Publications. Other documents scrutinized include: published materials such as textbooks, academic journals, scholarly papers, and internet materials. The generated narrative data was analyzed through critical discourse method. Numerical data obtained from verifiable sources such as World Bank Open Data on Exports, UNCTAD-Annual Reports and BRICS-Joint Statistical Publications, were computed for the period of the study by the researcher and presented in tabular and graphical forms. The generation and computation of statistical data from these verifiable sources which are expertly handled, goes to guarantee its validity. The critical discourse analysis utilized descriptive and explanatory method by drawing inference from the data.

Results and Discussion

Results from data generated mainly from secondary sources through document studies on Exports of Goods and Services, BRICS and EU are as presented and discussed in succeeding paragraphs:

European Union Export of Goods and Services, 2018-2024

In spite of the emerging BRICS superior performances in most sectors of the global economy, the European Union (EU) has been holding unto its past relics in the area of export of goods and services. The Group's total exports of goods and service for the period covered by the study stand at $43,439,170.0tr, which represents 23% of the world total exports of goods and services ($191,030,000.0tr). Germany leads the EU with $11,121,492.0tr representing 25.6% of the Group's total exports of goods and services; but representing 5.8% of the world total. Netherlands is second with $5,770,946.0tr (13%). Italy is third with $4,212,399.0tr (9.7%) and France is fourth with $4,088,661.0tr (9.4%). The rest are: Belgium with $3,419,222.0tr (7.89%) is 5th; UK with $3,402,148.0tr (7.8%) is 6th; Spain with $2,631,241.0tr (6.1%) is 7th; Switzerland with $2,591,518.0tr (6%) is 8th, Austria with $1,386,022.0.0tr (3.2%) is 9th; Ireland with $1,363,254.0tr (3.1%) is 10th; Sweden with $1,261,367.0tr (2.9%) is 11th; Denmark with $850,267.0tr (2%) is 12th; Finland with $544,251.0bn (1.3%) is 13th; Portugal with $524,027.0bn (1.2%) is 14th; Greece with $272,354.0bn (0.6%) is 15th and Luxembourg $114,281.0bn (0.3%) is 16th. The EU cumulative country average (EUCCA) stands at $2,714,948.13.0tr, while, the EU cumulative annual average (EUCAA) stands at $6,205,595.0tr (Putri, & Santoso, 2023; World Bank, Open Data on World Exports, 2025; Javeria, & Ashok, 2020; UNCTAD-AR, 2025). This is as presented in Table 1 and Figures 1:

Table 1: EU Cumulative Export of Goods and Services, 2018-2024 ($tr)

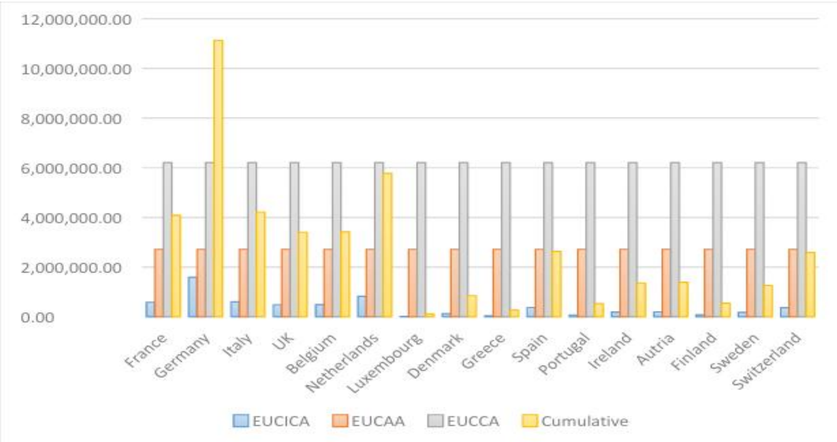
S/N.	Countries	EUCICA	EUCCA	EUCAA	Cumulative
	EU Exports				
1.	France	584,094.4	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	4,088,661.0
2.	Germany	1,588,784.6	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	11,121,492.0
3.	Italy	604,771.3	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	4,212,399.0
4.	UK	486,021.0	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	3,402,148.0

5.	Belgium	488,460.3	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	3,419,222.0
6.	Netherlands	824,420.9	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	5,770,946.0
7.	Luxembourg	16,325.9	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	114,281.0
8.	Denmark	121,466.7	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	850,267.0
9.	Greece	38,907.7	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	272,354.0
10.	Spain	375,891.6	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	2,631,241.0
11.	Portugal	74,861.0	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	524,027.0
12.	Ireland	194,717.4	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	1,363,254.0
13.	Austria	198,003.1	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	1,386,022.0
14.	Finland	77,750.1	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	544,251.0
15.	Sweden	180,195.3	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	1,261,367.0
16.	Switzerland	370,216.9	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	2,591,518.0
	EU Total	**6,205,595.0**	**43,439,170.0**	**43,439,170.0**	**43,439,170.0**
	World Total	**191,030,000.0**			

Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from BRICS-JSP, 2025; UNCTAD-AR, 2025; World Bank Open Data on World Exports, 2025

Key: EUCICA – EU Cumulative Individual Country Average; **EUCCA** – EU Cumulative Country Average; **EUCAA** – EU Cumulative Annual Average.

Fig. 1: Cumulative Export of Goods and Services of the European Union, 2018-2024 ($tr)



Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from BRICS-JSP, 2025; UNCTAD-AR, 2025; World Bank Open Data on World Exports, 2025.

Cumulative BRICS Export of Goods and Services, 2018-2024

The rapid increase in industrialization and manufacturing productions among the BRICS nations, made them to be the most preferred global favorable destinations (PGFDs) for raw materials, FDI and human capitals in the world. For the period of the study, the performance of the BRICS in the area of export of goods and services stand at $20,104,804,0tr (10% of the world total export of goods and services which stand at $191,030,000.0tr). China leads the group with $10,935,270.0tr, (54%), Russia is placed second with $3,484,846.0tr (17%); India with $2,821,407.0tr (15%) is placed third; Brazil is in the fourth position with $2,090,861.0tr (10%). and South Africa is placed fifth with $772,417.0tr (4%). Though the BRICS members are greatest performers in the areas of manufacturing and direct domestic investment (DDI), they need to push hard in the area of export of goods and services to complement their domestic strides (World Bank Open Data, 2025). However, the BRICS Cumulative Annual Average (BCAA) of $2,872,114,.43tr and the BRICS Cumulative Country Average (BCCA) of $4,020,960.2tr, represents 10% and 20% of BRICS's total cumulative Exports for the same period. The BRICS total Individual country Annual Average (BCICAA) stands at

$2,872,115.40tr. In view of this low performance, the BRICS should buckle-up in order to compete favorably with EU in the area of global export of goods and services in the years ahead (Reppas & Christopoulos, 2005; Panta & Dhruba, 2022; UNCTAD-WIR, 2024; BRICS-JSP, 2025; World Bank Open Data, 2025). This is as presented in Table 2 and Figure 2:

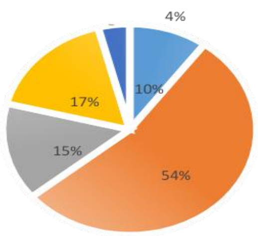
Table 2: Cumulative BRICS Export of Goods and Services, 2018-2024 ($tr)

S/N	Countries	Cumulative	BCAA	BCCA	BCICA
1.	Brazil	2,090,861.0	2,872,114,.43	4,020,960.2	298,694.42
2.	Russia	3,484,846.0	2,872,114,.43	4,020,960.2	497,835.14
3.	India	2,821,407.0	2,872,114,.43	4,020,960.2	403,058.14
4.	China	10,935,270.0	2,872,114,.43	4,020,960.2	1,562,181.42
5.	South Africa	772,417.0	2,872,114,.43	4,020,960.2	110,345.29
	BRICS	**20,104,804.0**	**14,360,572.15**	**20,104,804.0**	**2,872,115.40**
	World	**191,030,000.0**	**27,290,000.0**	**27,290,000.0**	**27,290,000.0**

Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from UNCTAD-AR, 2025; BRICS-JSP, 2025; World Bank Open Data, 2025.

Key: BCAA – BRICS Cumulative Annual Average; **BCCA –** BRICS Cumulative Country Average; **BCICA –** BRICS Cumulative Individual Country Average.

Fig. 2: Cumulative Averages of BRICS Export of Goods and Services, 2018-2024 (%)



Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from UNCTAD-AR, 2025; BRICS-JSP, 2025; World Bank Open Data, 2025.

European Union Export of Goods and Services Compared with BRICS Exports of Goods and Services, 2018-2024

The EU with cumulative total exports of goods and services stands at $43,439,170.0tr, (representing 23% of the world total). It outperformed the BRICS whose cumulative total export of goods and services stand at $20,104,804.0 tr, which represents 10% of the world total export of goods and services which stands at $191,030,000.0tr. The individual country-by-country comparison of the leaders of the two trans-regional economic blocs shows that Germany (EU leader) with $11,121,492.00tr representing 5.82% of the world total, has slightly outperformed China (BRICS leader) who's total export of goods and services stands at $10,935,270.0tr representing 5.72% of the world total. Germany has outperformed China by 0.10%. As such, China has to upscale its manufacturing and industrial sectors to further boost its export of goods and services (Putri, & Santoso, 2023; UNCTAD-WIR, 2025). The second level of comparison shows Russia as the second highest performer of BRICS with $3,484,846.0tr (1.82% of world total); has been outperformed by the Netherlands by 60.4% (Autor, Dorn & Hanson, 2021; World Bank Open Data, 2025; BRICS-JSP, 2025; Istaiteyeh, Najem & Saqfalhait, 2023). This is as presented in Table 3:

Table 3: Cumulative Exports of BRICS Compared with EU Export of Goods and Services, 2018-2024 ($tr)

S/N.	Countries	CICA	CCA	CAA	Cumulative
	EU Exports				
1.	France	584,094.4	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	4,088,661.0
2.	Germany	1,588,784.6	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	11,121,492.0
3.	Italy	604,771.3	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	4,212,399.0
4.	UK	486,021.0	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	3,402,148.0
5.	Belgium	488,460.3	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	3,419,222.0
6.	Netherlands	824,420.9	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	5,770,946.0
7.	Luxembourg	16,325.9	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	114,281.0
8.	Denmark	121,466.7	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	850,267.0
9.	Greece	38,907.7	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	272,354.0
10.	Spain	375,891.6	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	2,631,241.0
11.	Portugal	74,861.0	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	524,027.0
12.	Ireland	194,717.4	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	1,363,254.0
13.	Austria	198,003.1	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	1,386,022.0
14.	Finland	77,750.1	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	544,251.0
15.	Sweden	180,195.3	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	1,261,367.0
16.	Switzerland	370,216.9	6,205,595.0	2,714,948.0	2,591,518.0
	BRICS Exports	**6,205,595.0**	**43,439,170.0**	**43,439,170.0**	**43,439,170.0**
1.	Brazil	298,694.42	4,020,960.2	2,872,114,.43	2,090,861.0
2.	Russia	497,835.14	4,020,960.2	2,872,114,.43	3,484,846.0
3.	India	403,058.14	4,020,960.2	2,872,114,.43	2,821,407.0
4.	China	1,562,181.42	4,020,960.2	2,872,114,.43	10,935,270.0
5.	South Africa	110,345.29	4,020,960.2	2,872,114,.43	772,417.0
	BRICS Total	**2,872,115.40**	**20,104,804.0**	**14,360,572.15**	**20,104,804.0**

Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from UNCTAD-AR, 2024; World Bank Group, 2025.

Key: CICA – Cumulative Individual Country Average; **CCA** – Cumulative Country Average; CAA – Cumulative Annual Average

Conclusion/Recommendations

From the analysis so far, the empirical data generated from verifiable sources such as the World Bank Open Data on World Exports, UNCTAD Annual Reports on Exports and BRICS-JSP on Exports; which were computed by the researcher, for the study have established that the EU with cumulative total export of goods and services of $43,439,170.0tr, representing 23% of world export of goods services. This outperformed the BRICS whose total export of goods and services stand at $20,104,804,0tr, representing 10% of world total. This shows that the EU has outperformed the BRICS by 216% in global export of goods and services. Conclusion can be drawn that the BRICS has slightly performed sub-optimally in the global export of goods and services compared to the EU. From this conclusion, the BRICS countries should direct more attention on upscaling their manufacturing and industrial sectors for more production of goods and services for global export. This will make them compete favourably in an increasingly competitive global market; and at the threshold of being leaders in the World exports sector for the rest of the 21st Century.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: February 04, 2026 **Accepted**: March 20, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Owodiong-Idemeko, Ide O. (2026). "Leading During Crisis: Leadership Imperatives and Human Resource Development Lessons from the Covid-19 Pandemic." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 9-14.

Article **Open Access**

LEADING DURING CRISIS: LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVES AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT LESSONS FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract
The Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) constituted one of the most profound leadership and Human Resource Development (HRD) challenges of the modern era. Beyond its public health implications, the pandemic exposed deep structural vulnerabilities in organizations while simultaneously accelerating transformations in work, leadership, and skill formation. This article develops a theoretically grounded and practice-informed analysis of crisis leadership during COVID-19, integrating sensemaking theory, adaptive leadership, and complexity leadership perspectives. Adopting a conceptual and reflective scholarship methodology, the paper synthesized contemporary crisis leadership literature with practitioner insights drawn from the pandemic experience. It advanced four core leadership imperatives - acting with urgency, responding productively, communicating transparently, and updating constantly - as dynamic capabilities essential for organizational resilience. The article further argued that crises function as developmental inflection points for HRD, creating a "burning platform" for accelerated learning, digital transformation, and workforce reskilling. By linking crisis leadership theory to HRD outcomes, the paper contributed to Human Resource Development policy and strategy by offering an integrative framework that informs leadership development, organizational learning, and post-crisis renewal.

Keywords: Crisis leadership, Human Resource Development, COVID-19 Pandemic, Leadership Imperatives.

Introduction

The Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and primarily, results in mild to moderate respiratory illness, but can lead to severe complications, especially in older adults and individuals with underlying health conditions. The pandemic represents an inflection point in the study and practice of leadership and Human Resource Development (HRD). Rarely has a single event simultaneously disrupted public health systems, labor markets, organizational routines, and social institutions on a global scale. For leaders and HRD professionals, the pandemic created conditions of radical uncertainty in which established plans, competencies, and assumptions rapidly became obsolete. Leadership research has long emphasized that crises are not merely operational breakdowns but socially constructed events that test meaning, trust, and authority (Boin et al., 2013). During COVID-19, employees, citizens, and stakeholders turned to leaders not only for solutions but for interpretation, seeking answers to fundamental questions about safety, continuity, and the future of work. These dynamics place crisis leadership squarely within the domain of HRD, where learning, adaptation, and capability-building are central concerns. This article reconceptualizes leadership during COVID-19 as a developmental challenge rather than a temporary disruption. It argues that crisis leadership effectiveness is rooted in leaders' ability to enable collective sensemaking, adaptive responses, and learning within complex systems. By strengthening the theoretical framing and explicitly situating the discussion within HRD scholarship, the paper extends existing crisis leadership literature and responds to calls for integrative, theory-informed contributions in *Human Resource discourse*.

Theoretical Foundations for Crisis Leadership

Sensemaking Theory and Crisis Leadership: Sensemaking theory posits that individuals and groups construct meaning retrospectively to navigate ambiguity and uncertainty (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). Crises disrupt taken-for-granted assumptions, triggering a collapse of meaning that requires active interpretation and narrative reconstruction. Leadership during crises, therefore, is fundamentally about shaping sensemaking processes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders who provided coherent narratives—acknowledging uncertainty while articulating purpose and direction—helped stabilize organizational sensemaking. Transparent communication, frequent updates, and visible decision rationales reduced anxiety and enabled coordinated action. From an HRD perspective, sensemaking is inseparable from learning, as employees reinterpret roles, identities, and competencies in response to changing realities.

Adaptive Leadership: Adaptive leadership theory distinguishes between technical problems, which can be solved using existing expertise, and adaptive challenges, which require new learning and behavioral change (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009). COVID-19 was predominantly an adaptive challenge. No established playbook existed, and leaders were required to mobilize learning across organizational levels. Adaptive leadership during the pandemic involved experimentation, rapid feedback, and tolerance for error. Leaders who framed the crisis as a shared learning problem—rather than a command-and-control exercise—enabled employees to contribute ideas and innovations. For HRD, this underscores the importance of fostering learning agility, psychological safety, and reflective practice as core leadership competencies.

Complexity Leadership Theory: Complexity leadership theory views organizations as complex adaptive systems characterized by nonlinearity, emergence, and interdependence

(Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). In such systems, leadership is not confined to formal authority but emerges through interactions that enable adaptation and innovation. The COVID-19 crisis amplified system complexity, as health risks, technological shifts, and human factors interacted unpredictably. Effective leaders facilitated adaptive dynamics by enabling collaboration, decentralizing decision-making, and supporting emergent solutions. HRD plays a critical role in such contexts by designing systems that enhance connectivity, learning, and adaptive capacity across the organization.

Methodology

This article adopts a conceptual and reflective scholarship methodology. Rather than reporting empirical data, the paper integrates established theory with reflective insights derived from leadership practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis draws on three primary data sources and analytical approach:

i. Peer-reviewed crisis leadership and HRD literature, particularly sensemaking, adaptive leadership, and complexity leadership frameworks.
ii. Scholarly and practitioner analyses of leadership during COVID-19 published between 2020 and 2023.
iii. Reflective practitioner insights derived from organizational leadership and HR practice during the pandemic.

These sources were synthesized using an integrative review approach, identifying recurring themes and mapping them onto HRD-relevant leadership capabilities. This approach aligns with conceptual scholarship standards that emphasize theory development, integration, and practical relevance.

Contributions to HRD Scholarship

This article contributes to human resource development scholarship in several important and interrelated ways. First, it advances crisis leadership as a core HRD concern, rather than a peripheral leadership topic. While crisis leadership has traditionally been examined within public administration, emergency management, and general leadership studies, this paper repositions it squarely within HRD by demonstrating that effective crisis leadership is fundamentally a learning, capability-building, and sensemaking challenge. In doing so, the article responds directly to longstanding calls in HRD literature for greater engagement with complex, real-world leadership problems. Second, the paper contributes theoretically by integrating sensemaking theory, adaptive leadership, and complexity leadership into a coherent HRD-relevant framework. Existing HRD research often draws on these theories in isolation. This article synthesizes them to show how leadership during crisis operates simultaneously at cognitive (sensemaking), behavioral (adaptive action), and systemic (complexity) levels. This integrative framing extends HRD theory by illuminating how learning and development processes unfold under extreme uncertainty and time pressure.

Third, the article enriches HRD scholarship by conceptualizing the four leadership imperatives—urgency, productive response, transparent communication, and constant updating—as dynamic developmental capabilities rather than static competencies. This reconceptualization challenges traditional competency-based leadership development models and aligns with emerging HRD perspectives that emphasize adaptability, learning agility, and continuous development. It suggests that HRD interventions should focus less on skill acquisition alone and more on cultivating leaders' capacity to learn in action. Fourth, the paper contributes to HRD practice-oriented theory by framing crises as developmental inflection points for individuals, leaders, and organizations. By introducing the notion of crisis as a “burning platform” for accelerated learning and reskilling, the article extends HRD discussions on organizational learning, workforce transformation, and digital capability development. This perspective positions HRD not merely as a support function during crises but as a strategic enabler of organizational resilience and post-crisis renewal. Finally, the article makes a methodological contribution by exemplifying conceptual and reflective scholarship as a legitimate and rigorous approach for advancing HRD theory. By systematically linking crisis leadership theory and practice insights from the COVID-19 context, the paper demonstrates how reflective analysis can generate transferable theoretical insights suitable for advancing both research and practice.

Core Leadership Imperatives During Crisis

The four leadership imperatives identified in this paper - acting with urgency, responding productively, communicating transparently, and updating constantly- should not be understood as discrete behaviors. Rather, they constitute an integrated and dynamic capability set that enables leaders to mobilize learning, coordination, and adaptation within crisis conditions. From an HRD perspective, these imperatives represent developable leadership capacities embedded in organizational learning systems rather than innate traits.

Acting with Urgency: Temporal Sensemaking and Decisive Learning

Acting with urgency during crisis is fundamentally a temporal sensemaking process. Crises collapse time horizons, forcing leaders to make consequential decisions without the benefit of complete information. Sensemaking theory suggests that early actions serve as cues that shape collective interpretations of threat, competence, and intent (Weick et al., 2005). In the COVID-19 context, leaders who acted decisively by instituting safety protocols, transitioning to remote work, or reconfiguring operations, provided employees with psychological anchors that reduced ambiguity. From an HRD standpoint, urgency is not synonymous with impulsiveness. Rather, it reflects the capacity for rapid learning cycles, where leaders test provisional actions, observe outcomes, and adjust accordingly. Organizations that had invested in leadership development emphasizing judgment under uncertainty and reflective practice were better positioned to balance speed with learning.

Responding Productively: Adaptive Capacity and Human Capital Mobilization

Responding productively refers to leaders’ ability to mobilize human, social, and cognitive resources toward problem-solving rather than blame avoidance. Adaptive leadership theory underscores that crises such as COVID-19 are not technical problems amenable to expert-driven solutions but adaptive challenges requiring collective learning (Heifetz et al., 2009). Productive responses during the pandemic were evident in organizations that empowered cross-functional teams, encouraged experimentation, and legitimized learning from failure. HRD systems played a critical enabling role by supporting rapid reskilling, redefining performance expectations, and fostering psychological safety. In this sense, productive response is inseparable from HRD’s mandate to cultivate learning-oriented cultures.

Communicating Transparently: Trust, Psychological Safety, and Learning

Transparent communication emerged as one of the most consequential leadership behaviors during COVID-19. Crises amplify information asymmetries and rumor propagation, making communication a central mechanism of sensemaking and trust-building. Leaders who communicated frequently, honestly, and empathetically enabled employees to align their interpretations with organizational realities. From an HRD perspective, transparent communication contributes directly to psychological safety, a condition necessary for learning and voice. By acknowledging uncertainty and explaining decision rationales, leaders modeled learning-oriented behavior and legitimized questioning and feedback. Conversely, inconsistent or opaque communication undermined trust and impeded adaptive learning.

Updating Constantly: Learning-in-Action and System Adaptation

Updating constantly reflects leaders' capacity for continuous learning and adaptation in complex systems. Complexity leadership theory emphasizes that in nonlinear environments, effective leadership requires iterative adjustment rather than static planning (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). During the pandemic, policies related to health, work design, and performance management required frequent revision as conditions evolved. For HRD, constant updating underscores the importance of feedback-rich systems, data-informed decision-making, and reflective learning practices. Leaders who treated policies and strategies as provisional hypotheses, subject to revision through learning, enabled organizations to remain agile and resilient.

Crisis as a Human Resource Development Opportunity

Crises function as developmental accelerators. COVID-19 forced organizations to confront skill gaps, leadership deficiencies, and outdated work systems. Rather than aiming to "return to normal," forward-looking leaders leveraged the crisis as a catalyst for transformation. The rapid shift to digital work exposed the urgency of reskilling and lifelong learning. HRD professionals were central to enabling this transition by designing virtual learning systems, supporting leaders in new work arrangements, and embedding reflective learning practices. In this sense, the pandemic transformed HRD from a support function into a strategic capability.

Implications for HRD Research and Practice

For HRD scholars, the pandemic underscores the need for research that integrates leadership theory with learning, development, and capability-building outcomes. Crisis contexts offer fertile ground for examining how sensemaking, adaptation, and complexity unfold in real time. For practitioners, the findings suggest that crisis leadership capabilities should be embedded systematically in leadership development, succession planning, and organizational learning architectures. HRD must move beyond static competency models toward cultivating adaptive, reflective, and system-aware leaders capable of operating under persistent uncertainty.

Propositions for Future Research

This conceptual article advances several propositions to guide future empirical and theory-building research in the area of crisis leadership as it relates to HRD:

i. **Proposition 1:** Leadership behaviors that enhance collective sensemaking during crises (e.g., transparent communication and frequent updating) are positively associated with employee learning orientation and psychological safety.
ii. **Proposition 2:** Adaptive leadership practices that emphasize experimentation and shared problem-solving during crises positively influence organizational resilience and post-crisis capability development.
iii. **Proposition 3:** HRD systems that support rapid learning cycles and reskilling moderate the relationship between crisis intensity and workforce performance outcomes.
iv. **Proposition 4**: Organizations that institutionalize post-crisis reflective learning processes are more likely to convert crisis experiences into sustained leadership and human capital advantages.

These propositions invite mixed-methods and longitudinal research designs capable of capturing dynamic leadership-learning interactions across crisis phases.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic reaffirmed that leadership effectiveness in crisis is inseparable from learning, adaptation, and meaning-making. By integrating sensemaking, adaptive leadership, and complexity leadership theories, this article positions crisis leadership as a core concern of human resource development. Crises, while disruptive, offer unparalleled opportunities for growth. Organizations that institutionalise learning from such moments will be better prepared for an increasingly uncertain future.

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Note: This was first delivered on Wednesday November 11, 2020 as a webinar on the Winning Edge Series. The original topic was “Leading During Crisis – The COVID-19 Challenge.”

JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: January 22, 2026 **Accepted**: February 18, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Pam, Davou D. (2026). "Political Leadership and the Crisis of Public Morality in Nigeria." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 15-24.

Article **Open Access**

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND THE CRISIS OF PUBLIC MORALITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
The persistence of corruption, ethical decline, and weak accountability in Nigeria underscores a deep-seated crisis of public morality closely linked to political leadership practices. Despite successive governance reforms and anti-corruption initiatives, unethical conduct among political elites remains pervasive, raising critical concerns about leadership responsibility and moral governance. The central problem addressed in this study is the failure of political leadership to uphold ethical standards necessary for democratic legitimacy and sustainable development in Nigeria. The main aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between political leadership and the crisis of public morality in Nigeria, with a focus on identifying the structural, institutional, and ethical factors that sustain moral decay in public governance. The study adopts a qualitative research method based on critical analysis of secondary data, including scholarly literature, policy documents, and empirical studies relevant to leadership, ethics, and governance in Nigeria. The findings reveal that moral failure in political leadership manifested through corruption, abuse of office, patronage politics, and institutional impunity has significantly weakened public trust, undermined rule of law, distorted development priorities, and contributed to socio-economic inequality. The study further finds that weak accountability institutions and cultural normalization of unethical behaviour reinforce this moral crisis, allowing unethical leadership practices to persist and reproduce across generations. Based on these findings, the paper recommends strengthening ethical leadership frameworks, reforming institutional accountability mechanisms, promoting civic and moral education, enhancing transparency through strategic communication, and institutionalizing merit-based governance. The study

concluded that sustainable governance and national development in Nigeria are unattainable without deliberate moral renewal in political leadership. Ethical leadership is therefore indispensable to restoring public morality, rebuilding democratic legitimacy, and achieving inclusive development.

Keywords: Political leadership, Public morality, Ethical governance, Corruption, Nigeria.

Introduction

Political leadership plays a central role in shaping the moral character, institutional credibility, and developmental trajectory of any nation. In Nigeria, the persistent crisis of public morality has become one of the most profound challenges confronting governance and democratic consolidation. Despite the country's abundant human and natural resources, Nigeria continues to experience widespread corruption, ethical decay in public institutions, erosion of civic responsibility, and declining public trust in political authority. Scholars increasingly argue that these challenges are not merely administrative or economic but fundamentally moral, rooted in leadership practices that normalize unethical behaviour and weaken collective moral consciousness (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021; Kure, 2020). Since independence in 1960, Nigeria's political history has been marked by alternating periods of military authoritarianism and civilian rule, each characterized by varying degrees of ethical compromise. While democratic transitions, particularly since 1999, were expected to usher in accountability, transparency, and moral renewal, the reality has been largely disappointing. Instead, corruption, patronage politics, abuse of public office, and elite impunity have persisted, suggesting a continuity of moral deficits across regimes rather than a rupture from past practices (Abada, 2025; Namo, Agwadu, & Amakoromo, 2024). This persistence indicates that Nigeria's leadership crisis is deeply embedded in structural and cultural frameworks that sustain moral dysfunction.

Public morality defined as the shared ethical standards guiding conduct in public life has suffered significant erosion in Nigeria. Acts such as bribery, nepotism, electoral malpractice, and diversion of public resources have increasingly become normalized within political and bureaucratic systems. As political leaders serve as moral exemplars, their actions significantly influence societal norms and expectations. When leadership consistently violates ethical standards without consequence, it fosters a culture of moral permissiveness and cynicism among citizens, undermining the legitimacy of the state and weakening democratic values (Akpa & Igah, 2019; Oghojafor, 2023). The crisis of public morality in Nigeria is further exacerbated by weak institutions and selective enforcement of laws. Oversight agencies, anti-corruption bodies, and the judiciary often lack the autonomy or political will required to hold powerful actors accountable. Constitutional provisions such as executive immunity have contributed to a governance environment where moral responsibility is diluted and ethical violations are rarely punished (Akpa & Igah, 2019). This institutional fragility reinforces perceptions that leadership is detached from moral obligation and public service ethos.

Beyond institutional factors, cultural and socio-economic dynamics also shape the moral landscape of Nigerian politics. Some scholars contend that traditional moral systems that once emphasized communal responsibility and ethical restraint have been weakened by modernization, economic hardship, and politicized ethnic loyalties (Atolagbe, 2018; Emina, 2017). In such contexts, political leadership often exploits identity politics and material deprivation to sustain power, further entrenching moral compromise and public disillusionment. Against this background, this paper examines the relationship between political leadership and the crisis of public morality in Nigeria. It seeks to analyze how leadership practices contribute to moral decay in public life, explore the structural and cultural drivers of ethical erosion, and assess the implications for governance and national development. By engaging relevant theoretical perspectives and empirical literature, the study contributes to ongoing debates on ethical leadership and offers pathways toward moral renewal and sustainable governance in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Conceptual clarification is essential in political and ethical studies in order to establish analytical precision and avoid ambiguity. This section clarifies the key concepts underpinning this study on political leadership, public morality, crisis, and ethical governance and situates them within relevant theoretical and empirical literature on Nigeria's political experience.

Political Leadership: Political leadership refers to the capacity and authority exercised by individuals or institutions entrusted with the responsibility of governing a political community. It involves decision-making, policy formulation, resource allocation, and the articulation of collective goals within a constitutional or political framework. Beyond technical competence, political leadership is inherently moral, as it requires the exercise of power in ways that promote justice, accountability, and the common good (Kure, 2020). In democratic societies, political leaders are expected to act as moral exemplars whose conduct shapes public values and institutional culture. In the Nigerian context, political leadership has often been characterized by personalization of power, patron-client relations, and elite dominance. Scholars argue that leadership failure in Nigeria is not simply a problem of capacity but of ethical orientation, where public office is frequently treated as a means of private accumulation rather than public service (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021; Abada, 2025). This ethical deficit has contributed to the erosion of trust in leadership and the weakening of moral authority in governance.

Public Morality: Public morality refers to the shared ethical norms, values, and standards that regulate behaviour in public life, particularly within political and administrative institutions. It encompasses principles such as honesty, transparency, fairness, respect for the rule of law, and accountability to citizens. Public morality differs from private morality in that it governs actions that affect collective welfare and public resources (Oghojafor, 2023). In Nigeria, public morality has been significantly compromised by systemic corruption and moral relativism. Practices such as bribery, nepotism, vote-buying, and embezzlement have become pervasive and, in some cases, socially tolerated. According to Emina (2017), this normalization of unethical conduct reflects a broader moral crisis in which ethical standards are selectively applied based on political power or social status. The decline of public morality weakens civic virtue and undermines citizens' confidence in democratic institutions.

Crisis

The term crisis denotes a condition of severe instability, breakdown, or dysfunction that threatens the normal functioning of a system. In relation to public morality, a crisis exists when unethical behaviour becomes institutionalized and moral standards lose their regulatory power over political conduct. Such a crisis is not episodic but structural, reflecting long-term deterioration in ethical norms and accountability mechanisms (Namo, Agwadu, & Amakoromo, 2024). Nigeria's moral crisis is evident in the persistence of corruption despite numerous reforms, commissions, and anti-graft agencies. The failure of these mechanisms suggests that the problem extends beyond policy inadequacies to deep-seated moral and cultural contradictions within the political system (Akpa & Igah, 2019). The crisis of public morality therefore represents a systemic challenge that undermines governance legitimacy and social cohesion.

Ethical Governance: Ethical governance refers to the practice of governing in accordance with moral principles that prioritize public interest, human dignity, transparency, and accountability. It emphasizes adherence to ethical codes, respect for constitutionalism, and responsiveness to citizens' needs. Ethical governance is widely regarded as a prerequisite for sustainable development and democratic stability (Kure, 2020). In Nigeria, ethical governance remains aspirational rather than operational. While formal ethical frameworks and anti-corruption policies exist, their implementation is often undermined by political interference and weak enforcement. Scholars have argued that ethical governance cannot thrive in the absence of ethical leadership, as leaders play a critical role in setting standards, enforcing norms, and shaping institutional behaviour (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021; Dike, 2025). The disconnect between ethical ideals and political practice has thus perpetuated the moral crisis in Nigeria's public sector.

Leadership and Moral Responsibility

Moral responsibility in leadership entails the obligation of political actors to act in ways that uphold ethical standards and protect public trust. This responsibility extends beyond legal compliance to include moral judgment, integrity, and accountability. Ethical leadership theory posits that leaders who consistently demonstrate moral behaviour influence followers and institutions positively, fostering ethical climates within organizations and society (Kure, 2020). In Nigeria, the failure of political leaders to accept moral responsibility for governance outcomes has contributed to public cynicism and democratic disillusionment. The absence of consequences for ethical violations reinforces a culture of impunity, weakening moral restraint in public life (Abada, 2025). As such, clarifying the moral dimension of leadership is crucial to understanding the persistence of Nigeria's public morality crisis.

Manifestations of Moral Crisis in Leadership

i. **Corruption and Abuse of Office:** Corruption remains a defining feature of political leadership in Nigeria. Political elites regularly misuse public office for personal enrichment, undermining the state's moral authority and public trust. The constitutional provision for immunity against prosecution of political office holders has insulated misconduct from accountability, further reinforcing impunity (Akpa & Igah, 2019). Corruption in governance affects public services, derails development projects, and exacerbates socio-economic inequalities.

ii. **Institutional Weaknesses and Ethical Compliance:** Efforts to promote ethical behaviour are severely undermined by weak enforcement of laws and compromised oversight institutions. Anti-corruption agencies often face structural limitations in prosecuting high-profile offenders, reinforcing perceptions that leadership is beyond moral scrutiny (Abada, 2025). Failure of public sector ethics reforms has also been attributed to lack of institutional will and inadequate moral education among public servants (Oghojafor, 2023).

iii. **Cultural and Social Dimensions:** Some scholars contend that the moral crisis is not solely political, but also cultural (Emina, 2017; Atolagbe, 2018). The normalization of corrupt practices and patronage politics in everyday life reflects a broader moral ambivalence. Traditional moral systems and taboos that once regulated behaviour have been weakened in the modern political context, contributing to ethical erosion

(Atolagbe, 2018). Existential analyses also suggest that cultural practices unwittingly condone corrupt behaviour, shaping collective moral consciousness in ways that accommodate political dysfunction (Emina, 2017).

Theoretical Perspectives on Leadership and Morality

Understanding the crisis of public morality in Nigeria requires engagement with theoretical perspectives that explain the relationship between power, leadership behaviour, ethical decision-making, and societal values. This study draws on ethical leadership theory, Machiavellian political theory, social learning theory, and institutional theory to illuminate how leadership conduct shapes moral outcomes in governance.

i. **Ethical Leadership Theory (Michael E. Brown, Linda K. Trevino & David A Harrison, 2005):** Ethical leadership theory emphasizes the moral dimension of leadership, arguing that leadership effectiveness is inseparable from ethical conduct. Ethical leaders are characterized by integrity, fairness, accountability, and concern for the common good. They not only adhere to moral principles but actively promote ethical standards through decision-making, communication, and enforcement of norms (Kure, 2020). Within this framework, leaders are viewed as moral agents whose behaviour establishes ethical expectations for institutions and society at large. In the Nigerian context, ethical leadership theory helps explain how moral failure at the political elite level contributes to widespread ethical decay. When leaders engage in corruption, abuse of office, or manipulation of public institutions, they send implicit signals that unethical behaviour is acceptable or even rewarded. Scholars argued that the absence of ethical leadership in Nigeria has weakened public institutions and normalized moral compromise within governance structures (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021; Oghojafor, 2023). Ethical leadership theory therefore underscores the importance of moral exemplarity in restoring public trust and ethical governance.

ii. **Machiavellian Perspective on Political Leadership:** The Machiavellian perspective on leadership offers a contrasting lens, prioritizing power acquisition and retention over moral considerations. Drawing from Niccolò Machiavelli's political philosophy, this perspective suggests that leaders may legitimately suspend moral principles when pursuing political stability or personal survival. In practice, this approach often justifies deception, coercion, and manipulation as necessary tools of governance, arguing always that the ends justify the means. Several scholars have applied Machiavellian analysis to Nigerian politics, arguing that political leaders frequently separate morality from leadership practice, treating ethics as expendable in the struggle for power (Ejukwe & Nwinya, 2025; Emina, 2017). This theoretical orientation helps explain why electoral manipulation, patronage politics, and corruption persist despite public condemnation. The Machiavellian approach, while descriptively useful, exposes the moral deficit inherent in leadership practices that prioritize expediency over ethical responsibility, thereby deepening the crisis of public morality.

iii. **Social Learning Theory (Albert Bandura, 1977):** Social learning theory posits that individuals learn behaviours, values, and norms through observation and imitation of role models, particularly those in positions of authority. Applied to political leadership, the theory suggests that citizens and public officials model their behaviour after political leaders, consciously or unconsciously internalizing the norms demonstrated at the top of the political hierarchy (Namo, Agwadu, & Amakoromo, 2024). In Nigeria, the relevance of social learning theory is evident in the diffusion of corrupt practices across political and bureaucratic institutions. When political leaders engage in unethical conduct without consequence, such behaviour becomes normalized and replicated throughout the system. This process contributes to moral contagion, where unethical behaviour spreads across institutions and society, reinforcing a culture of impunity (Akpa & Igah, 2019). Social learning theory thus highlights the far-reaching moral implications of leadership behaviour beyond individual misconduct.

iv. **Human Dignity and Moral Responsibility Perspective:** Another important theoretical lens is the human dignity and moral responsibility perspective, which emphasizes that political leadership carries an ethical obligation to respect human worth and promote social justice. Leadership decisions that undermine public welfare, divert resources, or exacerbate inequality are viewed as violations of moral responsibility and human dignity (Kure, 2020). Within Nigeria's governance context, this perspective exposes how corruption and ethical neglect erode citizens' dignity by depriving them of basic services, security, and economic opportunity. The moral crisis in leadership thus transcends legal infractions and becomes a fundamental ethical failure with human consequences (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021). This framework reinforces the argument that leadership morality is central to sustainable development and democratic legitimacy. Collectively, these theoretical perspectives provide a multidimensional understanding of leadership and morality in Nigeria. Ethical leadership theory offers a normative framework for moral governance, while Machiavellian theory explains the pragmatic erosion of ethics in power struggles. Social learning theory illustrates how leadership behaviour shapes societal morality, and institutional theory reveals how systemic weaknesses perpetuate ethical failure. Together, they underscore that the crisis of public morality in Nigeria is both a leadership and structural problem, requiring moral renewal at the individual, institutional, and societal levels.

Impacts on Governance and Development

The crisis of public morality rooted in political leadership failure has far-reaching consequences for governance quality and national development in Nigeria. Ethical decay within leadership structures undermines institutional effectiveness, distorts policy outcomes, and weakens the social contract between the state and its citizens. Scholars widely agree that moral failure in leadership is not merely a normative concern but a critical structural obstacle to sustainable development and democratic stability (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021; Namo, Agwadu, & Amakoromo, 2024). Beyond these, this study reveals the following impacts:

i. **Erosion of Public Trust and Democratic Legitimacy:** One of the most significant impacts of moral crisis in political leadership is the erosion of public trust in government institutions. Trust is a foundational element of democratic governance, enabling citizen cooperation, compliance with laws, and participation in civic processes. In Nigeria, repeated incidents of corruption, electoral malpractice, and abuse of office have fostered widespread cynicism toward political leaders and public institutions (Oghojafor, 2023). When citizens perceive leaders as morally compromised, they are less likely to view political authority as legitimate, thereby weakening democratic accountability and civic engagement. The decline in public trust also affects electoral participation, as voters become disillusioned with democratic processes perceived to be manipulated or morally bankrupt. This disengagement undermines representative governance and creates opportunities for elite domination and authoritarian tendencies within democratic frameworks (Akpa & Igah, 2019).

ii. **Weak Institutional Performance and Policy Failure:** Moral deficits in political leadership significantly impair the performance of governance institutions. Corruption and unethical conduct distort policy priorities, leading to misallocation of public resources and ineffective implementation of development programmes. Funds intended for infrastructure, education, healthcare, and social welfare are often diverted for personal or political gain, resulting in poor service delivery and stalled development outcomes (Abada, 2025). Institutional inefficiency is further exacerbated by politicization of public offices and patronage systems that prioritize loyalty over competence. Such practices weaken bureaucratic professionalism and reduce the capacity of institutions to function independently and ethically. Scholars argue that governance systems characterized by moral compromise struggle to enforce regulations, coordinate development efforts, and respond effectively to citizens' needs (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021).

iii. **Economic Underdevelopment and Inequality:** The moral crisis in political leadership has direct economic consequences. Corruption increases the cost of doing business, discourages foreign and domestic investment, and reduces economic competitiveness. Nigeria's persistent governance challenges have been identified as key factors limiting economic diversification and inclusive growth (Namo et al., 2024). Public resources that could stimulate development are instead captured by political elites, deepening income inequality and regional disparities. Moreover, unethical leadership exacerbates poverty by undermining social welfare programmes and employment initiatives. When development policies are driven by political patronage rather than social need, marginalized populations suffer disproportionately. This reinforces cycles of deprivation and social exclusion, further destabilizing the socio-economic fabric of the nation (Kure, 2020).

Undermining Rule of Law and Accountability

The crisis of public morality also weakens the rule of law, a cornerstone of effective governance. Selective enforcement of laws and political interference in judicial processes undermine legal equality and accountability. In Nigeria, powerful political actors often evade prosecution for ethical and legal violations, reinforcing a culture of impunity (Akpa & Igah, 2019). This situation diminishes the deterrent effect of laws and emboldens further misconduct within political and bureaucratic institutions. Weak accountability mechanisms not only perpetuate corruption but also erode moral discipline within the public sector. Civil servants and lower-level officials are more likely to engage in unethical practices when leadership misconduct goes unpunished, creating a cascading effect across governance structures (Abada, 2025).

i. **Social Fragmentation and Insecurity:** Moral failure in leadership has also contributed to social fragmentation and insecurity in Nigeria. Perceived injustice, corruption, and exclusion fuel public resentment and grievances, which can manifest in social unrest, violent conflict, and criminal activity. Inadequate and unethical governance responses to socio-economic challenges have been linked to rising insecurity and loss of confidence in state authority (Namo et al., 2024). When citizens lose faith in the moral capacity of leadership to ensure justice and welfare, alternative loyalties such as ethnic, religious, or regional affiliations often take precedence over national identity. This weakens social cohesion and complicates governance efforts aimed at national integration and stability (Emina, 2017).

ii. **Stunted Development and Moral Reproduction:** Beyond immediate governance outcomes, the crisis of public morality has long-term developmental implications.

Through social learning processes, unethical leadership behaviour is reproduced across generations, shaping societal attitudes toward corruption and public service (Oghojafor, 2023). This moral reproduction perpetuates governance failure by embedding unethical norms into political culture and administrative practice. Sustainable development requires not only economic resources and technical expertise but also moral leadership committed to transparency, equity, and human dignity. Without addressing the ethical foundations of governance, development initiatives are unlikely to achieve lasting impact (Kure, 2020).

Pathways to Ethical Leadership and Moral Renewal

i. **Strengthening Institutions:** Enhancing the capacity and independence of accountability institutions—such as anti-corruption agencies, judiciary, and public service commissions—is vital. This requires legal reform to close loopholes that protect political elites and impede accountability.

ii. **Moral Education and Public Engagement:** Promoting ethical leadership must involve moral education at both institutional and societal levels. Civic education programs that emphasize integrity, transparency, and rule of law can help shift public expectations and empower citizens to demand ethical behaviour from leaders.

iii. **Strategic Communication and Transparency:** Effective communication strategies that promote transparency and public involvement in governance can foster a culture of accountability. Strategic communication efforts have been shown to enhance trust and promote ethical norms in Nigeria's governance landscape (Dike, 2025).

Conclusion

Crisis of public morality in Nigeria is deeply intertwined with political leadership failures. Ethical decay among political elites, coupled with structural weaknesses in governance institutions, has entrenched corruption and eroded public trust. Addressing this crisis requires concerted efforts to strengthen institutions, promote ethical norms, and foster a culture that values integrity and accountability. Without such reforms, Nigeria's democratic project and socio-economic progress will continue to be undermined by persistent moral and political dysfunction. The crisis of public morality in Nigeria is not inevitable. Through deliberate ethical leadership, institutional reform, civic engagement, and moral reorientation, Nigeria can rebuild public trust and strengthen democratic governance. Political leadership must move beyond rhetoric to embody moral responsibility, as ethical renewal remains indispensable to national development and democratic sustainability.

Recommendations

Addressing the crisis of public morality in Nigeria requires a multidimensional approach that targets leadership behaviour, institutional frameworks, and societal values simultaneously. Following the findings of the this study, the following recommendations are proposed to promote ethical political leadership and restore public morality in governance.

i. **Strengthening Ethical Leadership and Moral Accountability:** There is an urgent need to institutionalize ethical leadership as a core requirement for public office. Political leaders should be subjected to enforceable ethical standards that emphasize integrity, transparency, and service to the public good. Codes of conduct for public officials must go beyond symbolic declarations and be accompanied by clear sanctions for violations. Ethical leadership training should be mandatory for elected and appointed officials, focusing on moral responsibility, public service ethics, and democratic accountability (Kure, 2020; Oghojafor, 2023). Furthermore, leadership selection processes within political parties should prioritize character, competence, and ethical track records over patronage and financial influence. Political parties play a critical gatekeeping role and must be reformed to serve as incubators of ethical leadership rather than platforms for moral compromise (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021).

ii. **Reforming Legal and Institutional Accountability Mechanisms:** Effective moral governance cannot thrive without strong institutions. Nigeria must strengthen the independence and operational capacity of anti-corruption agencies, the judiciary, and legislative oversight bodies. Legal reforms should address constitutional and procedural loopholes that shield political office holders from accountability, including excessive immunity provisions that enable impunity (Akpa & Igah, 2019; Abada, 2025). Institutional transparency mechanisms such as open budgeting, public procurement monitoring, and asset declaration enforcement should be digitized and made accessible to the public. When institutions are transparent and autonomous, they create structural disincentives for unethical behaviour and reinforce moral discipline in leadership.

iii. **Promoting Civic Education and Moral Reorientation:** Moral renewal in governance must be complemented by societal transformation. Civic education programmes should be strengthened to promote ethical values, democratic norms, and active citizenship. Educational curricula at all levels should emphasize integrity, rule of law, and collective responsibility, thereby nurturing a morally conscious citizenry capable of holding leaders accountable (Atolagbe, 2018; Emina, 2017). Civil society organizations, faith-based institutions, and traditional authorities should also be mobilized as partners in moral reorientation. These institutions possess cultural legitimacy and can play a critical role in reshaping social norms that currently tolerate or rationalize unethical leadership practices.

iv. **Enhancing Transparency Through Strategic Communication:** Strategic communication should be deployed as a governance tool to promote transparency, accountability, and public engagement. Government institutions must communicate policies, decisions, and expenditures clearly and consistently to reduce information asymmetry and public suspicion. Transparent communication builds trust and reinforces ethical expectations in public life (Dike, 2025). Whistleblower protection frameworks should be strengthened to encourage citizens and public servants to report unethical practices without fear of retaliation. When ethical behaviour is publicly rewarded and protected, moral norms are reinforced within governance systems.

v. **Institutionalizing Meritocracy and Professionalism:** The politicization of public administration has contributed significantly to moral decay in governance. Recruitment, promotion, and appointment processes in the public sector should be based on merit, competence, and professionalism rather than political loyalty. A merit-based system reduces incentives for corruption and enhances institutional efficiency (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021). Performance evaluation systems that incorporate ethical conduct as a key criterion should be adopted across public institutions. Leaders and public officials who demonstrate ethical excellence should be recognized and rewarded to reinforce positive moral behaviour.

vi. **Integrating Moral Leadership into National Development Strategy:** Finally, ethical leadership should be recognized as a central pillar of Nigeria's development strategy. National development plans must explicitly link governance reforms to moral accountability, recognizing that sustainable development is unattainable without integrity and ethical leadership. Development partners and international institutions should also support governance initiatives that prioritize moral renewal and institutional integrity (Namo, Agwadu, & Amakoromo, 2024).

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: March 02, 2026 **Accepted**: March 25, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: John, Elijah O. & Asuquo, Mbosowo E. (2026). "Public Administration and Disaster Management in Nigeria: Myth or Reality?" *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 25-34.

Article **Open Access**

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: MYTH OR REALITY?

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Abstract
This paper, Public Administration and Disaster Management in Nigeria: A Myth or Reality? was necessitated by the fact that Nigeria faces frequent natural and human-induced disasters such as floods, epidemics, communal conflicts, and environmental degradation. Despite the existence of numerous government agencies and frameworks for disaster management such as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the effectiveness of public administration in mitigating these crises remains questionable. Since Nigeria's return to democratic governance in 1999, public administration has undergone significant reforms aimed at improving governance, accountability, and service delivery. This work examines the evolution, structures, reforms, challenges, and prospects of public administration in Nigeria between 1999 and 2025. Using scholarly perspectives and policy documents, the paper analyzes how institutional reforms with respect to disaster management achieved expected result and challenge. The analysis found performance failure; and so made recommendations that include strengthening management-based administration, capacity building and training, among others.

Keywords: Public Administration, Disaster management, Nigeria.

Introduction
The contemporary Nigerian state is confronted with an escalating frequency and intensity of disasters that pose existential threats to its population, economy, and development. The nation's risk profile is a complex amalgam of natural hazards, exacerbated by climate change, and human-induced catastrophes rooted in political, social, and economic frailties. From the

devastating annual floods that submerge vast swathes of its territory to the protracted humanitarian crisis spawned by the Boko Haram insurgency, the imperative for an effective public administration-led disaster management system has never been more acute. In response, the Nigerian government, particularly since the return to democracy in 1999, has established a formal, multi-tiered administrative architecture for disaster management. The creation of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) via Act 12 of 1999 (as amended) signified a deliberate attempt to institutionalize and centralize disaster coordination. This framework, which extends to State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs) and Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMCs), represents the state's formal commitment to the protection of its citizens the supposed "reality" of its disaster management capacity. However, the aftermath of every major disaster in the country is invariably characterized by a chorus of public condemnation citing delayed response, inadequate relief, poor coordination, and corruption. This persistent gap between statutory mandate and operational performance fuels a critical scholarly and public discourse: Is the elaborate public administration machinery for disaster management in Nigeria a functioning reality or a hollow myth? This dissertation probes this central question, moving beyond a simplistic binary to explore the complex interplay of factors that define the "troubled reality" of the Nigerian experience.

Despite a sophisticated, legally-backed institutional framework for disaster management, Nigeria's vulnerability to disasters continues to increase, and the human and economic costs of these events remain catastrophic. The core problem is a significant implementation deficit, where well-articulated policies fail to translate into effective, timely, and equitable outcomes. The public administration system, theoretically designed to be the solution, is often perceived as part of the problem. Its operations are allegedly constrained by bureaucratic pathologies, political interference, systemic corruption, and a critical lack of technical capacity. While NEMA and its counterparts exist as administrative entities, their efficacy in mitigating hazards, preparing for emergencies, responding swiftly, and ensuring sustainable recovery is highly contested. This research, therefore, addresses the disjuncture between the institutional architecture of disaster management and its functional performance, seeking to anatomize the elements that constitute its reality and the systemic failures that perpetuate the myth of its effectiveness. This work, therefore, raises some concerns like What are the theoretical underpinnings and statutory provisions of the public administration framework for disaster management in Nigeria? How effective has this framework been in practice? An analysis of specific disaster management cases (e.g., 2012/2022 floods, IDP crisis)? What are the systemic, political, and socio-economic factors that strengthen (reality) or weaken (myth) the public administration of disasters in Nigeria? And To what extent do the observed outcomes of disaster management interventions in Nigeria align with or deviate from the stated policy objectives?

Public Administration In Nigeria from 1999 - Date

Since Nigeria’s return to democratic governance in 1999, public administration has played a critical role in managing disasters arising from natural, environmental, technological, and human-induced causes. According to Adamolekun (2002), democratic governance revitalized Nigeria’s public institutions after prolonged military rule, creating opportunities for improved policy coordination and service delivery. Between 1999 and 2025, Nigeria experienced recurring disasters such as flooding, epidemics, oil spills, building collapses, fires, communal conflicts, and insurgency-related humanitarian crises (Adebayo, 2018). The effectiveness of disaster management during this period has been shaped by administrative reforms, institutional capacity, political leadership, and intergovernmental relations.

Conceptual Clarification

i. **Public Administration:** Public administration refers to the machinery and processes through which government policies are formulated, implemented, and evaluated. In Nigeria, public administration operates within a federal system involving federal, state, and local governments, as provided for in the 1999 Constitution (Ayo, 2000). It encompasses ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) responsible for public service delivery and national development.

ii. **Disaster Management:** Disaster management involves systematic efforts to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Scholars such as Coppola (2015) described disaster management as a continuous process involving mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. In Nigeria, disaster management has gradually evolved from an ad hoc relief-based approach to a more structured administrative system (Oladipo, 2014).

Literature and Synopsis of Disaster Management

i. Abule-Ado Gas Explosion (Lagos, 2020): On 15 March 2020, a massive explosion and fire tore through the Abule-Ado area of Festac Town in Lagos State. It started around 9 a.m. and the fire was finally extinguished late that night. The blast was extremely powerful and heard kilometers away. NNPC initially claimed the explosion occurred after a truck hit gas cylinders at a facility near a pipeline. NEMA and other investigations indicated the pipeline itself was under too much pressure (possibly by a laden truck), leaked fuel vapour into the air, and that ignited. Other analyses dispute the presence of a gas plant or cylinders entirely, suggesting instead that vaporized petroleum from a ruptured pipeline caused the explosion. At least 23 people were killed, dozens injured, and hundreds of buildings destroyed including schools and homes. Tens of thousands were displaced; estimated total displacement figures reached hundreds of thousands according to government sources. Firefighters and emergency crews fought the blaze through the day and night until it was finally contained. The Lagos State Government established a ₦2 billion relief fund for victims, including cash support to families who lost loved ones. There were efforts to provide temporary shelter, food, and medical support, though many affected residents later complained that promised broader compensation and reconstruction assistance was slow or insufficient.

ii. Ikoyi Building Collapse (Lagos, 2021): In 2021, a 21-storey luxury residential building under construction in the affluent Ikoyi district of Lagos suddenly collapsed. The disaster occurred without warning, trapping many workers and nearby residents under tons of concrete and steels. Preliminary observations and official probes pointed to structural failure and poor construction practice. Conflicting reports emerged about whether the building was legally permitted or altered beyond approved plans e.g., disputes over whether 15 or 21 floors had been authorized. Broader industry concerns cited poor enforcement of building codes, substandard materials, and regulatory lapses as contributing systemic factors. Rescue teams, including emergency responders and civil defense units, worked days to pull survivors from the rubble. A government investigation panel was established shortly after the collapse to determine what went wrong and to issue recommendations. The tragedy prompted Lagos authorities to inspect and test nearby buildings, leading to demolition orders for other unsafe structures to avert repeat incidents.

iii. **1998 Jesse Pipeline Explosion (Delta State):** On 18 October 1998, a petroleum pipeline in the Jesse area of Delta State ruptured and exploded, unleashing one of Nigeria's deadliest industrial disasters. The resultant fire burned unchecked for several days before being extinguished with the help of international fire-fighting teams. There are differing accounts: the government blamed pipeline sabotage and people collecting fuel, while others argue that poor pipeline maintenance and corrosion led to the rupture, with fuel vapour ignited by a spark or cigarette. Official and independent estimates vary, but over 1,000 deaths are widely attributed to the blast and ensuing fire. Hundreds more were injured, and many bodies were too badly burned for individual identification, leading to mass burials. Fighting the blaze took several days, including involvement by foreign-specialized teams using nitrogen-rich firefighting foam. Federal authorities visited the site, promised support, and vowed to improve future safety — but long-term remediation, structural safety improvements, and community compensation were uneven or limited. Subsequent discussions and commemorations have focused on pipeline safety reforms and the need for better monitoring, pipeline integrity checks, and community protections.

iv. **Port Harcourt Stampede (Rivers State, 2022:** On 28 May 2022, a crowd crush (stampede) occurred at a charity food distribution event organized by the Kings Assembly Pentecostal Church at the Port Harcourt Polo Club. Thousands of people had gathered early to receive free food and goods; impatience and poor crowd control led to a surge that resulted in many being trampled. At least 31 people were killed in the stampede and seven others injured. Media reports noted that some attendees had gathered the night before, compounding the risk of overcrowding. Emergency medical services and police responded to treat the injured and restore order. The event was immediately suspended, and state authorities (including the governor) ordered a formal investigation to understand what went wrong. Officials urged better crowd control planning and coordination with security forces for future events, especially where large gatherings and giveaways are foreseen.

v. **2015 Onitsha Tanker Fire tragedy:** In late May 2015 (often reported as May 31 or early June 1), a petrol-laden tanker lost control and crashed into a highly populated area in Onitsha, a major commercial city in Anambra State, southeastern Nigeria. The accident occurred at the Upper Iweka/Asaba Motor Park, a busy transport hub where many buses, motorcycles, traders and pedestrians gather. The tanker, carrying Premium Motor Spirit (petrol), was descending the Onitsha–Enugu Expressway when it reportedly lost control. It rammed into vehicles and the crowd at the motor park and burst into flames, causing an immediate and massive fire. Many buses, motorcycles and nearby objects were engulfed in the inferno, and victims were burned beyond recognition. The blaze spread rapidly because the area was densely populated and filled with combustible materials and people. The most widely reported cause was that the tanker lost control while descending a slope, likely due to brake failure or loss of braking capability, which prevented the driver from stopping. According to eyewitness accounts and initial reports, the tanker rammed into Asaba Park after the driver could not control it. The area was extremely crowded with passengers, traders, and onlookers, which intensified the tragedy. Burning petrol and crowded conditions made escape difficult, worsening casualties. There were no official long-form technical investigations reported publicly at the time to conclusively explain all mechanical details, but brake failure and loss of control were the dominant explanations from eyewitnesses and officials. Security forces including police, Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and other agencies were present at the scene to help with rescue and evacuations. According to The Nation Newspaper Many victims were rushed to Toronto Hospital and other medical facilities in Onitsha for treatment or identification. Pathologists were involved in identifying the bodies, many of which were charred beyond recognition. Relatives and community members flocked to hospitals and mortuaries searching for loved ones. Local institutions like the Onitsha traditional council called for prayers and community assistance for victims and survivors. Officials including the Anambra State Governor visited the scene and mourned with victims' families. There were criticisms about the adequacy and speed of response. Some reports suggested fire services faced challenges reaching and quelling the fire because of heavy traffic and limited equipment. Initial official reports recorded at least 69 deaths with several others injured. Later counts in some reports mentioned around 70 deaths as additional victims succumbed to injuries or were identified later. Many victims were burned beyond recognition, making identification difficult for families. Scores of survivors suffered severe burn injuries, requiring intensive care and long-term treatment. Hospitals were quickly overwhelmed with the scale and severity of burns. Apart from human loss, multiple vehicles, including commercial buses and motorcycles, were destroyed. Goods belonging to traders and transport operators were ruined, adding economic hardship to families and the local economy. Civil society and community groups urged better road safety enforcement, improved fire services, and better location planning for motor parks and high-risk areas.

Institutional Framework for Disaster Management in Nigeria

i. **National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA):** The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established in 1999 to coordinate disaster management at the federal level. According to NEMA (2020), the agency is responsible for disaster preparedness, response coordination, relief distribution, and policy advisory functions. Its creation marked a major administrative milestone in Nigeria's post-1999 governance structure.

ii. **State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs):** To decentralize disaster management, state governments established State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs). However, scholars note that the performance of SEMAs varies widely due to differences in funding, political will, and technical capacity (Ibrahim & Muhammed, 2017).

iii. **Other Relevant Institutions:** Other institutions involved in disaster management include the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development (established in 2019), the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet), the Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA), security agencies, non-governmental organizations, and international development partners (UNDP, 2021).

Disaster Management in the Early Democratic Period (1999–2010)

The period between 1999 and 2010 focused largely on rebuilding institutions weakened by military rule. Disaster management during this era was largely reactive, with limited emphasis on prevention and mitigation (Olorunfemi, 2011). Public administration responses were characterized by emergency relief efforts following disasters such as pipeline explosions, urban flooding, and communal conflicts. Weak early warning systems, inadequate funding, and poor inter-agency coordination limited effectiveness (Adebayo, 2018).

Expanding Challenges (2011–2018)

Between 2011 and 2018, disaster management gained increased attention due to major events such as the 2012 nationwide flooding and the Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East. According to Ezeudu (2016), these crises exposed the limitations of Nigeria's disaster preparedness and response mechanisms. Public administration responses included stronger collaboration with international humanitarian agencies, improved data utilization from NiMet and NIHSA, and the adoption of disaster risk reduction strategies. Nevertheless, bureaucratic bottlenecks and corruption undermined relief distribution and recovery efforts (Transparency International, 2017).

Humanitarian Governance and Disaster Management (2019–2025)

The establishment of the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development in 2019 marked a new phase in Nigeria's disaster governance. This period emphasized the management of internally displaced persons (IDPs), social protection programmes, and climate change adaptation (FGN, 2020). From 2020 to 2025, Nigeria faced compounded disasters including the COVID-19 pandemic, intensified flooding, and food insecurity. According to the World Bank (2022), climate change significantly increased disaster frequency and severity, placing additional strain on public administration.

Challenges to Disaster Management

Despite reforms, disaster management in Nigeria continues to face significant administrative challenges. These include inadequate funding, weak local government participation, political interference, limited professional training, and poor data management (Oladipo, 2014; Ibrahim and Muhammed, 2017). These issues have constrained the ability of public administration to shift from reactive to preventive disaster management.

The Prospects

Notwithstanding these challenges, Nigeria has recorded notable achievements in disaster management. These include the institutionalization of disaster management agencies, improved early warning systems, increased international cooperation, and greater public awareness of disaster risks (UNDP, 2021). Looking beyond 2025, scholars advocate for digital governance, community-based disaster management, and stronger integration of climate resilience into public administration (Coppola, 2015). In all, from 1999 to 2025, public administration has remained central to disaster management in Nigeria. Democratic governance enabled institutional development and policy reforms, but implementation gaps persist. Strengthening administrative capacity, accountability, intergovernmental coordination, and preventive planning is essential for effective disaster management in Nigeria.

The Challenges of Public Administration in Nigeria

Throughout 1999–2025, Nigeria's public administration has faced persistent challenges. These challenges have constrained the ability of public administration to effectively drive development. The few notable ones are here underlisted.

i. **Corruption:** Corruption is a major challenge affecting public administration and disaster management in Nigeria. Funds meant for disaster preparedness, emergency response, and rehabilitation are often misappropriated or diverted by public officials. Transparency International (2017) observes that corruption weakens public institutions and reduces their effectiveness in service delivery. In disaster management, corruption leads to poor-quality relief materials, inflated contracts, and delays in providing assistance to affected communities. This situation increases the hardship faced by disaster victims and erodes public confidence in government institutions.

ii. **Political Interference:** Political interference poses a serious problem in public administration and disaster management. Political office holders frequently influence administrative decisions such as staff appointments, allocation of disaster relief materials, and implementation of emergency policies. According to Adebayo (2018), political considerations often take precedence over professionalism and competence. During disaster situations, relief efforts may be politicized, resulting in unequal distribution of resources and neglect of communities that are most in need.

iii. **Lack of Accountability:** Lack of accountability remains a persistent challenge in public administration and disaster management. Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms make it difficult to ensure that public funds and relief materials are properly utilized. Adamolekun (2002) argues that ineffective accountability systems encourage misuse of resources and administrative inefficiency. In disaster management, poor accountability leads to lack of transparency, duplication of efforts, and failure to assess and improve response strategies.

iv. **Lack of Technical Know-How:** The absence of adequate technical knowledge and skills limits the effectiveness of public administration and disaster management in Nigeria. Disaster management requires expertise in risk assessment, early warning systems, emergency response, and recovery planning. However, many public institutions lack well-trained personnel. Ezeani (2014) notes that insufficient training and limited exposure to modern disaster management techniques result in poor planning, slow response to emergencies, and weak implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies.

Nigerian Government Reforms on Disaster Management

Nigeria has brought many reforms aimed to strengthen coordination, improve early warning systems, enhance emergency response capacity and involve communities in disaster preparedness. Here are some notable government reforms in Nigeria on disaster management, which have attempted to mitigate the situation to a better condition.

i. **Anticipatory Action Framework for Floods (2025):** The Nigerian government shifted from a reactive response to proactive disaster preparedness by adopting the Anticipatory Action Framework for floods. This policy enables pre-defined triggers based on forecasts, so resources and early action can be mobilized before flood impacts peak, saving lives and reducing economic losses (ReliefWeb, 2025).

ii. **NEMA Strategic Plan (2025–2029):** The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) launched a five-year strategic plan (2025–2029) designed to enhance Nigeria's capacity for proactive disaster risk management, strengthen institutional coordination, and align national disaster response with global best practices. This plan underscores improving operational efficiency, evidence-based planning, and inter-agency collaboration for hazard resilience (NEMA, 2025).

iii. **National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy (2025–2030):** In 2025, the government unveiled a National Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategy (2025–2030) to mainstream resilience across sectors such as water resources, health, education, and infrastructure and to emphasize early warning systems and risk-informed planning in national development decisions (Shettima/departure remarks, 2025).

iv. **National Disaster Risk Financing Framework:** Nigeria is developing a National Disaster Risk Financing Framework to ensure stable and timely funding for disaster prevention and preparedness, moving away from crisis-driven funding after events occur. This reform also aims to deepen partnerships with private sector, development partners, and research institutions to support disaster risk reduction across all levels of governance (Shettima/Vice-Presidential remarks, 2025).

v. **Community Empowerment for Disaster Safety:** The federal government emphasized empowering local and flood-prone communities to manage their safety by strengthening local emergency management agencies (SEMA/LEMA), expanding early warning systems, and encouraging community-level planning and resilience building. This reform supports disaster risk reduction capacity at grassroots levels (Federal Government Press Release, 2025).

vi. **Integration of Disaster Risk Reduction into Sectoral Planning:** Government leaders have started integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) into wider sectoral development policies, including agriculture, infrastructure, health, and education. The initiative also boosts early warning systems and prioritizes resilience investments that prevent disasters rather than only respond to them (Nigeria Moves to Mainstream DRR, 2025).

Disaster Management in Nigeria: A Myth Rather than Reality

Disaster management refers to the organized process of preventing preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters in order to minimize their impacts on society. In Nigeria, disaster management is theoretically well structured through institutions such as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). However, the persistent occurrence of disasters and the weak response mechanisms suggest that disaster management in Nigeria exists in theory than in practical reality.

i. **Weak Implementation of Disaster Management policies:** Nigeria has developed several frameworks to guide disaster management Framework (NDMF)and the National Disaster Response Plan. However, their implementation remains weak due to bureaucratic inefficiency and lack of political commitment (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2010).

ii. **Poor Preparedness and Early Warning Systems:** Effective disaster management depends on preparedness and early warning mechanisms. Agencies such as Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet)regularly issue warning about potential floods and extreme weather conditions. Despite this, such warnings are rarely translated into concrete preventive measures by authorities or local communities(Oladokun and Proverbs, 2016).For instance, seasoned flooding continues to affect states like Benue, Kogi and Bayelsa, leading to displacement, destruction of homes, and loss of agricultural livelihoods.

iii. **Inadequate Funding and Resources:** Another factor that supports the argument that disaster management in Nigeria is largely a myth is the insufficient funding of emergency agencies' and related agencies often face logistical challenges such as lack of rescue equipment, inadequate training and poor transportation infrastructure for emergency response(Adebimpe and Adebimpe, 2010).

iv. **Corruption and Mismanagement of Relief Materials:** Corruption and poor accountability also undermine disaster management efforts. Relief materials intended for disaster victims are sometimes diverted or mismanaged, preventing them from reaching those targeted at. Such practices weaken public trust and make disaster response appear ineffective (Ojo,2011).

v. **Lack of Community Participation:** Modern disaster management emphasizes community-based risk reduction, where local communities actively participate in planning and preparedness activities. In Nigeria, however, disaster management strategies are often top-down, with minimal involvement of grassroots stakeholders (Adeoye &Adebayo,2009). Without local participation, disaster prevention and preparedness strategies fail to address the specific vulnerable of communities.

Solutions and Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following solutions are proposed:

i. **Strengthening Merit-Based Administration:** Recruitment, promotion, and postings in the civil service should be strictly based on merit and competence. Adamolekun (2002) emphasizes that professionalism is essential for administrative effectiveness. Independent civil service commissions should be empowered to operate without political interference.

ii. **Anti-Corruption Institutional Reforms:** Anti-corruption agencies such as EFCC and ICPC should be granted greater operational independence. Transparency International (2017) recommends stronger enforcement mechanisms and judicial reforms to ensure timely prosecution of corruption cases.

iii. **Capacity Building and Training:** Continuous professional development should be institutionalized. According to Ezeani (2014), regular training in public financial management, digital governance, and policy analysis will enhance administrative competence.

iv. **Strengthening Intergovernmental Relations:** Fiscal federalism should be deepened to empower state and local governments. Olowu (2011) argues that decentralization improves service delivery and accountability when combined with strong oversight mechanisms.

v. **Expanding Digital Governance:** E-governance platforms should be expanded to cover personnel management, procurement, and service delivery. Dunleavy et al. (2006) note that digital-era governance reduces corruption and enhances citizen engagement when properly implemented.

vi. **Ensuring Policy Continuity:** Frequent policy reversals undermine administrative effectiveness. Adebayo (2018) recommends institutionalizing long-term national development plans insulated from partisan politics. In public administration and disaster management, continuity is particularly critical because disasters are recurring, cumulative and often unpredictable.

Conclusion

Although Nigeria has established institutions, legal frameworks and policies for disaster management, the persistent occurrence of disasters, poor preparedness, inadequate funding, corruption and weak community involvement suggest that disaster management often exist only in principle rather than in practice. For disaster management to become a reality in Nigeria, there must be stronger implementations of policies, increased funding, improved transparency, and greater community participation in disaster risk reduction efforts. Nigeria’s disaster management system is largely reactive rather than proactive. Government intervention typically occur after disasters have already caused significant damage, focusing on temporary relief rather than long-term risk reduction. This reactive approach contradicts global best practices such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which emphasizes prevention, preparedness, and resilience building (UNDRR,2015). This study has examined public administration in Nigeria from 1999 to 2025, highlighting its evolution under democratic governance, major reforms, persistent challenges, findings, and solutions. While the period witnessed significant institutional and policy reforms, deep-rooted structural and cultural problems limited their impact. For Nigeria to achieve effective governance and development, public administration must prioritize professionalism, accountability, capacity building, and policy continuity to come out from its mythical dominance.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: February 25, 2026 **Accepted**: March 04, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Nwosu, Mike C. (2026). "Interrogation of Executive Impeachment Procedures in United States of America and Nigeria." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 35-41.

Article **Open Acces**

INTERROGATION OF EXECUTIVE IMPEACHMENT PROCEDURES IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study critically examines the impeachment mechanisms in both Nigeria and the United States—two major democratic nations with entrenched constitutional guidelines for the removal of executive officials. In both countries, impeachment is a constitutional process with detailed provisions embedded in their foundational legal documents. In Nigeria, the removal of a President, Governor, or Deputy Governor is governed by Sections 143 and 188 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)[1]. Section 143(1) provides the legal basis for removing the President or Vice President in accordance with outlined procedures. Similarly, Section 188(1) authorizes the removal of State Governors or their Deputies under specified conditions. The United States Constitution assigns the House of Representatives the exclusive right to initiate impeachment proceedings (Article I, Section 2)[2], while the Senate is empowered to conduct impeachment trials. For a conviction to occur, two-thirds majority of senators present must vote in favor (Article I, Section 3). The scope of impeachable offences in the USA includes "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors" as outlined in Article II, Section 4[3]. However, the Constitution does not explicitly define "high crimes and misdemeanors," leaving room for interpretative flexibility. Similarly, Nigeria's constitutional provisions under Sections 143 and 188 do not provide a concrete definition of 'gross misconduct," leaving the term to be interpreted by the National Assembly or State Houses of Assembly based on the context of alleged behavior. A doctrinal review in this paper reveals that Nigeria's impeachment process is relatively complex, involving multiple institutions. The structure may have been designed to serve as a safeguard, preventing arbitrary or politically motivated removals. It also aligns with the right to fair hearing guaranteed under Section 36

of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)[4]. In conclusion, while both Nigeria and the United States uphold impeachment as a legal check on executive power, there are practical differences in implementation. Both systems aim to balance accountability with institutional protection. However, the study also finds that in Nigeria, the process is sometimes exploited for political gain, raising concerns over the politicization of what is intended to be a legal and constitutional safeguard.

Keywords: Articles, Constitution, Impeachment, Nigeria, Removal, United States of America.

Introduction

The concept of impeachment can be traced to medieval England, where the Parliament exercised the authority to hold royal officials accountable for wrongdoing. It is served as a vital instrument to ensure that power was not misused by agents of the crown. The word "impeachment" originates from the Old French term *empecher*, meaning to obstruct or impede, reflecting its intended function—to halt the abuse of public office. Impeachment refers to a legislative procedure by which certain public officeholders are accused of serious misconduct. If found culpable, they are removed from office before their term ends. It essentially involves the constitutional removal of elected political leaders through a formal process conducted by the legislature. Although practices differ across jurisdictions, the idea first emerged in England[5] and was subsequently adopted by colonial and state governments in early America. In democratic governance, impeachment stands as critical check available to legislature to retrain or dismiss members of the executive arm. However, in some developing democracies—particularly in parts of Africa including Nigeria—this process is increasingly influenced by political actors. It has sometimes become a tool used by political "godfathers" to settle disputes with their proteges, thereby undermining its original democratic intent.[6] In well-established democracies like the United States, impeachment is primarily a constitutional mechanism aimed at ensuring executive accountability. It allows lawmakers to initiate charges and, where appropriate, remove public officials for actions that violate the law or constitutional standards.7

Legislators are the primary custodians of impeachment powers[8]. Misuse of this authority can erode democratic norms, especially when the process lacks judicial oversight. The Nigerian Constitution, under Section 143(10)[9], stipulates those decisions or proceedings related to presidential impeachment by the National Assembly are immune from judicial scrutiny. Similarly, Section 188(10)[10] shields the actions of State Houses of Assembly in gubernatorial impeachment matters from Court intervention. This framework grants the process a finality that renders it nearly unquestionable—unless a seven-member investigative panel, appointed by either the Chief Justice of Nigeria or a State Chief Judge (as applicable), delivers a "not guilty" verdict or if the process is constitutionally flawed from the beginning, as outlined in Sections 143(5) and 188(5).[11] Impeachment, though grounded in law, is ultimately a political process with significant constitutional consequences. Its primary objective is to hold officeholders accountable, curb the excesses of executive power, and safeguard the rule of law. Nonetheless, the implementation of impeachment differs across countries, depending on constitutional arrangements, political maturity, and institutional independence. As noted by Ozokhome (2006)[12], impeachment serves as the legislative branch's ultimate tool to cut short an official's tenure before it ends naturally. It is often described as a figurative sword hanging over the executive. Although Nigeria's constitutional model draws heavily from that of the United States, its practical application of impeachment has often diverged. While the American system treats impeachment with legal gravity and institutional decorum, in Nigeria it has frequently been misused for political retribution, especially in recent democratic cycles.

Impeachment in the United States

The notion of impeachment, originally inherited from English legal tradition, was integrated into the constitutional frameworks of early American colonies. As the United States Constitution was ratified in 1788[13], the framers purposefully left the criteria for impeachment open to interpretation, entrusting Congress with the discretion to assess what constituted impeachable behavior. According to Article I, Section 2 of the United States Constitution, the House of Representatives holds the exclusive authority to initiate impeachment proceedings[14]. Article I, Section 3 further mandates that the Senate conducts the trial, with a two-thirds majority required for conviction[15]. The President, Vice President, and other federal officers are subject to impeachment under Article II, Section 4, which lists treason, bribery, and "other high crimes and misdemeanors" as valid grounds, though the latter remains undefined. The impeachment process in the United States is constitutionally enshrined within a broader system of checks and balances. Once the House approves articles of impeachment by a simple majority, the matter proceeds to the Senate. There, a formal trial is held, with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court presiding in cases involving the President. Conviction leads to removal from office and can include disqualification from holding future public office. Notably, there is no provision for appeal after conviction. Compared to Nigeria's more layered and often politicized impeachment model, the U.S. framework is procedurally clearer. Nigeria's process typically involves additional external panels and investigative bodies, reflecting its unique constitutional design that places significant emphasis on legislative authority tempered by judicial input. Despite procedural differences, both nations embed high thresholds to prevent the abuse of impeachment for political ends, underscoring its gravity and potential for misuse.

Historically, only three American Presidents have gone through the impeachment process by the House of Representatives: Andrew Johnson in 1868, Bill Clinton in 1998, and Donald Trump in both 2019 and 2021. None were removed from office, as the Senate acquitted each of them16. Johnson's impeachment was related to Tenure of Office Act, Clinton's to perjury and obstruction of justice arising from the Paula Jones lawsuit and the Monica Lewinsky investigation, and Trump's impeachments stemmed first from allegations of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, and later from incitement of insurrection following the events at the Capitol in January 2021. Impeachment may still proceed even if the official resigns. In 1876, for example, William Belknap was impeached by the House shortly after stepping down as Secretary of War17. The Senate ruled it had the authority to try him regardless of his resignation. A similar debate occurred in Trump's second impeachment, which was pursued after he had left office. The Senate upheld the constitutionality of proceeding with trial in a 55-45 vote.18 The constitution places no restriction on how many times a federal officer can be impeached. Donald Trump remains the only individual in U.S. history to have faced impeachment twice. Typically, the process unfolds in three phases: a preliminary inquiry (which is optional), the House's approval of one or more articles of impeachment by simple majority, and a Senate trial where two-thirds vote is necessary for conviction. In cases of presidential impeachment, the Chief Justice presides; for other federal officials, the presiding officer is not specified, though it usually defaults to the Senate's presiding officer, often the Vice President. Impeachment in the United States of America remains a weighty constitutional process aimed at upholding public accountability and safeguarding democratic institutions. While the grounds for impeachment are broadly defined, the structured and deliberate procedures underscore the nation's intent to reserve this mechanism for only the most serious offences.

Impeachment Process and Procedures in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the process of removing high-ranking public officials such as the President, Vice President, Governors and Deputy Governors is constitutionally grounded in Sections 143 and 188 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)[19]. These sections outline the procedural steps required for impeachment, though they provide considerable leeway to the legislature, which has led to concerns about the process being manipulated for political reasons. The procedure typically includes several phases, such as an initial allegation, investigation by a judicial panel, and formal deliberation by the relevant legislative chamber. Safeguards such as the right to fair hearing and avenues for judicial oversight are embedded in the system. Nigeria's constitutional evolution, particularly from the colonial period through to independence in 1960, drew significant influence from the American model. This influence is evident in the 1979 and 1999 constitutions, which institutionalized legislative checks and balances, especially in the context of impeachment.

Despite these legal frameworks, Nigeria's political environment has often affected how impeachment is implemented. In certain instances, it has been wielded as apolitical instrument to settle internal disputes or exert control, rather than being based on genuine allegations of misconduct. To commence the process at the federal level, a motion supported by a least one-third of members of National Assembly must be submitted[20]. A panel, usually appointed by the Chief Justice of Nigeria, is tasked with reviewing the claims. Their findings are then presented to the Assembly, which votes on whether the case should proceed. If the required majority supports the motion, a joint session is convened for the final decision. At the state level, a similar structure is used, with the State House of Assembly playing a leading role. A two-thirds majority is necessary to formally remove the officeholder. Neither Section 143 nor 188 of the Constitution provides a clear definition of "gross misconduct" leaving the term open to interpretation. Nigerian courts have ruled that such grounds may include severe constitutional violations, misuse of public office, or actions that infringe upon citizen's rights. This lack of precise terminology grants the legislature considerable interpretative authority, which, while flexible, can also make the process vulnerable to partisan abuse. Section 143(1)[21] stipulates that the President or Vice President can be removed from office in accordance with that section's provisions. Subsection 2 specifies that an impeachment process begins with a written notice of allegations, endorsed by no fewer than one-third of National Assembly members and presented to the President of the Senate.

When an allegation is made that the President or Vice President has committed gross misconduct in carrying out their official duties, with specific details provided, the Senate President is required, within seven days of receiving such notice, to distribute a copy to the officeholder concerned and to all members of the National Assembly. The procedure outlined in Section 188[22] for removing a Governor or Deputy Governor closely mirrors, in substance and application, the constitutional process established for impeaching the President or Vice President. Impeachment in Nigeria traces its roots to the Second Republic when Alhaji Balarabe Musa, then Governor of Kaduna State under the People's Redemption Party (PRP), was removed by a legislature dominated by the opposing National Party of Nigeria (NPN)[23]. Though the official charge was gross misconduct, the action was largely seen as a political strategy by the majority legislators to assert authority over a minority-party governor. Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1999, several Governors and

Deputy Governors have faced impeachment, often under questionable circumstances. The process has frequently been misused to resolve personal and political disputes, especially between political patrons and their proteges. A notable case occurred in Anambra State in 2004 when Chief Titus Ubah, a political influencer, allegedly attempted to orchestrate the impeachment of Governor Dr Chris Ngige after the latter reportedly declined to allocate state funds as previously agreed. Though unsuccessful, the effort nearly paralyzed governance in the state.24

In contrast to failed attempts, the impeachment of some governors such as D.S.P. Alamieyeseigha of Bayelsa, Rashidi Ladoja of Oyo, Joshua Dariye of Plateau, and Ayo Fayose of Ekiti were successful. While official reasons included allegations of gross misconduct and corruption, the underlying causes were often political. For instance, Ladoja's removal was linked to his refusal to endorse President Obasanjo's third-term ambition, while Fayose's impeachment stemmed from ideological differences with the same president. When the legislature removed both Fayose and his deputy, the president responded by invoking Section 305 of the constitution to dissolve the state's democratic institutions.25 Impeachment data in Nigeria reveal that deputy governors have been the most frequent targets. This trend is often driven by succession politics—deputies expressing interest in gubernatorial seats clash with governors who favor other successors. Notable impeachments of deputy governors include Chief Mrs Bucknor Akerele and Chief Pedro (Lagos), Dr Nwafor and Chief Chris Akomas (Abia), Mr Sani Abubakar (Taraba), Peremobowei Ebebi (Bayelsa), Sunday Onyebuchi (Enugu), Simon Achuba (Kogi), and Philip Shaibu (Edo).26 Simon Achuba's case is particularly controversial. Although a seven-member panel cleared him of all allegations, the Kogi State House of Assembly proceeded to remove him, allegedly at Governor Bello's behest. This act contradicted Section 188 (8) of the Constitution, which clearly states that if allegations arenot substantiated, the process should end. Ironically, the Chief Judge who empaneled the investigating committee later swore in a new deputy governor, disregarding the panel's not-guilty verdict. Overall, impeachment processes in Nigeria are rarely about genuine administrative failings. They are predominantly driven by political motives. Notably, Sections 143(10) and 188(10) of the Constitution shield impeachment proceedings from judicial review—unless there is a procedural flaw or if the accused is acquitted.

Policy Recommendations

To address the persistent misuse of impeachment procedures in Nigeria, it is essential to confront the underlying issues—chief among them being the influence of political godfatherism. In many cases, politics is treated as a transactional affair, where influential elites sponsor candidates not for public good but to serve personal interests. A shift toward transformational leadership, driven by service rather than self-interest, is urgently needed. Moreover, the legislative arm currently holds unchecked discretion in determining what qualifies as "gross misconduct", making the process highly subjective. This ambiguity in Sections 188(11) and 143(11) of the 1999 Constitution calls for a constitutional amendment that clearly defines and outlines the criteria for impeachment. For better governance, politics must be service-centered. One proposal is to restructure the legislature into a part-time institution, functioning only when necessary. Alternatively, its independence must be reinforced to prevent it from being reduced to a mere extension of the executive branch. When lawmakers act as rubber stamps, democratic values are undermined, giving rise to impunity and political instability.

Conclusion

In the United States, impeachment at the federal level is carried out by a bicameral legislature - comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House initiates the impeachment process, while the Senate conducts the trial by evaluating evidence and hearing witness testimonies. A two-third majority vote in the Senate is required to convict and remove the official from office. Otherwise, the official is acquitted and remains in position, as seen in cases of Presidents Andrew Johnson, Bill Clinton, and Donald Trump[27]. This process is mirrored in many States in USA due to their bicameral legislative systems. Conversely, in Nigeria, impeachment proceedings have only been applied to Governors and Deputy Governors, with no Nigerian President or Vice President ever removed through this process. Although Nigeria's procedure includes judicial involvement - particularly the formation of a seven-member investigative panel - the State Houses of Assembly often bypass the spirit of due process by acting simultaneously as accuser, judge, and enforcer. A notable example is the removal of Deputy Governor Simon Achuba, who was impeached despite the panel clearing him of all allegations. Even when the judiciary eventually overturns such actions, the purpose of the impeachment—removing the officeholder - would already have been accomplished, rendering legal redress ineffective due to the passage of time

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1. Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) Sections 143 and 188
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3. Article II, Section 4 of the United States Constitution
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5. Cole, J & Garvey, T (2015) Impeachment and Removal. Congressional research p15-16
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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: January 30, 2026 **Accepted**: March 18, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Omoregie, Edoghogho; Ajisebiyawo, Adekunle & Agara, Babatunde O. (2026). "Campaigns and Grassroots Engagement in Ondo State 2024 Governorship Election: Implication for Future Elections." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 42-51.

Article **Open Access**

CAMPAIGNS AND GRASSROOTS ENGAGEMENT IN ONDO STATE 2024 GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION: IMPLICATION FOR FUTURE ELECTIONS

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Abstract
The study investigates the impact of grassroots engagement in political campaigns during the 2024 Ondo State governorship election, exploring implications for future electoral processes in Nigeria. Grassroots involvement remains pivotal in Nigerian politics, yet its effectiveness and influence on election outcomes are underexplored, particularly within the context of increasing political mobilization and voter apathy. This research addresses the problem of limited empirical understanding of how local-level political participation shapes campaign success and democratic consolidation in Nigeria's evolving electoral landscape. Using a qualitative secondary data methodology, the study analyzes campaign reports, election observer assessments, and relevant academic literature to generate rich contextual insights. This approach enables an in-depth examination of grassroots political activities, voter mobilization strategies, and community engagement practices that influenced the 2024 governorship election in Ondo State. The study is framed within the Structural Functionalism theory, which conceptualizes political campaigns as social systems where grassroots engagement performs essential functions such as political socialization, voter education, and legitimization of political authority. This framework facilitates understanding how grassroots involvement sustains democratic processes and fosters political accountability. Key findings include: that effective grassroots engagement significantly increased voter turnout and enhanced candidate visibility; secondly, Strong community networks facilitated trust and information dissemination, reducing electoral misinformation;

however, challenges such as resource constraints and political clientelism limited the full potential of grassroots mobilization. Based on these findings, the study recommends, Institutionalizing grassroots political education to deepen voter awareness; enhancing funding and logistical support for local campaign activities and implementing regulatory frameworks to curb clientelism and promote transparent grassroots participation among others. These recommendations aim to strengthen future electoral engagements in Nigeria by harnessing the power of grassroots democracy for more inclusive and credible elections.

Keywords: Political Campaigns, Grassroots Engagement, Political Participation, Voters Mobilization and Voters Education.

Introduction

The impact of grassroots engagement in political campaigns is a critical area of study in understanding democratic processes and electoral outcomes in Nigeria. Grassroots engagement refers to the active participation of community members, including marginalized groups such as women, youth, and minorities, at the most local levels of political activity. This involvement is pivotal in ensuring that political agendas resonate with the actual needs of the people, fostering accountability and responsiveness in governance. Empirical evidence suggests that active grassroots participation strengthens democratic institutions by promoting transparency and community ownership over governance matters (Governance Vote, 2025). In Nigeria, where democratic consolidation continues to face challenges, the role of grassroots political engagement is not only integral to enhancing political representation but also vital in mitigating voter apathy and disenfranchisement. The 2024 Ondo State governorship election provides a pertinent case for examining the effects of grassroots involvement on electoral participation and outcomes. Despite an increased number of registered voters compared to previous election cycles, the actual voter turnout in Ondo State in 2024 was notably low, with a recorded turnout of about 24.8%. This low participation has been attributed to factors such as internal party conflicts, socioeconomic concerns, and a general lack of robust engagement between candidates, parties, and the electorate. Moreover, the uneven voter turnout across Ondo's senatorial districts, despite high permanent voter card (PVC) collection rates, indicates a complex dynamic where voter registration does not necessarily translate into electoral participation (Center for Democracy and Development, 2024). Understanding how grassroots mobilization could have influenced this dynamic is essential for improving future electoral participation not only in Ondo but across Nigeria.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to elucidate the mechanisms through which grassroots engagement can either enhance or hinder democratic participation, with particular reference to the 2024 Ondo governorship election. By analyzing grassroots efforts within this election context, the study aims to provide insights into the implications for subsequent elections in Nigeria. Such findings will be crucial for policy makers, political actors, and civil society organizations seeking to strengthen democratic governance and citizen participation. The study’s objectives are to assess the extent and nature of grassroots engagement during the 2024 Ondo State governorship election and its influence on voter mobilization and election outcomes, to identify the challenges and barriers faced by grassroots actors and communities in participating effectively in the Ondo 2024 electoral process, to explore the implications of grassroots political engagement in Ondo State for improving citizen participation and democratic practices in future Nigerian elections. Corresponding research questions revolve around understanding, how grassroots engagement influence voter mobilization and turnout in the 2024 Ondo State governorship election? What challenges did grassroots actors and communities face in their participation during the Ondo 2024 electoral process? What are the implications of grassroots political engagement in Ondo State for enhancing democratic participation and election outcomes in future Nigerian elections?

Conceptual Review

Political Campaigns: Political campaigns can be conceptualized as organized efforts by candidates or political parties to communicate their ideas, positions, and policies to voters in the lead-up to elections. These campaigns encompass a variety of strategies and media to influence voter attitudes and behavior with the ultimate goal of winning electoral support. Campaigns typically have a legally defined time frame before Election Day, during which candidates engage in public events, media advertising, direct voter contact, and distribution of written materials. Beyond simply promoting candidates, campaigns serve broader democratic functions by facilitating public exposure to competing beliefs and providing a platform for political communication, (Kam, Miller, & Iyengar, 2007: Open Election Data Network, 2011). The theoretical understanding of political campaigns positions them as complex social and political processes shaped by communication, persuasion, and voter psychology. Persuasion theories such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model and Social Judgment Theory guide campaigns in crafting messages that resonate either through rational arguments or emotional appeals, including hope, fear, and patriotism. Campaigns increasingly utilize targeted messaging, or micro targeting, leveraging voter data to deliver customized content, thereby enhancing their influence. However, empirical research within democratic theory suggests that voter opinions are often stable and resistant to change during campaigns due to cognitive biases and long-standing political beliefs developed over a lifetime, indicating that campaigns may primarily reinforce existing attitudes rather than convert voters (Fiveable. 2024). In addition to voter persuasion, campaigns can bolster political efficacy, voters' sense of competence and trust in the political system which is crucial for democratic health. Political efficacy comprises internal efficacy, or knowledge about politics, and external efficacy, or trust in the responsiveness of the system. Campaigns can enhance this efficacy by increasing voters' political knowledge, though this effect may be limited by selective attention to familiar parties and candidates. Furthermore, political campaigns operate within ethical and normative frameworks, balancing strategies of influence with concerns about manipulation and transparency in democratic processes. As such, campaigns are both empirical phenomena and normative practices that reflect the ongoing tensions and challenges inherent in democratic communication (Briffault, 2010).

Conceptualizing Grassroots Engagement: Grassroots engagement refers to the involvement and active participation of ordinary community members in processes that affect their local environment, governance, and development. It is fundamentally a bottom-up approach, where power and decision-making derive from the people rather than top-down authorities or external institutions. According to the United Nations, grassroots participation provides opportunities for all members of a community to contribute to and influence development activities, ensuring that benefits are shared equitably among them (Mohammed, 2023). This form of engagement fosters democratic participation by allowing citizens at the local level to make decisions about the allocation of resources, community priorities, and governance strategies that have direct impacts on their daily lives. It manifests through various forms including community meetings, local elections, protests, petitions, and organizing campaigns that mobilize collective action (Mohammed, 2023; Wikipedia, 2004). Thus, grassroots engagement is a crucial mechanism through which communities can express their needs and aspirations, enhance transparency, and hold leaders accountable.

The role of grassroots engagement extends beyond mere participation; it is vital for empowering communities towards sustainable development and social justice. Grassroots organizations, which operate through collective efforts within communities, are central to mobilizing local populations and advocating for inclusive and gender-responsive development policies (Mahila Housing Trust, 2023). These organizations provide platforms for dialogue, enabling community members to identify their own needs, articulate priorities, and collaborate in creating solutions. By drawing on local knowledge and cultural contexts, grassroots initiatives can rapidly address unmet needs and foster social innovations that are locally appropriate and sustainable (Raj, 2022). Moreover, grassroots movements can challenge existing power structures and social norms by contesting inequalities and advocating alternative socio-ecological relations (Raj, 2022). Through such empowerment, grassroots engagement helps reduce vulnerabilities and creates a sense of ownership and resilience within communities.

Grassroots engagement is also essential for reinforcing democratic governance and political accountability. It facilitates citizens' direct involvement in local decision-making processes, such as local elections and policy formulation, making governance more responsive and inclusive (GoVote, 2025). By enabling people to participate actively, grassroots engagement transforms democracy from a periodic electoral exercise into a continuous participatory process that shapes policies and programs reflective of community realities. President Franklin D. Roosevelt famously emphasized that ultimate governance belongs to the voters, underscoring the democratic essence of grassroots politics as citizens taking ownership of their governance (GoVote, 2025). Furthermore, grassroots participation promotes transparency and prevents the marginalization of underrepresented groups, ensuring equitable development outcomes. In sum, grassroots engagement is a vital democratic principle and practice that empowers communities, enhances social justice, and strengthens governance structures at multiple levels.

Conceptualizing Voters Education: Voter education is a vital component of the democratic process, designed to equip eligible voters with the necessary knowledge and skills to participate effectively in elections. It involves the dissemination of comprehensive information about the electoral system, including voter eligibility, registration procedures, how and where to vote, as well as the political choices available on the ballot (Open Election Data, 2013). This education bridges the gap between the electorate and the electoral process, ensuring that voters are not only aware of their rights but are also prepared to cast informed ballots without confusion or error. Effective voter education campaigns utilize various media platforms, including traditional media such as radio and television, print materials, and increasingly, digital platforms like social media, to reach diverse populations (Open Election Data, 2013). Beyond merely providing information, voter education serves to empower citizens by fostering electoral confidence and motivation to participate in elections. It seeks to counteract voter apathy and disenfranchisement by clarifying the importance of each vote in shaping governance and public policy. Furthermore, voter education is essential in safeguarding the integrity of elections; it reduces the likelihood of spoiled ballots and administrative errors by instructing voters on proper voting procedures (ACE Project, 2013). The scope of voter education extends to addressing the needs of marginalized groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities, by offering tailored communication methods and inclusive outreach strategies. This ensures equitable access to electoral knowledge and promotes broad participation across different societal sectors (United Nations, 2002).

In the context of emerging and developing democracies, voter education holds particular significance in building trust in electoral institutions and processes. It provides the electorate with a clearer understanding of the voting process and the democratic principles underlying governance, which is crucial in post-conflict or politically unstable societies (Zarjes, 2019). By fostering a culture of informed participation, voter education contributes to the legitimacy, representation, and accountability of elected officials and democratic institutions. Therefore, voter education is not only about educating individuals on the mechanics of voting but also about nurturing democratic citizenship and active political engagement for sustainable democratic development (ACE Project, 2013; Zarjes, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

This research deploys the structural functionalist theory as the framework, to explain the impact of grassroots engagement in political campaigns in the context of the Ondo State 2024 governorship election, with implications for subsequent Nigerian elections: Structural functionalism, as articulated by Parsons (1951), views society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote stability and social order. In the context of political campaigns, grassroots engagement is a key functional component that contributes to the coherence and stability of the political system by fostering citizen participation and legitimizing leadership. In the Ondo State 2024 governorship election, grassroots engagement served as an essential mechanism through which different social groups articulated their needs and preferences, which in turn enabled the political actors to align their campaign strategies with these demands. This interaction between the political system and its constituents reflects the theoretical emphasis by Parsons (1951) on the integration of individuals into societal structures through reciprocal roles, ensuring that political leaders are responsive and accountable to the grassroots, promoting political stability and democracy.

Exponents of structural functionalism such as Merton (1968) further contribute to understanding the dynamics of grassroots engagement by highlighting the role of functions and dysfunctions within social structures. Applying Merton's perspective to the Ondo 2024 election, grassroots political mobilization can be seen as a manifest function that facilitates voter education, participation, and the consolidation of democratic culture by bridging the gap between elites and the electorate. However, Merton's theory also cautions about dysfunctions that may arise, such as elite manipulation or vote buying, which can undermine the integrity of the electoral process. Nonetheless, the election in Ondo State demonstrated how functional grassroots engagement, through organized community-level participation and communication, can strengthen democratic legitimacy and reinforce social cohesion. This functional reciprocity is vital for subsequent elections in Nigeria, as it establishes patterns of political accountability and citizen empowerment that are necessary for democratic consolidation, (Wilcox, 2024).

The implications of applying structural functionalism to grassroots engagement in elections extend beyond Ondo State's 2024 governorship race to Nigeria's broader electoral landscape. Given the theory's focus on system stability and the interdependence of institutions, effective grassroots mobilization acts as a social integrative function that mitigates political alienation and social fragmentation in Nigeria's diverse and pluralistic society (Butler, 2006). By ensuring that political participation is inclusive and representative at the grassroots level, structural functionalism suggests that political campaigns can contribute to national cohesion and reduce the risks of electoral violence and disenfranchisement. Consequently, political parties and electoral bodies should prioritize and institutionalize grassroots engagement strategies as part of their campaign frameworks to sustain democratic governance amid Nigeria's complex socio-political challenges.

Gap/Contribution to Knowledge

The contribution to knowledge of this research lies in its investigation of grassroots political engagement within the specific context of the 2024 Ondo State governorship election, offering nuanced understanding of how local community participation shapes voter turnout, electoral results, and democratic strengthening. This study fills a critical gap by linking grassroots dynamics directly to electoral performance and democratic consolidation in a Nigerian sub-national setting, thereby providing evidence-based recommendations to enhance citizen involvement and election quality in Nigeria's broader democratic process;

i. The study Provides a detailed assessment of grassroots engagement patterns and their measurable effects on voter mobilization and election outcomes in Ondo State, an understudied context in Nigerian electoral studies.
ii. This research identifies practical challenges grassroots actors face, enriching existing literature on political participation barriers in emerging democracies with localized, contextual insights.
iii. The study Advances understanding of how community level political involvement can promote democratic consolidation, offering a theoretical and empirical model applicable to future elections and political reforms in Nigeria.

This research thus bridges gaps between grassroots political behavior, electoral success, and democratic development, contributing to academic discourse as well as practical electoral policy and civic engagement strategies.

Findings and Discussion

Grassroots Engagement in Ondo 2024 Governorship Election: It's Influence on Voter's Mobilization and Election Outcome: The 2024 Ondo gubernatorial election featured active grassroots engagement efforts, particularly targeting youth participation through campaigns such as the Civic Shift Campaign. This initiative focused on empowering youth advocates across all 18 local government areas in Ondo State with civic knowledge and advocacy skills. Through a blend of online social media campaigns and in-person mobilization activities, young voters were encouraged to view voting as a necessary civic duty to positively influence governance. The campaign demonstrated how grassroots involvement could foster a culture of electoral participation despite persistent challenges like voter apathy and distrust in the electoral process. The consistent and coordinated outreach, both virtually and physically at the local level, expanded civic awareness and engagement among youths, which is crucial in shifting behavioral mindsets toward voting (Akinrelere, 2024). Despite these efforts, voter turnout in the 2024 Ondo election was notably low, with participation dropping to around 509,000 voters out of over two million registered, marking a decline relative to previous elections. Several factors impacted this turnout, including widespread distrust in the electoral system, fear of violence, errors in voter registers, and the entrenched perception of incumbent strength. Vote-buying and last-minute financial mobilization tactics also persisted, indicating a complex interplay between grassroots engagement and traditional electoral manipulations. Financially, the campaign prioritized local visibility through posters and banners, contrasting with other states that relied more heavily on rallies and mass media. These dynamics underscore the nuanced impacts of grassroots mobilization, where increased awareness and advocacy must compete with longstanding systemic challenges and vote-buying practices (PoliMoney Report, 2024).

Overall, grassroots engagement in the Ondo 2024 gubernatorial election played a significant role in voter mobilization by empowering local advocates and fostering civic responsibility among youths, which are essential for strengthening democratic participation. However, the election outcomes reflect that grassroots efforts alone cannot fully overcome structural issues such as political clientelism, vote-buying, and institutional distrust. The experience from Ondo highlights the importance of sustained grassroots advocacy combined with systemic electoral reforms and poverty reduction to enhance voter turnout and election credibility. For meaningful progress, continuous community-level engagement and enhanced local ownership of the electoral process remain imperative to transform voter attitudes and translate civic education into higher participation and more transparent election outcomes (Akinrelere, 2024; PoliMoney Report, 2024).

The Challenges Encountered by Grassroots Actors in Effectively Participating in the Electoral Process: Ondo 2024 in Perspective

The 2024 Ondo State gubernatorial election revealed several significant challenges faced by grassroots actors in effectively participating in the electoral process. First, there was a notably low voter turnout, with only about 508,963 out of over 2 million registered voters casting their votes. This represents a decline from previous years and underscores a pervasive distrust in the electoral system among grassroots communities. Several factors contributed to this low participation, including fears of electoral violence, prevalent in past elections, and widespread skepticism regarding the fairness of the process. Many grassroots voters also expressed a belief that defeating an incumbent governor was nearly impossible due to the incumbent's strong access to state resources and federal backing, which discouraged political engagement and voter turnout (Akinrelere, 2024; Ready To Lead Africa, 2024). Second, vote-buying was rampant during the Ondo 2024 election, posing a severe challenge to genuine grassroots participation. Poverty and economic hardship made many voters vulnerable to inducements, with political parties and agents offering cash amounts ranging from ₦5,000 to ₦10,000 in exchange for votes. This practice undermined the integrity of the electoral process and shifted the focus of many grassroots actors from principled political participation to immediate financial gain. The incidence of vote-buying was widely condemned by electoral observers and civic groups, highlighting a deep-rooted challenge in mobilizing genuine democratic engagement among grassroots voters (Akinrelere, 2024; Yiaga Africa, 2024).

Lastly, logistical and administrative challenges such as inaccuracies in the voters' register significantly impeded grassroots participation. Many registered voters faced difficulties due to obsolete voter lists containing deceased individuals or people who had relocated. This problem was compounded by restrictions that prevented voters from casting ballots outside their designated registration areas, further disenfranchising grassroots actors who often experience mobility constraints. This administrative defect diminished voters' confidence in the electoral process and emphasized the critical need for continuous voter registration and updates to electoral rolls to reflect the dynamic population realities at the grassroots level (Akinrelere, 2024). In sum, the challenges of low turnout, vote-buying, and flawed voter registration collectively illustrate the complex barriers grassroots actors face in engaging effectively in Ondo State's electoral process.

Grassroots Political Engagement and Improved Democratic Practices: Implications for Future Elections in Nigeria

Grassroots political engagement in Nigeria remains limited, characterized by low citizen participation at the local government level, which undermines the foundational goals of democratic governance. Studies reveal that despite the establishment of local governments to foster political education and socialization, factors such as inadequate access to information on government programs, lack of trust in political office holders, and limited government responsiveness to civil society hinder robust involvement (Bakare, 2019). For instance, in Osun State, surveys indicate that community members often feel alienated, with only marginal platforms like town hall meetings or public forums providing superficial engagement, frequently marred by political bias and poor accessibility (Bakare, 2019). Similarly, empirical research in Bayelsa State's Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Area confirms low participation rates, attributing this to insufficient political mobilization and awareness, which perpetuates elite dominance and weakens grassroots democracy (University of Nigeria Journal of Political Economy, 2016).

Enhanced grassroots engagement promises significant improvements in democratic practices by promoting accountability, transparency, and inclusivity in Nigeria's electoral processes. Active citizen involvement at the community level, through strategies like door-to-door canvassing, town halls, and youth-led advocacy, has proven effective in countering electoral violence and boosting voter turnout, as evidenced by campaigns during the 2007 elections that facilitated collective action against intimidation (Vicente & Collier, 2015). Recent initiatives, such as those by the Consolidated APC Grassroots Movement (CAGrAM) and youth forums supported by organizations like KDI, emphasize nationwide strategies for voter education and reform advocacy ahead of 2027, addressing issues like voter apathy and misinformation (Kimpact Development Initiative, 2024). These efforts align with findings that grassroots mobilization strengthens local accountability, reduces corruption perceptions, and fosters civic responsibility, particularly when integrated with electoral reforms prioritizing local government autonomy (Yiaga Africa, 2024).

For future elections, particularly the 2027 polls, bolstering grassroots engagement could transform Nigeria's democracy by ensuring more credible, inclusive outcomes and mitigating risks of violence or apathy. Groups like the Grassroots Mobilization Initiative (GMI) and Grassroots Movement for Tinubu (GMT) are already charting paths through house-to-house sensitization and voter registration drives, signaling a shift toward bottom-up influence on electoral results (The Guardian Nigeria, 2026; The Nation Newspaper, 2025). Scholarly analyses suggest that sustained participation enhances democratic consolidation by institutionalizing voter education, decentralizing power, and neutralizing anti-democratic actors, potentially leading to higher turnout and policy responsiveness (Bakare, 2019). However, realizing this requires urgent reforms, including constitutional amendments for devolved powers and mandatory public consultations, to overcome barriers like federal interference and low awareness, paving the way for resilient electoral practices (Kimpact Development Initiative, 2024).

Conclusion

The study of grassroots engagement in the Ondo State 2024 governorship election reveals a significant impact on the electoral outcome and offers valuable implications for future elections in Nigeria. The victory of Lucky Aiyedatiwa of the All Progressives Congress (APC) with 366,781 votes against his closest rival from the People's Democratic Party (PDP) demonstrates the effectiveness of extensive grassroots mobilization and voter education. Despite a relatively low voter turnout, the distribution of votes across all 18 local government areas, with APC dominance in key regions, indicates that engaging voters at the community level can build broad-based support crucial for electoral success. The relatively low percentage of rejected votes also underscores the importance of voter education in minimizing electoral errors. This election exemplifies how strong grassroots campaigns foster political participation, strengthen party loyalty, and can decisively influence election outcomes by securing voter confidence and turnout in Nigeria's democratic process. For subsequent elections, the Ondo case highlights the necessity for political parties to invest in sustained grassroots networks and voter sensitization to enhance electoral competitiveness and democratic consolidation across Nigeria. Enhanced grassroots engagement promotes inclusivity, strengthens the accountability of political actors, and potentially reduces electoral violence by establishing peaceful, well-organized participation mechanisms at the local level.

Recommendations

Based on the study on the impact of grassroots engagement in political campaigns in the Ondo State 2024 governorship election, four key recommendations for subsequent elections in Nigeria are:

i. Enhance Voter Education and Political Awareness at the Grassroots Level: This is to address issues of voter apathy and low turnout, there should be stronger, sustained voter education programs at the grassroots. This would improve voter understanding of the electoral process, reduce rejected votes, and encourage informed participation in elections.

ii. Promote Inclusive Participation, Especially of Marginalized Groups: Efforts must be made to facilitate and monitor inclusive participation by marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities, youth, and women at the grassroots level. This ensures elections represent the diversity of the electorate and strengthens democratic legitimacy.

iii. Strengthen Grassroots Party Engagement and Candidate Interaction: Political parties should actively engage with grassroots communities early in the campaign process to build trust, address local concerns, and motivate higher voter turnout. This also mitigates the effect of voter disenchantment seen in Ondo where internal party conflicts reduced competitiveness and participation.

iv. Improve Election Integrity Monitoring and Mitigation of Electoral Malpractices: Grassroots engagement should include robust mechanisms for detecting and reducing vote buying, intimidation, and other electoral malpractices, which undermine the credibility of elections. Civil society and media collaborations at the grassroots can help foster transparency and accountability.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)

Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: January 15, 2026 **Accepted**: February 16, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026

Citation: Okoh, Blessing U. & Okoh, Precious T. (2026). "A Contextualization of 1 Timothy 4:7-10 on the Pharmacology of Spiritual Growth." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 52-60.

Article **Open Access**

A CONTEXTUALIZATION OF 1 TIMOTHY 4:7-10 ON THE PHARMACOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

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Abstract

This study reinterprets 1 Timothy 4:7-10 through a novel pharmacological metaphor, presenting spiritual formation as a therapeutic regimen for cultivating godliness (eusebeia) in the context of first-century Ephesus. Moving beyond the traditional athletic metaphor, the paper posits that the passage prescribes sound doctrine as a medicinal "active ingredient" and disciplined training (gymnazo¯) with strenuous effort (ago¯nizomai) as the regimen for its administration, countering the spiritually toxic "doctrines of demons." A tripartite methodology - historical-critical, metaphorical-theological, and exegetical - grounds the analysis. The historical-critical approach situates the text within Ephesus's socio-religious milieu, marked by syncretism and heresy, while examining debates on Pauline authorship. The metaphorical-theological framework reappropriates pharmacology, shifting from negative connotations of pharmakeia (sorcery) to therapeia (healing), to model spiritual transformation. Exegetical analysis unpacks the Greek text, highlighting the prescription's components: rejecting myths, training in godliness, and striving toward holistic spiritual health. The resulting pharmacological model of sanctification emphasizes active, grace-empowered participation, contrasting with Wesleyan, Reformed, and Keswick models by framing spiritual growth as a dynamic, lifelong regimen. This approach illuminates the passage's call for intentional discipline in the midst of modern spiritual challenges, offering a robust framework for fostering godliness in contemporary Christian practice. The study

underscores the enduring relevance of 1 Timothy's prescription for spiritual vitality, promising benefits for both present and eternal life.

Keywords: Contextualization, Spiritual, Growth, Pharmacology, and 1 Timothy 4:7-10.

Introduction

The pericope of 1 Timothy 4:7-10 stands as a main exhortation within the Pastoral Letters, providing a potent and concise strategy for spiritual strength. Traditionally interpreted through an athletic metaphor, its call to "train" in godliness evokes images of the gymnasium and the disciplined life of an athlete. While this framework is textually sound and theologically productive, it does not exhaust the passage's metaphorical richness or its practical and therapeutic implications. This paper argues that 1 Timothy 4:7-10, when interpreted through a pharmacological metaphor, presents a sophisticated therapeutic regimen for spiritual formation. This regimen prescribes disciplined training (gymnazo¯) in godliness (eusebeia) as the primary "medication" and strenuous effort (ago¯nizomai) as the necessary "adherence," functioning as a potent antidote to the spiritually toxic "doctrines of demons" circulating in first-century Ephesus. This hermeneutical approach moves beyond traditional athletic metaphors to frame spiritual growth as a process of holistic, therapeutic intervention aimed at cultivating spiritual health. By viewing sound doctrine as a prescribed "medicine" and spiritual disciplines as the "regimen" for its administration, this framework illuminates the passage's urgent concern not only with correct belief but with the practical, embodied process of cultivating a healthy spiritual constitution capable of resisting the pathogenic impact of heresy.

Spiritual Formation and Growth

Within contemporary evangelical theology, "spiritual formation" has become the preferred term to describe the process of Christian maturation. Dallas Willard offers a foundational definition, describing it as "the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself" (Willard, 2002, p. 22). This definition underscores that the process is initiated and empowered by the Holy Spirit, focuses on the transformation of the internal character, and has Christlikeness as its explicit aim. This process is not a passive state but an ongoing, dynamic journey of personal transformation, deepened faith, and an evolving relationship with God (Chad, 2025). The theological necessity for such formation is grounded in the doctrine of the *imago Dei*. Humanity, created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27), saw that image "perverted" by the Fall (Hoekema, 1986). The work of Christ is therefore not only relational but restorative; He came to restore both humanity's relationship with God and the divine image within humanity. As a result, spiritual formation is the process by which believers, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, are progressively conformed to the image of Christ, who is the perfect reflection of God. This journey toward Christlikeness is not linear but is shaped by divine encounters, struggles with doubt, community support, and the intentional practice of spiritual disciplines (Teo, 2017). The ultimate goal is a holistic transformation that results in right relationships with God, self, and others, manifesting as a godly and transformed lifestyle.

Methodology

This paper employs a tripartite methodology. First, a historical-critical analysis establishes the socio-religious and theological context of the Ephesian church to which the letter is addressed. This involves examining the scholarly debate surrounding the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles and its hermeneutical implications, as well as diagnosing the specific spiritual "malady" - the false teaching - that necessitated this pastoral prescription. Second, a metaphorical-theological analysis constructs and justifies the use of a pharmacological hermeneutic. This involves exploring the biblical concept of *pharmakeia* and reappropriating the broader field of pharmacology as a positive and therapeutic model for understanding the mechanics of spiritual transformation. Finally, a detailed linguistic and exegetical analysis of 1 Timothy 4:7-10 is conducted. This close reading of the Greek text serves to unfold the "prescription" itself, identifying its core components and mechanisms of action. The findings are synthesized into a coherent pharmacological model of sanctification, which are placed in dialogue with traditional Protestant models to highlight its unique contributions to the doctrine of spiritual growth.

The Ephesian Clinic: Contextualizing the Pastoral Prescription

A prescription is never written in a vacuum; it is a specific response to a particular patient's condition within a given environment. To understand the therapeutic logic of 1 Timothy 4:7-10, one must first enter the "clinic" of first-century Ephesus, assess the patient, and diagnose the illness. This requires an examination of the letter's origins, the socio-religious pressures on the Ephesian church, and the specific nature of the heresy that threatened its spiritual health. The identity of the "attending physician" - the author of 1 Timothy - has been a subject of intense scholarly debate since the nineteenth century. While the letter explicitly claims Pauline authorship (1 Tim. 1:1), a significant, and perhaps predominant, consensus among modern scholars views the Pastoral Epistles (PE) as pseudonymous, written in Paul's name by a later disciple (Aageson, 2020). Arguments for this position are cumulative, citing notable differences from the undisputed Pauline corpus in vocabulary, literary style, theological emphases, and historical details that are difficult to reconcile with the chronology of Paul's life presented in the book of Acts (Collins, 1988). Conversely, a robust defense of Pauline authorship continues, arguing that these discrepancies are not insurmountable (Carter, 2007). Proponents suggest that stylistic and lexical variations are attributable to factors such as Paul's advanced age, the unique subject matter, and the use of a different amanuensis, with some scholars proposing Luke as the likely scribe (Witherington, 2006).

The debate is not just a historical footnote; it determines the fundamental nature of the therapeutic intervention being prescribed. If the letter is understood as a direct communication from the apostle Paul to his apostolic delegate, Timothy, then the instructions in chapter 4 function as a personal, urgent "field prescription." It is a mentor's immediate response to an acute crisis threatening a specific community (Fee, 1988). In this scenario, the pharmacological metaphor is one of emergency medicine. However, if the letter is the work of a later Paulinist, its purpose shifts from immediate crisis management to the long-term institutionalization of Pauline tradition in a post-apostolic era. The text then becomes less of a personal letter and more of a "church manual" or a standardized "pharmacopeia," designed to ensure doctrinal stability for a church transitioning from a charismatic movement to an established institution (Aageson, 2020).

The Patient's Environment: The Socio-Religious Milieu of Ephesus

The church in Ephesus was situated in a complex and spiritually hazardous environment. As the capital of the Roman province of Asia, Ephesus was a large, cosmopolitan centre of trade, culture, and religion, with a population exceeding 250,000 (Portefaix, 1988). This multi-ethnic metropolis was characterized by great wealth, religious pluralism, and a climate of moral permissiveness. This environment promoted a syncretistic perspective where claims of exclusive truth were viewed with suspicion, and social pressure against such claims was acute (Kubik, 2012). For the nascent Christian community, this presented a constant temptation to compromise its distinctive beliefs and practices. The spiritual atmosphere of the city was dominated by powerful and pervasive religious forces. The most prominent was the cult of Artemis (Diana in Latin), a fertility goddess whose magnificent temple was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and a major economic engine for the city (Portefaix, 1988). Alongside the Artemis cult, the imperial cult demanded civic worship of the emperor, who was often titled "Saviour" and "Lord," creating a direct conflict with Christian confession. The city was also home to the worship of numerous other deities, such as Aphrodite and Dionysus, contributing to an environment saturated with hedonistic pleasures and idolatry (Jackson, 2011). Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus had established a strong church, but he foresaw that this spiritually toxic environment would produce internal threats (Acts 20:29-30).

The specific malady addressed in 1 Timothy is a form of false teaching that the author attributes to demonic origins, "deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1). The primary symptoms of this spiritual disease were a form of spiritually deceptive asceticism: its proponents forbade marriage and commanded abstinence from certain foods (1 Tim. 4:3). This asceticism was likely rooted in a dualistic worldview, possibly an incipient form of Gnosticism, which viewed the material world and the physical body as inherently evil and thus to be denied (Mowczko, 2013). This ascetic impulse was combined with an obsession with "myths and endless genealogies" (1 Tim. 1:4), which appear to be speculative and esoteric interpretations of the Mosaic Law, suggesting a syncretistic blend of Jewish and proto-Gnostic elements (Third Millennium Ministries, n.d.). The motivation of these teachers seems to have been a mixture of pride - a desire to be recognized as "teachers of the law" (1 Tim. 1:7) - and financial greed, viewing godliness as a means of profit (1 Tim. 6:5). Consequently, the prescription in 1 Timothy 4:7-10 is a highly specific therapeutic intervention. It is not a generic call to be spiritual but a carefully calibrated formula that rejects both the world's self-indulgence and the heretics' ungodly self-denial, championing a third way: a path of sanctified embodiment where God's good creation is to be received with thanksgiving (Fee, 1988).

A Framework for Theological Pharmacology

In order to fully understand the therapeutic precision of 1 Timothy 4:7-10, it is essential to establish a hermeneutical framework that can account for its language of intervention, training, and holistic health. While the athletic metaphor is a common and valid starting point, a pharmacological metaphor offers a more comprehensive model for understanding the dynamics of spiritual formation as a response to spiritual disease. This "theological pharmacology" provides a lens through which to analyze the interaction between doctrine (as a spiritual substance) and the believer's spiritual constitution. The term "pharmacology" derives from the Greek root *pharmak-*, which has a complex and often negative history in the New Testament. The noun *pharmakeia* appears in lists of the "works of the flesh" and is typically translated as "sorcery" or "witchcraft" (Gal. 5:20; Rev. 18:23). In the ancient world, the term referred broadly to the use of drugs, often in connection with pagan religious practices, idolatry and deception (Pretorius, 2023). The "doctrines of demons" circulating in Ephesus can thus be understood as a form of spiritual *pharmakeia* - a toxic concoction of lies that poisons the soul.

This paper proposes to reappropriate the concept of pharmacology, moving from the negative pole of *pharmakeia* (poison) to the positive pole of *therapeia* (healing). This hermeneutical framework, which can be termed "theological pharmacology," examines the interaction of doctrines and spiritual practices (the "drugs") with the believer's ultimate values and spiritual health (Moraczewski, 1973). Both science and theology rely on metaphors and models to articulate complex, often unobservable realities (Barbour, 1974). Just as medicine uses metaphors of warfare to describe disease, theology can employ pharmacology as a heuristic model to understand the mechanics of spiritual transformation prescribed in Scripture.

Components of the Metaphor

A pharmacological model provides a structured vocabulary for analyzing the process of spiritual growth. The key components of this metaphor, as applied to 1 Timothy 4, are as follows:

i. **The Prescription (The Active Ingredient):** The prescribed "medication" is sound doctrine, described as the "words of the faith and of the good doctrine" (4:6). This is the life-giving truth of the gospel, which nourishes the soul and promotes spiritual health.
ii. **The Regimen (Adherence and Dosing):** The therapeutic regimen consists of the spiritual disciplines, especially the active "training" (gymnazo¯) and strenuous "striving" (ago¯nizomai) mentioned in the text. This is the prescribed method for administering and metabolizing the "medicine" of truth.
iii. **The Therapeutic Outcome (Efficacy):** The desired state of spiritual health is *eusebeia* (godliness). This is the evidence that the therapy is effective. It is a holistic condition of spiritual well-being, reverence toward God, and a life that reflects His character.
iv. **Contraindications and Toxicology:** The "godless myths and old wives' tales" (4:7) are contraindicated substances. They are spiritually toxic, and their ingestion leads to adverse side effects, such as "controversial speculations" (1:4) and a "shipwreck" of faith (1:19).

Exegetical Analysis of 1 Timothy 4:7-10

A close reading of the Greek text of 1 Timothy 4:7-10 reveals the precise details of this spiritual-pharmacological prescription. The author moves from a command to avoid spiritual toxins to the core instruction for therapeutic training, followed by a cost-benefit analysis of the regimen and a concluding statement on the divine source of this healing. The verse opens with a sharp contrast, commanding a continuous and personal refusal (*παραιτοῦ*, *paraitou*) of "profane and old wives' myths" (*τοὺς δὲ βεβήλους καὶ γραώδεις μύθους, tous de bebēlous kai graōdeis muthous*). The myths are characterized as profane (*bebēlous*), that which is common and devoid of sacred character, and "old-womanish" (*graōdeis*), a term of contempt suggesting they are nonsensical tales (Hiebert, 1957). This prophylactic measure is immediately followed by the positive prescription: "but train yourself for godliness" (*γύμναζε δὲ σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν*, *gymnaze de seauton pros eusebeian*). The verb *γύμναζε* (*gymnaze*) is a present active imperative, calling for continuous, diligent, and strenuous effort. It evokes the image of an athlete in a gymnasium, stripping away all encumbrances for rigorous training (Fee, 1988). The goal of this training is *εὐσέβειαν* (*eusebeian*), "godliness," a key term in the Pastoral Epistles denoting a practical, lived-out piety - a God-centered orientation that shapes one's entire life.

Verse 8 provides the rationale for the demanding regimen, presenting a clear cost-benefit analysis. The author begins by acknowledging the limited utility of physical discipline: "for bodily training is of some value" (*ἡ γὰρ σωματικὴ γυμνασία πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐστὶν ὠφέλιμος*, *hē gar sōmatikē gymnasia pros oligon estin ōphelimos*). This may carry a subtle critique of the false teachers' ascetic practices, conceding that such discipline has some profit, but its benefit is limited to "a little while" or this transient life (Hiebert, 1957). In stark contrast, "godliness is of value for all things" (*ἡ δὲ εὐσέβεια πρὸς πάντα ὠφέλιμός ἐστιν, hē de eusebeia pros panta ōphelimos estin*), because it "holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (*ἐπαγγελίαν ἔχουσα ζωῆς τῆς νῦν καὶ τῆς μελλούσης, epaggelian echousa zōēs tēs nyn kai tēs mellousēs*). The "medication" of godliness has both immediate and long-term therapeutic benefits, making it the ultimate spiritual and existential investment (Platt, 2019).

Verses 9 and 10 ground this complete therapeutic enterprise in the character and work of God. Verse 9 opens with a formula characteristic of the Pastoral Epistles: "The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance" (πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, *pistos ho logos kai pasēs apodochēs axios*), emphatically endorsing the preceding statement. Verse 10 then explains the motivation for the arduous work of ministry: "For to this end we toil and strive" (εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ κοπιῶμεν καὶ ἀγωνιζόμεθα, *eis touto gar kopiōmen kai agōnizometha*). The verb ἀγωνιζόμεθα (*agōnizometha*) depicts a grueling struggle, a fight against adversaries, or an athlete contending for a prize (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, n.d.). The ultimate foundation for this strenuous labour is hope in the "living God, who is the Saviour of all people, especially of those who believe" (ὅτι ἠλπίκαμεν ἐπὶ θεῷ ζῶντι, ὅς ἐστιν σωτὴρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων, μάλιστα πιστῶν, *hoti ēlpikamen epi theō zōnti, hos estin sōtēr pantōn anthrōpōn, malista pistōn*). This God is identified as the σωτήρ (*sōtēr*), the Saviour or Healer, who provides the ultimate remedy. The scope of His saving work is universal, but its specific salvific efficacy is special to those who believe (Knight, 1992).

The Regimen of Spiritual Growth: A Therapeutic Process

The pharmacological model of sanctification is a multi-stage process. It begins with a diagnosis of the human condition, which is characterized by sin and a susceptibility to spiritually toxic ideas. In response, God, the Divine Physician, provides a prescription: the gospel of grace, which is encapsulated in "sound doctrine" (Berkhof, 1938). The believer's role is one of active adherence to this prescribed regimen. This involves both prophylaxis (rejecting "godless myths") and the therapeutic regimen itself: the strenuous, disciplined training (*gymnazo*) and striving (*ago nizomai*) in godliness. This is not a passive reception of grace but an active, grace-empowered participation in the healing process. The mechanism of action involves the Holy Spirit, who empowers the believer to metabolize the "medicine" of truth, leading to the internal transformation of character (Willard, 2002). The final therapeutic outcome is *eusebeia* - a state of holistic spiritual health that manifests in a life of reverence toward God.

Comparison with Traditional Models of Sanctification

Situating this pharmacological model in dialogue with other prominent Protestant views of sanctification highlights its unique contributions. While all orthodox models affirm that sanctification is a work of God's grace, they differ in their descriptions of the process, the role of human effort, and the expected outcome in this life. The following table contrasts the proposed Pharmacological Model with the Wesleyan, Reformed, and Keswick models to clarify its distinctives (Alexander, 1988; Naselli, 2010).

Feature	Wesleyan Model	Reformed Model	Keswick ("Higher Life") Model	**Pharmacological Model (1 Timothy 4)**
Core Metaphor	Attaining Perfection (in love)	Gradual Growth / Building	Entering a "Higher Life" / Rest	Therapeutic Regimen / Training for Health
Nature of Progress	Gradual, but with a potential crisis moment of "Entire Sanctification".	Lifelong, gradual, progressive, and incomplete in this life.	A decisive crisis of "surrender" leads to a new plateau of victorious living.	A continuous, strenuous training process with cumulative effects; health can fluctuate based on adherence and exposure to toxins.
Key Human Action	Faith and cooperation with grace, striving toward perfection.	Active pursuit of holiness through means of grace (Word, sacraments, prayer), mortification of sin.	Passive surrender and faith ("Let go and let God"); "trying" is counterproductive.	Active, disciplined, strenuous training (gymnazo¯) and striving (ago¯nizomai); adherence to the prescribed regimen.
View of Sin	Post-sanctification sin is a voluntary transgression of a known law; freedom from the "bent to sinning" is possible.	Indwelling sin remains a reality throughout the believer's life; a constant battle between flesh and Spirit.	Distinguishes between the "carnal" and "spiritual" Christian; victory over known sin is the norm for the surrendered believer.	Spiritual "disease" (sin) and "toxins" (heresy) are constant threats requiring ongoing prophylactic and therapeutic intervention.
Role of Crisis	"Entire Sanctification" is a potential "second blessing" crisis.	Definitive sanctification occurs at conversion, but progress is non-crisis-oriented.	The crisis of full surrender is central to entering the "victorious life".	No single crisis is emphasized; rather, it is a daily, disciplined regimen. Crises may occur as acute spiritual "illnesses" requiring intervention.

The Pharmacological Model, as derived from 1 Timothy 4, offers a unique synthesis. Like the Reformed view, it posits a lifelong, strenuous process. However, its emphasis on *training* and *striving* provides a more dynamic picture of the believer's role. Unlike the Keswick model, it does not advocate for passivity but for intense, grace-empowered effort. And in contrast to the Wesleyan model's potential for a single crisis of "entire sanctification," the pharmacological model suggests an ongoing regimen where spiritual health is maintained through daily discipline and vigilance.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that interpreting 1 Timothy 4:7-10 through a pharmacological hermeneutic provides a powerful and practical model for understanding spiritual formation. This approach recasts the pursuit of godliness as a comprehensive therapeutic regimen prescribed by the Divine Physician, God the Saviour. This regimen requires both a prophylactic rejection of spiritual toxins—the "profane myths" of false doctrine—and a disciplined adherence to a therapeutic course of action: the strenuous training (gymnazo¯) and striving (ago¯nizomai) in godliness. The "medicine" in this regimen is the life-giving truth of the gospel, and the desired outcome is a state of holistic spiritual health (*eusebeia*) that holds promise for both the present life and the life to come. The pharmacological model derived from 1 Timothy 4 offers a potent critique of several contemporary challenges to authentic spiritual discipline. The modern world, particularly in Western consumer cultures, presents a constant barrage of competing "prescriptions" for fulfillment. Digital technology and on-demand entertainment function as powerful spiritual "opiates" or "placebos," promising connection but often leading to distraction and spiritual malnourishment (Reinke, 2022). Adherence to the biblical regimen of disciplined training in godliness requires intentional, counter-cultural effort against these pervasive forces. This model also addresses perennial challenges within the church itself. It supplies a clear safeguard against the pitfall of legalism, which can "choke the heart and soul out of walking with God" (Foster, 1983). In the pharmacological framework, the disciplines are not virtuous in themselves; they are simply the prescribed means of administering the medicine of grace.

The prescription articulated in 1 Timothy 4:7-10 remains immensely relevant for the church in every age. It diagnoses the timeless human susceptibility to spiritual disease and prescribes an enduring remedy. It calls believers not to a life of passive waiting or anxious self-effort, but to a life of disciplined partnership with God. The church is to be a community of spiritual health, a place where believers are nourished on the "words of the faith" and diligently train together in the gymnasium of discipleship. The Christian life is a strenuous endeavour, a labour and a struggle fuelled by a confident hope in the living God, the ultimate Healer and Saviour. By rejecting the toxic myths of our age and embracing the therapeutic regimen of the gospel, the church can cultivate the robust godliness that is profitable for all things, holding the promise of true life, both now and forever.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: August 06, 2026 **Accepted**: March 25, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Salifu, Gabriel (2026). "Medical Brain Drain and the 'Japa' Phenomenon in Southwestern Nigeria: A Socio-Ethical Analysis." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 61-68.

Article **Open Access**

MEDICAL BRAIN DRAIN AND THE 'JAPA' PHENOMENON IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA: A SOCIO-ETHICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study conducts a comprehensive socio-ethical analysis of the accelerating emigration of healthcare professionals, commonly termed the 'Japa' phenomenon from Southwestern Nigeria. 'Japa,' a Yoruba slang meaning "to flee, escape, or run," encapsulates the urgent, self-preservation-driven departure of skilled individuals, particularly from the medical sector. Employing a mixed-methods framework that synthesizes empirical data, policy analysis, and ethical theories, this research investigates the multifaceted drivers, profound societal consequences, and complex ethical dilemmas inherent in this brain drain. Findings reveal that push factors including systemic infrastructural decay, chronic underfunding of the health sector, inadequate remuneration, professional insecurity, and heightened societal unrest are primary catalysts. The mass exodus has precipitated a critical depletion of human resources for health (HRH), exacerbating healthcare inequities, deteriorating quality of care, and eroding medical training capacity. Ethically, the phenomenon presents a tension between individual physicians' right to pursue personal well-being and career fulfillment (autonomy and self-determination) and their social contract obligations to the state and vulnerable populations (beneficence, non-maleficence, and distributive justice). The paper argues that the Nigerian state's failure to provide a conducive professional and security environment constitutes a breach of its side of this social contract, partially legitimizing the emigration response. However, it also highlights ethical concerns regarding the destination countries' recruitment practices and the broader global injustice in health workforce distribution. The study concludes that effective mitigation requires not merely restrictive policies but a fundamental, ethically grounded restructuring of Nigeria's health sector governance, coupled with global dialogue on ethical recruitment and health equity.

Keywords: Brain Drain, Medical Migration, Japa Phenomenon, Healthcare Ethics, Nigeria,

Introduction

The global health workforce crisis is acutely felt in Sub-Saharan Africa, a region characterized by a debilitating paradox: it bears an inordinate share of the global disease burden approximately 24% while commanding a meager 3% of the world's health workers, a disparity that severely undermines health system resilience and the attainment of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022; Anyangwe & Mtonga, 2007). Within this distressing continental panorama, Nigeria Africa's most populous nation and its largest economy exemplifies a severe and rapidly accelerating medical brain drain. The recent, rapid escalation of this trend has been captured and popularized in the national lexicon as the 'Japa' phenomenon, a term derived from Yoruba, meaning to flee swiftly, often from hardship, peril, or an untenable situation. More than mere migration, 'Japa' connotes a visceral, urgent escape, reflecting a profound sense of systemic failure and diminished hope. Southwestern Nigeria, home to the nation's oldest and most concentrated cluster of tertiary healthcare and training institutions, including the University College Hospital, Ibadan, and Lagos University Teaching Hospital serves as a critical epicenter for both the production and subsequent hemorrhaging of medical talent. This region, therefore, presents a poignant case study of the dynamics of skilled health worker emigration. This mass emigration of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, laboratory scientists, and other critical healthcare professionals presents a quintessential socio-ethical challenge for 21st-century global health. It is a tangible manifestation of the collision between individual agency and collective welfare, local health needs and global labour market opportunities, and the reciprocal obligations implied in the relationship between the state and its professionals. While a significant corpus of existing literature has diligently documented the brain drain's staggering scale and its primary economic determinants (Adebayo et al., 2021; Chikwelu & Okonta, 2022; Obioma et al., 2023), a dedicated socio-ethical analysis of the 'Japa' phenomenon as a distinct, culturally contextualized social action remains critically underexplored. Such an analysis must move beyond quantifying losses to interrogate the moral universe within which these migration decisions are made and adjudicated.

This research, therefore, aims to bridge this gap by pursuing three interconnected objectives: first, to analyze the interconnected socio-economic, political, and psychological drivers of the 'Japa' phenomenon among healthcare professionals in Southwestern Nigeria; second, to assess its multi-layered, cascading impact on the source health system, medical education, and societal health outcomes; and third, to rigorously interrogate the attendant ethical dilemmas from the perspectives of the migrating professionals, the Nigerian state, the residual patient population, and the global health community. By doing so, this paper seeks to reframe the conversation from one of blame to one of accountability, responsibility, and justice.

Conceptual Framework

To navigate the complex ethical terrain of medical brain drain, this analysis is principally guided by the framework of social contract theory, as applied specifically to the health sector (Daniels, 2008; Walzer, 1983). This theoretical lens posits the existence of an implicit, multi-party covenant between the state, healthcare professionals, and the citizenry. Within this tripartite agreement, the state assumes fundamental obligations: to provide a secure and stable environment, to invest in and maintain functional health infrastructure, to ensure fair and timely compensation commensurate with skill and labour, and to foster an ecosystem conducive to professional growth and development. This constitutes the state's duty of justice and stewardship over public goods. In reciprocal return, healthcare professionals are socialized often through state-subsidized education and licensing with an expectation to contribute their acquired skills and expertise towards safeguarding and improving the health of the society that nurtured them. This embodies principles of beneficence, non-maleficence (to not abandon patients), and a duty of reciprocity (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019; Mills, 2011). The citizenry, for their part, legitimate this arrangement through taxation, civic compliance, and the trust they place in both the state and the medical profession. The 'Japa' phenomenon, conceptualized through this framework, signals a catastrophic breakdown or perceived nullification of this social contract. When professionals feel the state has consistently and egregiously reneged on its core duties failing to provide security, tools, or dignity they exercise what Albert Hirschman (1970) theorized as the "exit" option, as opposed to "voice" or "loyalty." Their emigration is thus not a first resort but a last act of agency in a context of perceived institutional betrayal. This framework allows for a nuanced ethical evaluation of the claims, responsibilities, and culpabilities of all parties involved, moving the discourse beyond simplistic narratives of unpatriotic desertion.

Methodology

To comprehensively address the research aims, this study adopted a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, conducted over a 12-month period from 2023 to 2024. This approach allowed for the triangulation of data, providing both breadth and depth of understanding (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The initial quantitative phase involved a cross-sectional survey administered to 450 licensed healthcare professionals, including medical doctors, registered nurses, and midwives, purposively sampled from six major tertiary hospitals across four states in Southwestern Nigeria: Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, and Osun. The structured questionnaire, validated for content and reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87), was designed to capture key metrics including intensity of migration intent, ranked preferred destinations, and an assessment of 20 push/pull factors using a 5-point Likert scale. Quantitative data were cleaned and analyzed using SPSS version 28, employing descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations) and inferential analyses (chi-square, correlation) to identify significant patterns and associations. Subsequently, a qualitative phase was undertaken to explore the nuanced narratives behind the numbers. This phase comprised 35 in-depth interviews (IDIs) and 8 focus group discussions (FGDs) with strategically selected stakeholders. Participants included: (a) healthcare professionals with active, advanced migration plans; (b) hospital administrators and department heads grappling with staff attrition; (c) senior policy makers within State Ministries of Health; and (d) medical educators from teaching hospitals. Interview and FGD guides were semi-structured, probing into lived experiences, the ethical reasoning underpinning migration decisions, perceptions of institutional responsibility, and the psychological burden of practice in a resource-constrained setting. All qualitative data were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to a rigorous thematic analysis using NVivo 12 software, following the iterative coding process described by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Complementing these primary data sources, a systematic documentary analysis was conducted. This involved a critical review of key national health policy documents (e.g., the National Health Act, 2014), federal and state budgetary allocations to the health sector from 2018 to 2023, and annual reports from professional regulatory bodies such as the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN). This analysis provided essential context on policy commitments versus implementation realities.

Drivers of the 'Japa' Phenomenon: Beyond Economics

The survey results presented a stark picture of professional disillusionment, with 82.5% of respondents indicating they had active, concrete plans or were seriously considering emigration within the next three years. This figure aligns with and exceeds regional estimates, underscoring the criticality of the situation (Oluwasanu et al., 2021). While economic factors were prominent, the data revealed a complex interplay of systemic failures. The top-ranked push factors, in order of agreement, were:

i. **Remuneration and Working Conditions (98% agreement):** Salaries were consistently described as "non-living wages," a sentiment amplified by Nigeria's soaring inflation rate, which reached 33.2% in March 2024 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2024). The demoralizing contrast with the earnings of peers in diaspora and even within other domestic sectors was a frequent theme.
ii. **Systemic Infrastructural Deficits (95%):** Chronic shortages of essential equipment from functional ventilators and dialysis machines to basic surgical tools coupled with an erratic power supply that forces surgeries to be conducted under flashlight or generator fumes, were cited as daily professional indignities.
iii. **Professional Immobility and Frustration (90%):** Respondents highlighted limited opportunities for specialization due to scarce training slots, opaque and politically influenced promotion structures, and a perceived lack of meritocracy, which stifled career progression.
iv. **Deteriorating Security and Quality of Life (88%)**: Rising incidents of kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, and general societal instability have eroded any sense of safety, affecting not just professionals but their families, making emigration a security decision as much as a career one (IOM, 2023; Salifu, 2024).
v. **Psychological Burden and Burnout (85%):** Immense and unsustainable patient loads, coupled with the moral distress of being unable to provide care that meets basic professional standards due to systemic constraints, were leading to severe burnout, depression, and anxiety.

The qualitative data profoundly enriched these statistical findings, giving voice to the ethical anguish underpinning the decision to leave. A senior resident doctor in surgery articulated a sentiment echoed by many: "It's not just about money. It's about dignity. How can I be expected to suture in darkness? How do I watch patients die from conditions a simple, functioning MRI machine could have diagnosed? 'Japa' is not an act of greed; it is an act of professional and personal survival a reclaiming of my agency." This narrative reframes emigration from a mere economic calculus to an ethically justifiable act of preserving one's professional integrity, mental health, and human dignity in the face of systemic devaluation.

Socio-Ethical Impacts on the Source Region

The consequences of the exodus are not abstract; they manifest in a vicious, self-reinforcing cycle of healthcare deprivation and ethical compromise for those left behind.

i. **Clinical Care Erosion and Violation of Beneficence:** The loss is not uniform; it disproportionately affects experienced consultants and mid-career specialists, creating a dangerous competency vacuum. In some states in the region, patient-to-doctor ratios have skyrocketed to over 5,000:1, a catastrophic figure that blatantly contravenes WHO recommendations (WHO, 2016). This directly violates the ethical principle of beneficence for the remaining population, who are denied access to timely and skilled care.

ii. **Educational Collapse and Intergenerational Injustice:** Teaching hospitals, the bedrock of medical education, are being stripped of their most qualified faculty. This “hollowing out” of academia compromises the quality of training for the next generation of health workers, creating an “empty pipeline” effect. This constitutes a profound breach of intergenerational justice, mortgaging the health of future Nigerians (Gostin & Friedman, 2015).

iii. **Inverse Subsidy and Global Distributive Injustice:** Nigeria’s significant public investment in subsidizing medical education, estimated at tens of thousands of dollars per doctor is effectively transferred as a human capital subsidy to the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, and Saudi Arabia (Mackintosh et al., 2006). This represents a perverse flow of resources from a lower-income country to some of the world’s wealthiest nations, exacerbating global health inequities and raising serious questions of exploitative practice and compensatory justice (Brock, 2009; Benatar, 2007).

iv. **Moral Distress and the Burden on Those Who Stay:** The health workers who remain, whether by choice or circumstance, are burdened with impossible workloads and the constant ethical distress of practicing below the standard of care they were trained to provide. This “second victim” phenomenon fuels further burnout, cynicism, and plans for eventual departure, accelerating the system’s collapse (Wu, 2000).

The Core Ethical Dilemma: Autonomy, Obligation, and a Broken Contract

At the heart of the ‘Japa’ phenomenon lies a profound ethical tension between competing moral claims.

i. **The Professional’s Right to Autonomy and Self-Determination:** From a liberal individualist perspective, healthcare professionals, like all individuals, possess a fundamental human right to seek safety, personal fulfillment, and a better quality of life for themselves and their families. Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights explicitly affirms the right to leave any country. A utilitarian analysis might further argue that the dramatic improvement in an individual’s well-being, security, and professional satisfaction abroad often outweighs their marginal, and often futile, contribution within a collapsing system (Pogge, 2005).

ii. **The Professional’s Social Obligation (Duty of Reciprocity and Non-Abandonment):** Conversely, communitarian and duty-based ethics emphasize the professional’s obligations arising from the social contract. The principles of beneficence (to do good) and non-maleficence (to do no harm) suggest a strong duty not to harm vulnerable patients by withdrawing care and abandoning them to a failing system. The significant public subsidy of their education strengthens the argument for an obligation of service or reciprocity, a concept underpinning mandatory service schemes in other nations (Mills, 2011).

iii. **Resolution within the Social Contract Framework:** This research posits that the Nigerian state has systematically and persistently failed to meet its primary obligations within the social contract: to ensure basic security, provide workable tools, and offer dignified, timely compensation. This fundamental breach, as evidenced by the findings, nullifies or severely weakens the moral binding force of the professional's obligation to stay. When one party to a contract defaults entirely, the other is often released from their duties. As one consultant physician framed it during an interview: "You cannot stand on the moral high ground and invoke a contract that you have, by your actions and inactions, already rendered void. The state broke the covenant first." Thus, a significant share of the ethical culpability for the brain drain shifts from the migrating individual to the state actors and institutions responsible for governance.

The Ethical Responsibility of Destination Countries

The ethical analysis cannot be confined to Nigeria's borders. The active, targeted recruitment of health workers from crisis-ridden systems by wealthy nations often through streamlined visa pathways and attractive relocation packages raises serious questions of complicity and exploitation. While the World Health Organization's Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel (WHO, 2010) provides guidelines for ethical recruitment, its voluntary, non-binding nature severely limits enforcement and accountability. Many high-income countries continue to benefit from a "poacher and gamekeeper" duality, paying lip service to global health equity while actively draining the very workforces needed to achieve it in source countries (Taylor & Dhillon, 2011). This represents a collective action problem and a failure of global health governance.

Recommendations

First, for the Nigerian State and Sub-national Governments, the imperative is decisive, restorative action to rebuild trust. This requires a genuine, funded commitment to honoring the social contract. Specifically:

i. **Implement a Security Compact for Health Workers:** Develop and fund a dedicated security protocol in collaboration with law enforcement to ensure the safety of health workers commuting to and from facilities, particularly in high-risk areas. This is a non-negotiable precondition for professional practice.
ii. **Enact a Health Sector Renewal Fund with Transparent Governance:** Move beyond incremental budget increases to launch a time-bound, multi-billion Naira Health Sector Renewal Fund. This fund, managed by an independent board including professional representatives, should exclusively target critical infrastructure: equipping at least two tertiary hospitals per geopolitical zone to international standards within five years, ensuring uninterrupted power via hybrid solar-grid systems, and digitizing medical records.. Annual, publicly audited reports on fund utilization are essential to rebuild credibility.
iii. **Institute a Merit-Based, Automated Career Pathway:** Co-design with professional associations a transparent, digital platform for career progression. This system should automate promotion notifications based on verifiable criteria (exams, publications, years served), delink advancement from bureaucratic patronage, and create clear, funded pathways for subspecialization to retain ambitious talent.

Second, for the Nigerian Medical and Health Professional Associations, the role must evolve from protest to proactive co-governance and diaspora engagement.

i. **Establish a 'Diaspora Knowledge Repatriation and Circular Migration' Framework:** Partner with the government to create attractive, short-term fellowship and sabbatical programs for diaspora experts. Offer tax incentives, premium housing, and leadership roles in specific projects (e.g., setting up a new cardiac catheterization lab) to facilitate knowledge and skill transfer without requiring permanent return.

ii. **Launch a National Health Workforce Advocacy and Monitoring Observatory:** This independent body, hosted by a coalition of professional associations, would annually publish a "State of the Health Workforce" report, tracking not just attrition rates but also key metrics like infrastructure functionality, security incidents, and salary adequacy relative to inflation, holding all levels of government publicly accountable.

Third, for Destination Countries and the Global Health Community, ethical responsibility demands moving from soft codes to binding, compensatory justice.

i. **Develop Bilateral 'Health Partnership and Compensation' Agreements:** High-income countries actively recruiting from Nigeria should be encouraged to enter into binding bilateral treaties. These would mandate a significant, annual financial contribution (e.g., a percentage of the estimated training cost per recruited professional) paid directly into Nigeria's dedicated Health Sector Renewal Fund. This transforms recruitment from a predatory act into a partnership with tangible restitution for system strengthening.

Fourth, for Medical and Nursing Educational Institutions, curricular reform is necessary to build resilient, context-adapted practitioners.

i. **Integrate 'Health System Leadership, Advocacy, and Innovation' into Core Curricula:** Mandate modules that train students not only in clinical medicine but also in health systems science, policy advocacy, telemedicine application, and low-resource innovation. Empower the next generation to be change agents within the system, not just passive victims of its failures.

Fifth, for International Funding Agencies and Philanthropic Organizations, a strategic shift in investment is required.

i. **Pivot Funding to Health Workforce Retention and System Resiliency:** A significant portion of development aid for health should be explicitly earmarked for initiatives that directly improve retention: grants for hospital infrastructure upgrades, subsidies for secure staff housing, low-interest loans for clinicians to establish group practices in underserved areas, and funding for robust mental health and burnout prevention programs for health workers.

Ultimately, stemming the 'Japa' tide is a test of ethical commitment and political will. It requires all stakeholders domestic and global to move beyond rhetoric and undertake the difficult, just, and necessary work of repairing the broken foundations of Nigeria's health system. The alternative is the continued erosion of a fundamental human right: the right to health.

Conclusion

The 'Japa' phenomenon is far more than a demographic or economic trend; it is a symptomatic eruption of a profound socio-ethical breakdown in Nigeria's health governance and its broader social contract. Viewing it through a simplistic lens of individual betrayal or lack of patriotism fundamentally obscures the deeper, structural failures at play. The accelerating exodus of healthcare professionals from Southwestern Nigeria is a rational, if distressing, response to a system that has failed to guarantee their security, dignity, and professional viability. The ethical framework of a broken social contract provides a more accurate and just explanatory model, apportioning primary responsibility to systemic and governance failures. Consequently, addressing this crisis requires moving beyond palliative, restrictive measures such as enforcing bonding agreements or vilifying emigrants toward fundamental, ethically informed, and multi-level restorative strategies.. The goal must be to repair the breached covenant and make the choice to practice in Nigeria a rationally and ethically attractive one.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: January 30, 2026 **Accepted**: March 07, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Saleh, Bailey (2026). "Empirical Comparative Analysis of Western Europe Manufacturing Outputs with Eastern Europe Manufacturing Outputs, 2018-2024." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 69-76.

Article **Open Access**

EMPIRICAL COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WESTERN EUROPE MANUFACTURING OUTPUTS WITH EASTERN EUROPE MANUFACTURING OUTPUTS, 2018-2024

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Abstract
The study is engaged in an empirical comparative analysis of Western Europe and Eastern Europe manufacturing outputs between 2018 and 2024. Both Western Europe and Eastern Europe regions have been actively participating in the manufacturing sector of the global economy; but at different pace. Western Europe is the second leading region after the Asia region of the world in this regard. Whereas, its eastern neighbour Eastern Europe, has been putting up fair performance by placing 6th on the world regional manufacturing outputs ladder. The Eastern European region has seriously underperformed compared with that of the Western European region. The study adopted descriptive research design with methods of data used for analysis were sourced from World Bank Open Data on Manufacturing, UNCTAD annual reports, academic journals, bulletins, textbooks, scholarly papers, and internet materials. The generated narrative data was analyzed through critical discourse method, while, empirical data generated from verifiable sources, was computed by the researcher and presented in tabular and graphical forms and analyzed through descriptive and explanatory methods, drawing inference where appropriate. The study has established that the Eastern European region with 4% of the world manufacturing outputs has seriously underperformed. By way of recommendation, Eastern European region should rely heavily on strategic local thinking and techniques to come up with unique products for exports.

Keywords: Comparative Analysis, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Manufacturing outputs.

JEL Classification: N10, N20, N60, O1, O19, O47, O57, P0, P16, P33.

Introduction

Industrialization has brought about general economic development of the northern hemisphere. Industrial manufacturing for most part of the 19th and 20th Centuries generated enormous wealth for them. during the industrial revolution up to the point when the 'China-shock' set in. Though Eastern European countries which include Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Maldova and the Czech Republic have been into the manufacturing business since their political independence, yet they could hardly meet their domestic consumption needs, talk less of massive exports. The poor performance of the Eastern Europe region in this regard, has been wrongly attributed to the bitter rivalry that once existed between the West and the East during the cold war era. It was wrongly held that the Western Europe region (France, Germany, UK, Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein, and Monaco) in strong collaboration with its traditional ally, the North American region (more specifically the US) adopted deliberate policies and measures to stifle and stagnate the industrial and manufacturing growth of Eastern Europe during the ugly cold war period. It resulted into a stunted manufacturing growth for Eastern Europe up to the fall of the Berlin Wall. With the global disparaging economic campaigns against Eastern Europe by the West during the cold war era, it resulted into dwindling and very limited global market spaces manufactured products from for Eastern European; such that even long time after the end of the cold war; Eastern European products, goods and services have little breeding spaces in markets around the world. The ascendancy of Western manufactured products in the global market up to the point of the 'China-Shock' (with low prices of Chinese products that are affordable to Eastern European citizens). During the cold period, Western Europe and North America dominated the world manufacturing sector with their expensive products fostered on the global community. It made the United States (US) to also dominate global political and economic affairs up to the end of the 20th Century. However, what will Eastern Europe say about the current global manufacturing leadership of China, which was once colonized by Japan? It is all about purposeful political leadership that have their countries and citizens at heart; and desirous of real national growth and development (Harb & Basil, 2023; Krusse, et-al, 2023; Wolde, 2022; Katina, 2024).

The problem of Eastern Europe so far is not that of resource wherewithal, but that of lack of political-will from their leaders to succeed in the nascent global manufacturing vogue. Where there is the political-will, the economic-will, certainly will be there to harness and direct all resources to the manufacturing production process that will generate enormous production activities with the accompanying employment generation and wealth creation for the Eastern European populace. As long as the Eastern Europe region fails to adopt the manufacturing vogue, it will continue to be among the wobbling manufacturing outputs performers of the world. Eastern Europe must learn to do it either the 'China way' or the 'Asian way' (Felipe, 2018; Xu & Pal, 2022; Diodato, et-al, 2022; Chaponniere & Lautier, 2020; Shameem, & Jayaprasad, 2020; Rocha, 2018; Liu et-al, 2020; Iqbal, 2022; Joshi, 2021).

Literature Review and Theories

The manufacturing theory and comparative advantage theory have been adopted and utilized as frameworks for the study as outlined and treated below:

i. **Manufacturing Theory:** Manufacturing Theory is the study of how businesses make use of resources to process and eventually produce goods or services for sale. It is a branch of economics that explains how businesses decide what to do with resources of raw materials and labour at its disposal to efficiently produce goods or services with comparative competitive advantage over other businesses or trading partners. In international economic relations, manufacturing and international trade theory refers to the economic concepts that explains why countries specialize in producing certain goods based on their available resources and comparative advantage over other entities, that attracts greater benefits to them. The theory identifies three factors that are very essential to the transformation of raw materials into finished goods and services; which include - resources, capital and labour. Though this study concurs with this position; but would like to add that the fourth important factor in manufacturing - is a very disciplined (clean) politico-economic condition. With a very disciplined government presiding over a very disciplined citizenry, there will be no wastages; where all efforts and resources will be judiciously directed at the qualitative and quantitative production of goods and services in which the country or region has comparative competitive advantage in the international market (Alting, 1978; Gandolfo, 1986; Daniel & Brown, 2004; Zhao, et-al, 2006; Zhang & Sharifi, 2007; Watson, 2017; Murdock, 2020; Katina, 2024).

Comparative Advantage Theory

The Comparative Advantage Theory (CAT), is the second theory adopted as framework for the study. Comparative advantage relates to how much productive and cost-efficient a country is over another country in the harnessing of vital resources in the production of finished goods and services. Furthermore, the theory of comparative advantage which is generally known as Heckster-Ohlin theory, is a classical country-based theory which states that countries will gain comparative advantage if they produce and export goods that requires resources or factors that they have in great supply; and cheaper production factors. The differences in factor abundance and the factor intensity of goods must be in favour of the country that possessed them. The CAT states that countries can benefit from international trade by specializing in producing goods where they have a lower opportunity cost compared to other countries. In another word, it is the ability of a country to produce a particular good or some goods or services at lower opportunity cost than its trading partners. Furthermore, comparative advantage also describes the economic reality of the gains from trade for individuals, firms, or nations; which arise from differences in their endowments or technological progress. The theory emphasizes that countries with advantage in factor abundance and the factor intensity of goods, often attains absolute advantage where they become more productive, and cost-efficient than other countries (Alting, 1978; Rodrik, 2013; Szirmai & Verspagen, 2015; Rocha, 2018; Liu et-al, 2020; Wolde, 2022; Xu & Pal, 2022; Krusse, et-al, 2023; Busse, et-al, 2024).

Methodology

The study adopted secondary data analysis method. The document scrutinized include: UNCTAD Statistical Data, World Bank Group Open Data and BRICS-JSP. Other documents scrutinized include published materials such as textbooks, academic journals, scholarly papers, and internet materials. The generated narrative data was analyzed through critical discourse method. While, empirical data generated from verifiable secondary sources were computed by the researcher and presented in tabular and graphical forms; and analyzed through descriptive and explanatory methods drawing inference where appropriate.

Results and Discussion

Results from data generated mainly from secondary sources through document studies on manufacturing outputs of the two regions, viz: Eastern and Western Europe are hereby presented in tabular forms and in figures; and analyzed through critical discourse method, descriptive and explanatory methods.

Manufacturing Outputs of the Western Europe Region, 2018-2025

In the face of dwindling manufacturing production, Western Europe, is placed second on the world regional manufacturing outputs table, where it recorded $16,880,381,849,062tr, which represents 16% of the World total cumulative manufacturing outputs, which stands at $106,856,626,720,000tr for the period of the study. Germany leads the region with $5,363,785,805,039tr, representing 5% of the World total cumulative manufacturing outputs; but represents 32% of the region's total cumulative of $16,880,381,849,062tr for the period of the study. France is placed second with $2,115,014,705,196tr which represents 13% of the region's total cumulative; but representing 2% of the World total cumulative. Italy is placed 3rd with $1,879,487,236,743tr representing 11% of the region's total cumulative; but represents 2% of the World total cumulative. Whereas, UK is fourth with $1,782,527,057,204tr which represents 11% of the region's total cumulative; but represents 2% of the World total cumulative. Ireland is in the fifth position with $1,182,420,374,452tr representing 7% of the region's total cumulative; but represents 1% of the World total. Spain is placed sixth with $1,098,964,945,135tr representing 7% of the region's total cumulative; but represents 1% of the World total cumulative. The rest of the Western European countries scored below 1% of the World total cumulative manufacturing production for the period of the study; indicating a very disturbing serious decline of the region in this regard (Jehle & Renny, 2011; Chaponniere & Lautier, 2020; Liu, et-al, 2020; Joshi, 2021; Harb & Basil, 2023; Katina, 2024). This is as presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Manufacturing Outputs of the Western European Region, 2018 - 2024 ($tr)

SN	Country	Cumulative	ICAA	WECAA	WEACCA
1	Germany	5,363,785,805,039	383,127,557,502.8	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
2	France	2,115,014,705,196	151,072,478,942.6	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
3	Italy	1,879,487,236,743	134,249,088,338.8	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
4	UK	1,782,527,057,204	127,323,361,228.9	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
5	Ireland	1,182,420,374,452	84,458,598,175.1	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
6	Spain	1,098,964,945,135	78,497,496,081.1	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
7	Netherlands	749,580,628,456	53,541,473,461.1	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
8	Sweden	523,506,062,000	37,393,290,142.9	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
9	Austria	522,257,384,976	37,304,098,926.9	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
10	Belgium	486,036,724,340	34,716,908,881.4	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
11	Denmark	323,964,397,548	23,140,314,110.6	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
12	Finland	291,619,031,302	20,829,930,807.3	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
13	Hungary	206,255,347,419	14,732,524,815.6	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
14	Portugal	185,253,603,277	13,232,400,234.1	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
15	Greece	126,540,769,993	9,038,626,428.1	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
16	Luxembourg	24,615,711,475	1,758,265,105.4	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
17	Cyprus	10,255,627,356	732,544,811.1	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
18	Malta	8,296,437,151	592,602,653.6	1,205,741,560,647.4	937,798,991,614.6
	Total	16,880,381,849,062	1,205,741,560,647.4	8,440,190,924,531.8	16,880,381,849,062

Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adopted from UNCTAD, 2023; World Bank Group, 2025

Manufacturing Outputs of the Eastern European Region, 2018 and 2025 ($tr)

Right from the period of the cold war up to date (2026), the performance of the Eastern European region in terms of manufacturing outputs is on the declining mode. For the period covered by the study, Eastern Europe with a total cumulative of $3,851,301,464,270tr, which represents 4% of the world total for the period of the study. This is in spite of the presence of Russia in that region with total cumulative of $1,444,018,570,988tr representing 37% of the regional total; but just 1% of the world total which stands at $106,856,626,720,000tr. The Eastern Europe total cumulative manufacturing annual average stands at $550,185,923,467.1tr; with a country cumulative average of $160,470,894,344.6tr. If this downward trend in Eastern European manufacturing outputs is not reversed urgently, the region will fall into the club of large consumers of Asian manufactured products, goods and services. The implication of this is so dire for the region in terms of job-losses (employment). Income per capita fall for citizens and the general retardation of economic growth and general development for their individual countries. In addition, with the fast -shrinking population of this region, the absence of manufacturing will be strategically injurious to their national securities (Kotresh, & Patil, 2015; Joshi, 2021). Their performances are as presented in Table 2 & 3, and Figure 1:

Table 2: Manufacturing Outputs of the Eastern European Region, 2018-2024 ($tr)

SN	Countries	Cumulative	EECAA	EECCA	WCAA
1.	Russia	1,444,018,570,988	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
2.	Poland	780,863,396,348	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
3.	Czech Repub.	409,105,407,173	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
4.	Romania	193,049,080,279	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
5.	Kazakhstan	182,559,327,191	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
6.	Slovakia	157,106,648,985	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
7.	Ukraine	110,080,821,166	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
8.	Belarus	108,344,852,355	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
9.	Uzbekistan	88,784,007,194	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
10.	Slovenia	82,117,435,069	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
11.	Lithuania	73,007,453,323	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
12.	Serbia	56,121,868,901	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
13.	Latvia	34,537,800,860	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
14.	Estonia	31,615,307,896	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
15.	Azerbaijan	22,080,929,167	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
16.	Georgia	13,983,151,320	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
17.	Armenia	12,962,995,115	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
18.	N/Macedonia	10,430,837,482	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
19.	Moldova	8,762,899,661	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
20.	Kyrgyz Repub.	8,750,806,009	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
21.	Kosovo	8,065,965,788	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
22.	Albania	7,626,734,680	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
23.	Tajikistan	5,953,794,087	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344.6	15,265,232,399,571.4
24.	Montenegro	1,371,373,233	550,185,923,467.1	160,470,894,344,6	15,265,232,399,571.4
	Eastern Europe	3,851,301,464,270			106,856,626,720,000
	World Total	106,856,626,720,000	4,645,946,292,173.9	7,632,616,194,285.7	106,856,626,720,000

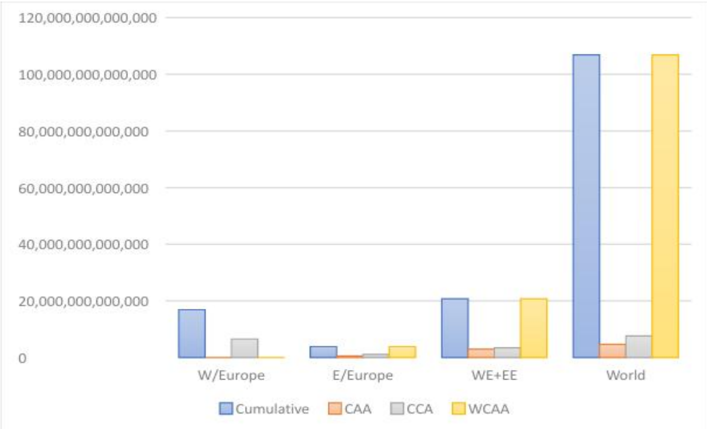
Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from UNCTAD, 2025; World Bank Open Data, 2025

Table 3: Summary of Manufacturing Outputs of Western and Eastern European Regions, 2018 and 2025 ($tr)

	Countries	Cumulative	CAA	CCA	WCAA
	W/Europe	16,880,381,849,062	8,440,190,924,531.8	6,564,592,941,301.92	16,880,381,849,062
	E/Europe	3,851,301,464,270	3,851,301,464,269.7	1,123,296,260,412.1	3,851,301,464,270
	WE+EE	20,731,683,313,332	2,961,669,044,761.7	3,455,280,552,222.0	20,731,683,313,332
	World Total	106,856,626,720,000	4,645,946,292,173.9	7,632,616,194,285.7	106,856,626,720,000

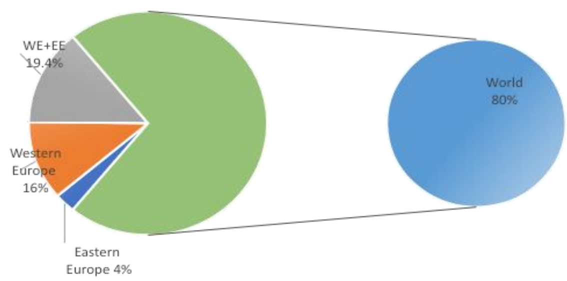
Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from UNCTAD, 2025; World Bank Open Data, 2025

Fig 1: Summary of Manufacturing Outputs of Western and Eastern European Regions, 2018 and 2025 ($tr)



Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from UNCTAD, 2025; World Bank Open Data, 2025

Fig 2: Summary of Manufacturing Outputs of Western and Eastern European Regions, 2018 and 2025 (%)



Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2025 as adapted from UNCTAD, 2025; World Bank Open Data, 2025

Summary of Major Findings, Conclusion / Recommendations

Summary of major findings, conclusion and recommendations derived mainly form the analysis are hereby presented:

Major Findings

From the analysis so far, the following major findings have been sieved:

i. The study has established that Western Europe with manufacturing outputs of $16,880,381,849,062tr, has overwhelmingly outperformed the Eastern Europe region ($3,851,301,464,270tr) by 438.3%.
ii. The study has also established that six out of eighteen Western Europe countries of Germany, France, Italy, UK, Ireland, and Spain scored above 1% of the world total; while only Russia scored 1% of the world total out of twenty-four Eastern European countries that featured on the world manufacturing outputs table.
iii. The study has also established that, Germany which is the Western European region leader (with $5,363,785,805,039tr), has outperformed Russia the Eastern Europe region leader (with $1,444,018,570,988tr) by 371.45%.

iv. The study equally established that Germany (with $5,363,785,805,039tr) as a single Western European country, has outperformed the entire Eastern European region (with $3,851,301,464,270tr) by 139.27%.

Conclusion/Recommendations

From the analysis so far, conclusion can be drawn that Western Europe with cumulative total manufacturing outputs of $16,880,381,849,062tr, which represents 16% of the world total, has comparatively and overwhelmingly outperformed the Eastern Europe region ($3,851,301,464,270tr, which represents 4% of the world total manufacturing outputs) by 438.3%. By way of recommendation therefore, Eastern European region should in all honesty seek first visionary leaders who have their countries and region at heart; who should adopt local strategic thinking and coming up with independent innovations of producing local unique products, goods and services with comparative competitive advantage in the global market. Furthermore, their political leaders should embark on the harnessing of their individual countries' abundant natural endowments such as human, land, marine, and minerals to launch-out on aggressive manufacturing, which is now a global vogue and a vital economic instrument for attaining economic and political relevance in the world.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: February 06, 2026 **Accepted**: March 20, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Umoh, Stephen A.; Ekeke, Nnanake & Ekeke, Dora N. (2026). "Orientation of Colour and Significations in Akwa Ibom Culture." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 77-84.

Article **Open Access**

ORIENTATION OF COLOUR AND SIGNIFICATIONS IN AKWA IBOM CULTURE

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Abstract
Colour entails the perception of light and the different wavelengths that can be seen through in the spectrum as they are being reflected off the objects. It is through the colours spectrum that human beings can see and identify one colour from others with the help of light. Each colour is a symbol that can be made to various cultural values. Drawing from Ferdinand the Saussure's conception of Semiotics, which explains the workability of a sign as an embodiment of concept and referent in a message, this paper uses qualitative approach to explore the orientation and signification of colours in the culture of Akwa Ibom people. Findings show that they are colours that are culturally peculiar to Akwa Ibom State, which appreciated solely on what they stand for Findings further suggest that colours are uniquely important to a particular people with a set of culture based on what they stand for. However, this study creates a platform for other issues related to colours in terms of messages, representations and significance as well as interpretation to suit with the belief system of a people. The paper concludes that regular performances with full state's support and encouragement can stabilize the Akwa Ibom sign system.

Keywords: Akwa-Ibom, Colour, Culture, Orientation, Signification.

Introduction
The need to decipher the actual signal a colour suggests is very important in the contemporary world following the various trends of human's creativity which communicate salient information in colours. Being that the various creative practices generating and sharing information to the audience are two sided: one evoking and idea while the other

situate the evoked idea, it is pertinent to acknowledge that what is presented in a creative construct is only a path to a destination of human imagination, which can be misinterpreted without in-depth knowledge of the system coding it. This view is a confirmation of Ferdinand de Saussure's speculation on language and signs usage and meaning generation as a system. According to Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, "it is based upon a distinction between the signified (image) and the signifier (the physical object or the image) (772). To make this link this dual processes effectively, an in-depth knowledge of the sign system is necessary as an aspect of rule or guide. "The rule seems to indicate to us the way to go like pointing finger … (to) creative interpretation" (Eagleton 20). Colour is very important in the beauty and identification of humans, animals, fishes, vegetation and insects. A specific colour has a specific role in situating a thought and various colours play different roles in coding a message to the audience. This is made feasible by viewing what Saussure arranges as the "signifier" and the "signified", which an idea and what the idea really suggests is conceptualized. This defines how meanings are regulated within and outside one's cultural domain.

In the area of culture and what each hue codes based on the reality of their customs, there is need to review colours and how meanings are coded in each as an aspect of cultural communication. In a society like Akwa Ibom State, colours have become very important to the cultural practices of the people especially during performances, festivals and carnivals. Colours play vital roles in interpreting the design people put on and the customs that allow them to work as a set of communication tools. Apart from the appeal of the hues, different moods, significant ideas, concept and values are coded in colours especially in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. Red, for instance, may denote redness but connotes danger or heat; white may openly mark whiteness but signal innocence, morality, orderliness, and purity; so do other colours maintain the suggestive and the referent parts in the society from the reality a people's culture. Cultural practice is one of the distinguishing factors of the people of Akwa Ibom State from others, and within the state, cultural enactment rooted in various designs established by colour perception marks one set of people from another. Apart from the general view of culture, the outstanding human practice that encompasses tangible, intangible and deal culture is performance. Performances are enacted in festivals, ceremonies, churches, schools, political rallies, rites of veneration, marriage celebrations, interment services, and for beliefs purposes. In terms of festival, colours play important roles from the perspective of makeup design to costume found on the performers' body. According to Dora Ekeke and Nnanake Ekeke, "the perception of make-up colours is one of the most interesting psychological experiences"(110). Looking beyond live performance, Anietie Udofia, Uwemedimo Atakpo and David Udoinwang conceive colour as "one of the clear processes of cultural projection and preservation in ethnic pigment through film" (50). Using life or screen performance, all colours are made to represent and idea in the Ibibio philosophy. This paper discusses colour orientation and signification in Akwa Ibom State culture.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is based on a linguistic theory known as semiotics. The theory is one of the contemporary speculations conceived by Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss Philologist, in his Structuralism that all languages possess two parts, which one side is suggestive while the other is denotative (Bressler 180). However, the theory was developed as a field of study by Charles Sanders Peirce, an American Linguist. His conception appears broader following his elaboration of a sign as a constituent of three ideas through which concrete ideas, causative ideas and representational ones can be conceptualized in society especially art. In Anietie Udofia and Aniekan Akpan's views, semiotics shows "imitative arts as human centred… (that) stimulates responses with aptness that generates concern for humanity" (39). Semiotics is form from the Greek root *sema*, meaning 'sign'. The word also suggests *parole* denoting a process than being, and is still derived from *semeiotikos,* another Greek, which means, "'observant of signs', suggesting the "study of signs, analogies, metaphors, symbolism – and the way they are used in language to aid communication" (vocabulary.com). it is one of the Western theories that discusses the nature of signs and application as an aspect of language in the society.

Semiotics is a principle projected as the science used in dissecting language. According to Keir Elam, it "is a science dedicated to the study of the production of meaning in the society… concerned with processes of signification and with those of communication, that is, the means whereby meanings are both generated and exchanged" (1). Based on its self-organization, "the rule seems to indicate to us the way to go like pointing finger … (to) creative interpretation" (Eagleton 20). From seeing semiotics as a guide or principle, Tzvetan Todorov posits that "things and state of mind are linked by a motivated relation… one is the image of the other" (16-17). Be that as it may, semiotics basically operates as an approach of linking one idea to another. In Saussure's view, Charles Bressler explains that the two ideas, namely: the *signifier* and the *signified* are used to denote an idea projected (*signifier*) and the referent of the idea (*signified*). As Umoh intones, "the signifier points to a concept; the signified confirms the concept which is referent" (270). In other words, what Peirce expresses in his three plunge-conception Colin Counsel and Laurie Wolf widen these three factors further thus:

> There are three kinds of signs which are all indispensable in all reasoning: the first is the diagramatic sign or icon, which exhibits a similarity or analogy to the subject of discourse; the second is the index which, like a pronoun demonstrative or relative, forces the attention to the particular object intended without describing it; the third (the symbolic) is the general name or description which signifies its object by means of an association of ideas or habitual connection between the name and the character signified. (10)

Relating these views to the focus of this paper, colour used to express an opinion possesses two parts. One part is the "colourness" of the hue drawn from the reflection of light; the other is the mood it conveys through which a cultural value is attached.

Colour Orientation and Signification in Akwa Ibom People's Culture

Colour is one of the major components in Performing Arts and the significant aspect of it is its serving as a code for cultural communication. According to Etop Akwang, "codes produce messages or meanings which are far more stable within several communicative contexts and concerts" (68). A code reflects an aspect of a sign and it functions as "a system of differences and correspondences which remain constant across a series of messages" (Stam and Lewis 30). Within a culture, then, there is a specific denotation which the sensation of colour stimulates. According to Oren Parker and Harvey Smith, "each designer has need of the same knowledge of colour. As code is unambiguous, a sign is subject to various suggestions; colour on the other hand, is a perception, which is subject to a gamut of interpretation until it regularized in a society since it is "the eye's perception of wavelength of light" (Ekeke and Ekeke 139). This implies that particular wavelength can only function as a code when its hue of light reflection is culturally certified as symbol for an idea. Orientation of colour is the disclosure of Ibibio values expressed through the wavelength of light. Colour signification, on the other hand, suggests what a specific wavelength of light denotes based on the hue it reflects and what it is used to express by the people of Akwa Ibom State. Although, in the world's blocks, colours are not viewed alike; yet within a specific bloc, unison in configuration is crucial to the ultimate unity of the system. There is a marked difference between the Western conception of colour and significations compared to that of the East. According to Philip Freund (2005: pp 140-141), in Chinese (Oriental World) performance and colour code,

> a white powdered face identifies a man as powerful but treacherous; scarlet emphasizes his honesty and fidelity; green and black denote personal crudeness…blue are worn by demons and obstinate ruffians or outlaw, purple by robbers but red on a man's face is mark of his virtue, and yellow of his strength and wit.

Oriental notion of colour is different from that of Occident. White conceived as peaceful evokes violence in the East. Yellow/gold which is linked to wealth and foreboding aura is the colour of the supernatural and intellect. Within the Occidental or Western conception of colour, it is possible to see certain ideas in one nation transcending another to signify the same idea from the perspective of performance. That means, "colour in theatrical design is the quality which allows the eyes to see the difference between the objects…such as red and blue" (139). That means, in the human society, or as would be conceived of a specific culture deploying colour as a code through which human practices are coded, there is the tendency to lose the trajectory of ideas and what they stand for if a means of engaging with the colours are not feasible. Colour signification works based on constant usage as a cultural practice. According to Ekeke and Ekeke they "can be identified with attendant peculiarities in terms of various beliefs, customs, traditional practices, activities, norms and values" (39). The beginning designer in the theatre must be aware of the separate uses of colour and seek a colour explanation that satisfies the use of colour" (215). The knowledge of colour sensation and denotation is widely acknowledged in the culture of the Ibibio, Annang, Oron, Eket, Ibeno and other nations making up Akwa Ibom State.

The notion of colour and its appeal is generalized in certain practices such as worship, jurisdiction and war. In *Who Are the Ibibio?* Edet Udo explains the association of certain colours to certain activities undertaken by the "Ibom people". The *Ndem-mong* aspect, for instance, white among other colours, is both notational and connotative in the worship, practices and influence of *Ndem-mong. Ndem-mong* is water spirit. For being a water spirit, whiteness is aligned to its being; for being a supernatural being or ghost, whiteness is suitable; and for being a god/goddess, the circle terminates in the white. Akwa Ibom people conceive of the supernatural as the all perfect, un-ravished, spotless and stainless – that is, all pure and all immaculate entity to behold (278-279). For arrogating whiteness to a water spirit, Akwa Ibom people situate the concept of denotation and for expanding whiteness to purity, they establish connotation in their conception of colour. This means that in the Ibibio conception of colour, there is a direct denotation and the implied one. Umoh opines that "Ekpo mask is made in a way that it reflects the traits of the masked personality impersonated…. A black mask made with very obvious larger eyes ball and heavy projected teeth is likely to represent a very strict and disciplined spirit" (5). This makes colour usage to suggest both direct and indirect or denotative and connotative referents. The extension is seen in the use of certain animals and insects to symbolize many things in the society especially in the aspect of performance. According to Ekwere Bassey,

> the Ibibio people observe various annual festivals which are celebrated… On such occasions that use of certain… symbols of dignity and unity are elaborately decorated and used… for worship of deities, snakes, crocodiles, cowries; and *nsibidi* symbols are used to reflect different gods (86).

In the art of making a performance up to portray the essence of the Akwa Ibom people's cultural focus, the use of colour is prominent to situate the sensation and meaning as one sees on the performer's body. This may be the reason Umoh further posits that "in Akwa Ibom State, performance is a unique cultural practice that develops as people develop" (1). Such development stems from the regular enactment of performances with colour application bent towards societal interest. Colours are significantly delineated and appropriated for both direct and subtextual meanings in the Akwa Ibom culture. In the view of Enoima Etteokon each colour has its identifiable name and the name sometimes determines what it is linked to within the semiotic parlance of the Akwa Ibom people (48-49). For this reason, colour becomes an instrument to portray the human emotions, especially, as expressed in the various dramatizations in social events even in the supra-mundane act by native doctors or such unexplainable realm. According to Derek Bowskil:

> … our emotional response to colour is highly subjective, but, in general terms we can state the following: warm colours tend to advance. Cold colours tend to recede. Red and orange are powerful and strong, assertive, aggressive and warm. Yellow is gay, happy and cheerful. It stimulates. Blues and greens are tranquilizing, restful and cold. Purple and magenta are pompous, regal, powerful and stimulating. White stimulates. Black depresses. Gray neutralizes (309).

Nonetheless, beyond the generalization conceptualized by Bowskill, Duro Oni avers that "while colour associations are universal in their application, differences sometimes occur across national boundaries" (62). This is the case of Akwa Ibom people which Jacob itemizes to be: Annang, Eket, Ebughu, Efai, Enwang, Etebi, Ibeno, Ibuoro, Ibibio, Idere, Igbo (as found in Ika and Etim Ekpo), Iko, Ilue, Itu-Mbon-Uzo, Nkari, Obolo, Okobo, Oro, and Uda spread across the geographical terrain of the state (6-7).

Apart from Akwa Ibom State, the notion of colour and its association with abstract qualities and human practices is ubiquitous in Nigeria. In the view of Chukwuma Okoye, among the Igbo,…"white is symbolic of death, as seen in the principle which forms the basis of all re-embodied spirits which appear with white faces" (46). In Hausa, Suleiman Saye affirms that "white is the colour that stands for purity… and peace of mind because it is believed to be the colour that the Prophet Mohammed preferred" (50). However, a remarkable representation is drawn from Maude Walhmann's averment on the Yoruba cosmology and their conception of colour that "…among the Yoruba, white, identified with the god *Obatala*, represents character, pre-intensions and the source of knowledge" (75). This notion has a remarkable semblance with Akwa Ibom people's conception of white resplendent of its connotation in, especially, the interplays between the mortal and the supernatural. This gives a clue to the ideation of the white and red chalk conspicuously drawn on the eyes of a seer or diviner in the Ibibio society. It further widens to the belief behind the coating of the *Ekpo* masquerades with charcoal (Black) and allows their buttocks to remain bare without any piece of cloth, down to their use of the *Mkpatat* (Carpet grass) to lay their head. This can be realizable by listing the colours based on how they are called in Akwa Ibom State.

The conception of colour in Akwa Ibom State is detailed in Enoma Etteokon as *Afia* (white), *Ndaidad* (Red), *Awa-awa* (Green), *Obubid* (Black), *Nsan-nsan* (orange), *Uto-uto* (Yellow), *Bru-bru* (Blue) and *Ndom-ndom* (Milky). *Obubid* speaks death, shame, condemnation and dark secret. *Afia* portrays exultation and soundness of mind. *Ndom-Ndom* is a feminine colour depicting their tranquility and elegance. *Ndaidad* depicts danger, aggression or violence. In such masquerades such as *Ekpo*, red symbolizes the thirst for blood; while *Awa-awa* portrays continuity of culture and fertility (51-52). This expose leads to the paraphernalia deployed in the Akwa Ibom real life and orchestrated enactment. To this effect, Ekong Ekong mentions that the eye of the native doctor painted white "maintains transcendental powers over the earthly world of man" (64). The one with the white circular design on the eye, Okon Ntia mentions that he/she "is one dedicated to the service of the Deity and therefore the servant of the deity… He knows the deity, be able to hear the voice of the deity and be able to speak with the deity. He is at the same time the mouth-piece between the deity and man (143). Nonetheless, traditional priests with a red design in the eyes do not actually evince evil; "they terrorize the forces of pestilence" (Thompson 219). Colours in cultural codes, from Nnanake Ekeke's position, "should not be viewed from the perspective of fantasy but on the viability…" (91). The use of colour among the Akwa Ibom people is equally a way of coding direct and deeper meanings in the various signs to express the symbolic communicative values that keep the society in its aliveness. These codes are generally defined by Charles Bressler as "signs governed by rules… (which) give meanings to all our social and cultural customs and behaviour" (63).

The orientation of colour in Akwa Ibom State has been elaborated engaged by many scholars. Some link the colour deployment to the global conception such as aligning white to peace, red to violence and green to fecundity or fertility. Be that as it may, some delimit the universality to the indigenous conception of the hues as are conceptualized based on the way they are named. For instance, Afia is linked to immaculate/purity denoting the untinctured conception of *Afia. Ndaidad* is linked to redness such as '*adaidad anyen*' which means to be red in the eye. This connotes daring or heat. *Awa-awa*, on the other hand, is linked to grass-because Ibibio call the greenness of the grass *awa-awa mbiet*. This practically links green to vegetation. The idea equally extends to "the use of indigenous components to embellish artistic work (which) has gained much popularity among the people of Akwa Ibom State" (Umoh 1). Therefore, colour signification in the makeup process of the Akwa Ibom people obeys both the universal and indigenous conception of the sensation of hue a colour is identified to situate the symbolic idea as conceived and as understood by the people.

Conclusion

The essence of traditional colours for cultural significance of the Akwa Ibom people is a proof of the true existence of a people because a group of people without a culture are already on the road to extinction. The culture of a people can be seen partly through their colours as represented through orientation and signification in both traditional performances and practices. However, these identifiable colours like in Akwa Ibom State may not fully reveal their identity and uniqueness without complementing some vital elements that are visible to the eyes – these vital elements can be seen on what they put on - costume and make-up. From this research work, it has become established that the people in Akwa Ibom State have maintained, in their repertoire, various inherent cultural codes in terms of orientation in their performances for better appreciation through colours.

This work calls for the full utilization of colours that are unique and embedded with indigenous messages to Akwa Ibom people (in their originality) on cultural performances to help project culture as strong components and variables. Colours as shown and analysed in this study, give vital information to the Orientation and Signification in Akwa Ibom People's Culture. Colours serve the purpose of identification of a particular culture and cannot be appreciated in the aesthetics and cultural imports, but in performance. Colours project cultures in the best way possible, by giving life to festivals, thus standing out as veritable elements of cultural identity. It is the submission of this study that colours as in the case of Akwa Ibom State, can be explored and deployed with adequate orientation during cultural performances, mostly in festivals and carnivals, in order to sustain traditional practices, promote ethnic identity and traditional values.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: February 28, 2026 **Accepted**: March 23, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Ogunwa, Samuel A. (2026). "Party Politics, Leadership Crisis and Governance in Nigeria." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 85-96.

Article Open Access

PARTY POLITICS, LEADERSHIP CRISIS AND GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
Over the years selfless leaders have sustained political party system and democratic governance. In this context, Leadership becomes a *sine qua non* that multiparty democracies look upon to lead the way to electoral success. In time of crisis, party leaders fall back on the extant rules and regulations to pacify both losers and winners. This way, many political parties have remained indivisible as well as focused, not only to attain the objectives of the political parties and party members but also for the good of the polity. Notwithstanding, there are positive and negative leaders. Both types of leaders are found within and among the party platforms. Either way, their positive and negative contributions are important for sustainability and durability or otherwise democratic governance. The study relied on secondary data and Elite theory show that when perennial leadership crises pervade party system it could undermine governance with severe consequences on the delivery of good governance; and can threaten the retention of the governing party in Nigeria. Leadership crises in the parties unsettled problem of governance. The magnitudes of these challenges in the ruling parties have distracted the attention of the governments. The study concludes that leadership conflict can be resolved when the leaders themselves are democratic and adhere to the liberal tenets of democracies as well as democratic institutions across the federation. Party politics is about aggregating different shades of opinion delivery of dividends of democracy should take central stage for party organizations especially any political party willing to gain the confidence of the people as well as to retain political power.

Keywords: Party Politics, Internal Crisis, Leadership, Governance, Nigeria.

Introduction

The ubiquitous of leadership in all organizations particularly in party democracies is indispensable in modern political systems. A political party is made up of a congregation of individuals with the sole aim to control the government (Agbaje, 2015; Omoruyi, 2002; Duverger, 1954; Sartori, 1976). A political party, to win political position electorally, requires competent leaders to organize the party and the entire members. The party members elect the leaders to lead them (Kapur, 2008). In essence, the leaders are look upon to influence members to achieve the political goals “without a leader … each one of the members may be going his own way” (Chaturvedi, 2006, p. 170). Party politics as the activities of political parties in democratic societies ensure that the leaders show the direction and carry everyone along without discrimination either by colour, language, race, socio-economic and political status. Party organization is oligarchic in nature where “the leadership of parties tends to assume oligarchic form” with intension to exclude the majority of party members from taking crucial and important decision on who become what, within the party platform (Duverger, 1954, p. 151). Viewing party organizations this way, they have “failed miserably” to uphold the paramount power of the citizens in terms of participation, inclusion and institutionalization (Ostrogorski, 1964, p. 539). The domination of party organization by the few elites largely obliterates the individual’s rights for free expression and the essence of being a card-carrying party member.

However, the party organization has the final say in the selection of the party flagbearers for any election and to keep the wheel of party administration going with a view to keep all members intact and indivisible. This is because men and women holding similar views must be duly organized. Without proper organization, the people make just a disorganized crowd and it is impossible to conform to the common principles on which they agreed. It is organization into a permanently cohesive body that enables them to acquire strength so as to act in concert” (Kapur, 2008, p. 639). On the contrary, over-bearing power and the tendency to fully adhere to Iron law of oligarchy and inability to follow firmly the extant laws in the books more often than not, informs instability of political parties. They are opposite of what Roucek, Huszar, and Associates (1950) described as absence of “knit-organization” that creates unacceptable party leadership as well as leadership crisis in the party system, while the “clever politicians” capitalize on the phenomenon to pass a vote of no confidence on the leadership and pronounce themselves as the new leaders but without the capacity to unify the remnant followers (Kapur, 2008).

Since Nigeria return to democratic rule in 1999, the Nigerian political parties are in precarious situations. The political parties were hurriedly put together by different ideological persuasions and different ideological positions to take over the country’s governance. The presence of party officials in the public offices across the federation have turned the party platforms into the battle-fields. For these leaders, party politics have become a war and a do or die matter. The first five years of the People’s Democratic Party administration for instance, witnessed arbitrary removal of representatives freely without a due process. The question that comes to mind is to what extent has non-adherence to the extant rules and regulations by the party organization or vis-à-vis party leadership have created leadership crisis? And what are the consequences of the leadership crises on governance in the country. The paper aims to interrogate leadership instability in Nigerian party system. The study is spread into introduction; party politics and leadership; theoretical framework; leadership crisis and implications on governance in Nigeria and conclusion.

Party Politics and Leadership

In liberal democracies, political parties are structured towards certain objectives and goals. And it is not an individual but collective project. Although, the idea of party formation is anchored on an individual and their collection, but the leadership of political parties' champions the course of their parties for acceptability nationally. The issue of leadership therefore becomes serious factor in party organizations. The achievement of organizational goals depends on the quality of leadership. Leadership is considered one of the most important elements affecting organizational performance. While Leadership is simply a process of influence being exercised by those who lead their followers, exercising influence by leaders, however, may be good or bad. In this context, Leadership is defined as the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals (Iyorwueze, 2002). However, party leadership is found to promote an oligarchy instead of popular and inclusive democracy. The argument put forward by Michels (1962, p. 15) is that "a party … is an organization which gives birth to the domination of the elected over the electors; of the mandatories over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators". Thus, party organizations or structures are built and centered on the personalities of the founding fathers. As such, leaders may not pursue desirable objectives for the corporate bodies as a whole, and may neither hold every member of the party together. For instance, Roucek, Huszar, and Associates (1950) declared that a political party is held together by its organization. In other words, without an organization, a political party may not survive. The survival of party organization depends much on how its gives or serves as a means of giving every member of the party, benefits and advantages. The organizational theory argued that the mission or goal of an organization, like a political party, can rationally be broken down into specific tasks, which can lead to the accomplishment of goals. Structurally, the arrangements in political parties constitute rules which allow the organs of political parties to work continuously, while roles are designated to members to carry out. The structure gives vitality, form, subdivision, a hierarchy of status, and distribution of functions.

Party structure and other levels of the party hierarchies are delegated with specific functions. These functions however differ from one another. For instance, Milbrath (1970, p. 18) identified three specific functions; namely "gladiatorial", "transitional", and "spectator" activities. The gladiatorial activities include: holding public and party office, being a candidate for office, soliciting political funds, attending a caucus or a strategy meeting, becoming an active member of a political party, and taking an active part in a political campaign. Secondly, transitional functions include attending a political meeting or rally, making a monetary contribution to a party or candidate, and contacting a public official or a political leader. And finally, spectator activities including wearing a button or putting a sticker on the car, attempting to talk another into voting a certain way, initiating a political discussion, voting and exposing oneself to political stimuli. All these categories help the structure and organs of political parties to be able to win elections on one hand and to lose as well. The leadership of any party naturally devolves on a small number of leaders. Thus, the measure of success of a particular party is a product of its leadership, constitution, capacity, appeal, and function. Generally, the leadership of a political party establishes the general setting of its members and the focus of their solidarity (Osumah & Ikelegbe, 2009).

When a political party lack knit organization that should hold members together, such a political party transform into factional parties (Kapur, 2008). According to him, a factional party lacks a stable organization and it is a group with a scattered leadership in pursuit of sectional interests. Such a party remains vague, shapeless, and not capable of doing their real work which is to form and control the government. They are not political parties in the true sense of it, but groups without any unified programmes and policy, have a definite influence on the voters and since the life of the group is short and precarious, they rarely develop lasting traditions and loyalties; neither do they dominate and influence the governmental policies and instead become an instrument in the hands of clever politicians who use the structure to perpetuate crisis in governance. Factionalization in party systems, although “faction is a bad term” but as factional leaders and members are concerned, their attitudes disorganize the parties including its activities, top hierarchies of the parties, party members and even the quest for good governance in the country.

Nigerian political parties lacked institutionalization because party institutionalization is germane to the functioning of party organizations. Party literature pays importance to “parties as institutions” (McDonald, 1955, p. 17), and “describes the party’s interface with society” (Janda, 1970, p. 86). Huntington (1968, p. 394) defines institutionalization as “the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability. … coherence of its organizations and procedures”. Put differently, the institutionalization of a political party is “when a party finds new activities and functions to perform or when it identifies new objectives to achieve, the party is said to have institutionalized organizationally” (Felizzo, 2006). The level of a party’s institutionalization reflects its age (how long the party has been in existence or created), its generational age (whether and how many times a political party can transfer power from one generation to another), and whether it has been able to adapt or rooted to environmental changes. The national spread of political parties can be viewed from the number of organizational levels; the more complexity of party organizations increases, the more the number of organizational levels increases. For instance, a political party characterized by four organizational levels (national, regional, provincial, local) is more complex than a political party with only three levels (national, provincial, and local). In other words, party complexity reflects not only the number of organizational levels but also the number of units at each level of the organization. The larger the number of units, the bigger and more complex the party organization is.

A stable party organization ensures that the objectives and functions are carried out by recognized leadership. A well-structured political party is like a small state within a big one. The attributes include active membership and its passive adherents, local branches or constituencies; branches of propaganda, fund-collecting and recruiting, conducting elections into the party councils, responsible for its choice of leaders and officials both at the local, state, and national levels as well as the adoption of party policy. Organizationally, they cover a whole political system including buildings and newspapers, mass media, advertising experts, songs and slogans, heroes and martyrs, money and campaign experts, officials and prophets, feast days, and fast days (Finer in Kapur, 2008). In Nigeria, it is a truism that political parties have some political tentacles across the federation, but a close look at their activities as well as organizations needs much to be desired. Nigeria is characterized with the leadership unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise above personality and ethnic sentiments. In party systems, the issue of leadership cannot be taken for granted because they provide knowledge, experience, and direction for the organizations to attain their goals. Leadership in the Nigerian political parties were taken for granted. For instance, the organs of political parties are structured toward political leadership at every stage in the party constitution. Each organ is headed by the ward chairman, local government chairman, and state chairman as well as at the national level by the national chairman. In Nigeria, the leadership of these political parties is not democratic, or transparent in their operations to the extent that they do not adhere to the extant laws of their various political parties and even that of the nation. Achebe (1983) made an observation of the root of the country's problem as a simple and squarely leadership problem. Leadership problems characterized the Nigerian party system. There is no clear cut between the leadership of the party and the elected or appointed, whether president, governor, senator or minister. There is nothing wrong with Nigeria as a state, but the country has suffered from the arena of good leaders to move the country for growth and greatness. Poor leadership is responsible for many crises the country has witnessed.

Theoretical Framework – Elite Theory

This study is built on the elite theory. Pareto (1935), Mosca (1939), Michels (1962) are known as elite theorists. They all concurred that elites are a small minority group of citizens that control a large-sum of socio-economic and political powers in political systems (Vergara, 2013). Pareto (1935) observes that the elites' possession of power is centered on the fact that they are "more fitted" than any other group in the polity. This position, according to Mosca (1939, p. 50) "in all societies… two classes of people appear; a class that rules and a class that is ruled". The few that is, the first class, although less numerous but with "special qualities such as abilities and talents which make them the 'natural' leaders and holders of power in the society, perform socio-economic and political functions". They monopolize power and enjoy the advantages accompanying their positions in power. The second class that is, the ruled class is more numerous with a huge population than the few. He argues that this class or masses remain mere passive, manipulated pawns and lacking in qualities and less able and hence unfit to govern. From the scholars' perspectives, there is a sharp distinction between the elites and non-elites. Both are fact of modern life. Notwithstanding, there is a distinction, the distinction is that the elite continue to recycle themselves in power. Pareto and Masco tagged this as elite circulation. According to Pareto (1968, p. 1430) "elites" do not last and only live for a certain time "history is a graveyard of aristocracies". The circulation of elite is necessitated in re-ordering of social positions when new classes will come to power as the economic system evolved historically (Mosca, 1939). The theory has demonstrated that all societies are divided into undifferentiated elite and as well as atomic mass. The elite decide on behalf of the people irrespective of colour, race, and language, among others:

> In every case, however, an organized minority – a political class, defining 'political' in a wide sense took the real decisions. A king's decisions were always taken with the participation of his advisers, in an aristocracy, a smaller group of activists made the policies issued in the name of all the aristocrats and democracy, the sovereign electorate was manipulated by the politicians (Parry, 1971, p. 24).

Elites formed political parties and invited others to join. The joiners become the electorates and vote during elections. Elite in the name of party leadership control the party organization and influence the nomination of party flag bearers even sometimes without recourse to due process. They tend to be democratic when in fact, Parry (1971, p. 26) observes that they have turned the party organization into the personal office and "as they were drawn into the fundamentally middle-class parliamentary politics they would become as bourgeois in their way of life as their opponents in the established parties".

Leadership Crisis and Implication on Governance

The 1999 Federal Constitution of Nigeria (as amended) and the INEC regulations provided for political parties to conduct periodic democratic congresses and conventions to elect official(s) in collaboration with the electoral body, INEC for supervision and legality. Article 16(1) provided as follows: "the National Convention, the Zonal, State Local Government Area, and Ward Congresses shall meet to elect the officers of the party at the various levels of the party structure as specified in this constitution except in the Federal Capital Territory where officers of the party shall be elected based on geopolitical zones". The guidelines for the nomination of candidates into public offices are stated clearly in the national constitution vis-à-vis the party's extant laws. The provision provides for the National Executive Committee to formulate guidelines and regulations for the nomination of candidates for election into public offices at all levels and shall be the final authority for resolving all disputes relating to the choice of candidates for the party for any election and for confirming the names or list of names of candidates for the party for any elective public office in the federation. The organizational structures of the party system with institutional mechanisms are indeed adequate to guide the party leadership and members aspiring into both the party offices and public offices. It allows a certain level of democracy in which candidate selection and nomination are predictable. This is in tandem with the general assumption by the students of party democracy that institutional designs strengthen the internal and external democratic practices of political parties and democracy in general and good governance in particular (Ballington, 2004; Scarrow, 2005).

Over the years, however, these legal provisions are ignored by the party leadership, thereby turning the party congresses into political chaos leading to political pogrom, disintegration, and lawlessness. While the party constitution seems to be democratic and allows a level playing field for all members in terms of being nominated by the party for public elective and appointive positions, the constitution equally puts a clause that sidelined all eligible party members and denied them to stand for election. In this sense, inequality prevailed within the political parties. The implication is that it encourages favoritism on the part of those who have contributed to the parties heavily, thereby breeding godfatherism, clientelism, and patronage with severe consequences on the party's hierarchies and its disorganization. It is at this point that the new joiners hijacked the platforms of the parties from their founding fathers and divided them into factions with cancerous effect on governance in the country.

The leadership positions are supported by regular elections during the party conventions. This is well enumerated in the party constitutions. The provision provided that All National, Zonal, State, Local Government Area, and Ward officers of the party, shall hold office for a term of four years and shall be eligible for re-election at the National Convention or appropriate congress for a further term of four years and no more. These provisions have not been binding on the leadership of the political parties across the federation; the opposite has been the case. The structure of the parties is democratic and based on the inclusion and the participation of party members. This is meant to accommodate conflicting interests within its fold and strengthen its support base across the length and breadth of the country. The structure of the parties, in theory, is to carry every member of the party along, but in practice, it is not what the structure stands for. Although, we may be tempted to say that they are political gimmicks to deceive the whole world that there is a structure in the parties. There is no structure, it's just on paper. It is not used. There is nothing that we can refer to as internal democracy within them, so there is no internal democracy and if there is no internal democracy, how do we want to compare the relationship between internal democracy in the parties and democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The absence of leadership eroded the supremacy of the political parties and breeds the internal crises in the party system. The consequences are that there was no respect for internal party democracy and constitutional order. The parties turned out to be the elite rule which Michels' (1962, p. 13) Iron Law of Oligarchy says all organizations are not democratic "who says organization, says oligarchy". For example, the Nigerian political parties tended to be oligarchic because only a few people decided and took the decision for the rest of the party members. The various structures of leadership within the political parties, particularly the PDP were subordinated to the will and caprices of the President of Nigeria, that is, what was in the party.

The crises in the Nigerian parties cum the question of leadership, the kind of leaders that are leading the party system, were the antidote that influenced the military intervention in the nation's democracy in 1983 (Enefe, 2008; Akinboye & Anifowose, 2015; Agbaje, 2010; Falola & Ihonvbere, 1985). General Ibrahim Babangida who lifted ban on party politics banned and unbanned politicians with aim to establish a viable and enduring people-oriented political system devoid of perennial disruption or interference by the military. In the aborted third Republic, the two parties decreed, viz the Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention, were not immune from leadership conflict. There was political struggle for supremacy between the various factions and personalities (Tyoden, 2002; Muhammad, 2008; Ogunwa, 2022; 2009).

The fourth Republic started with three political parties PDP, APP, and AD. They evolved organically to produce a prior long term political association between the various groups that came together in 1998 but leadership problem characterized them. These parties have been immersed with cantankerous and witnessed frequent discords, unresolved political issues, recriminations, threats of impeachment of executive, treacheries, flagrant breach of party rules, carpets-crossings as well as the resurgence of factional cleavages within the party, which have continued to threaten the functioning of democracy in Nigeria (Anifowose, 2004). Across the party system, the National Working Committee (NWC) and the National Executive Committee (NEC) have substantially failed to manage the affairs of their parties very well. These organs took the form of partisanship even collapsed their structures, the PDP in particular, before the 2015 general elections. The disorganization of the party resulted in conflicts, suspension of party stalwarts, among others (Sambo et al, 2022). In an interview with the Deputy Chief Whip, Honourable O. Oduntan (2005), observed.

> In cases where we have Mr. A being appointed in a particular office that Mr. B wanted and because you know the perception that in Nigerian politics there is hardly the next time, it will be a do or die thing, they believe that now is the time and there is no other time, they believe that I must have my way. I believe that that was what tore the parties including the PDP apart, they were looking at the size of their interest only, they believed that they must win at all cost, and that to me is the cause of these crises because they failed to agree with one another especially with the party hierarchy[1].

Since 1999 political parties have heavily relied on the supports and patronages of rich individuals. The control of party structures gradually passed into the hands of the new joiners. They include governors, senators, presidents, retired military generals, and politicians from previous Republics. They are financially resourceful and have benefited from oil money, the country's civil war, and served under the military. They have quantum resources and became the kingmakers, godfathers, and redirected the structures of the parties to be answerable to their interest. As the new stakeholders in the parties, they greatly affected the internal democracy in the party. For instance, former President Olusegun Obasanjo was not part of the formation of the PDP in 1998, but was brought in by the military to be the president in 1999. Umar Ardo (2015) observed that all efforts of well-meaning PDP members to achieve this noble objective through the entrenchment of internal and participatory democracy and the creation of institutional collaboration and cooperation within the party structures were rebuffed as people of questionable character were allowed a free hand to do with the party as they will. Ethics and values were thrown to the dogs. The leadership in the PDP became an unjust and unfair with no truth in its mouth, no compassion, no sincerity of purpose, and their actions always intrinsically self-serving and deceitful (cited in *Daily Trust Newspaper*, April 5, 2015).

Party literature agreed that political parties are instilling appropriate attitudes and expectations in the public and by contriving through their actions to "give substance to constitutional rules and thus confirm and enlarge on the formal outcome of transition" (Pridham, 1990, p. 22). For instance, after four general elections and overwhelming victory in those elections, the former President Olusegun Obasanjo sidelined many of the G-34 members who brought him into the office. By the end of his presidency in May 2007, he took over the organizational machinery of the PDP. He alone made all major decisions for the party members including candidate selection and amendments to the PDP Constitution in December 2006 which guaranteed him the chairmanship of the Board of Trustees of the party. Under him, the due process of electing party leaders was not adhered to. A chieftain of Accord Party, Mr. Oluranti Jamiu (2005) argued thus:

> When we are talking of structure it means the national executive in mind, the national working committee in mind, and the national convention of the party in mind, if you study the history of the PDP national executive, you will see that the national executive is led by the chairman and the chairman is always the President of Nigeria during the time. For example, Obasanjo was the one discharging the duties of the national chairmen at will, so to say. If the other chairman disagrees with him, he will change him without referring to the other structures of the party. Even the National Working Committee did not have a life of its own outside the President of Nigeria. At the end of the day, all the structures were not effective in taking decisions so whatever they wanted to do was within what the president wanted[2].

In effect, the Nigerian party system was administered by those who have the structure of the party, maintain their seats, and wield power in the party because they have access to the nation's resources, that is, the Federal Government of Nigeria. The quest for inclusion, participation, and institutionalizing of members created dissenting voices that led to factionalization as well as an internal crisis that occurred when major stakeholders in the party were excluded. This also occurs in all political parties. They lack inclusiveness which seriously undermined the party structures in Nigeria.

Specifically, Article 12(72)(d) of the 1999 Federal Constitution mandated the National Executive Committee (NEC) to "ensure that all the organs of the party function democratically and effectively". In theory, the highest decision-making organ of the Nigerian party system is the NEC but in reality, in the case of the party system, it is the Board of Trustees (BoT). Membership in the BoT is by influence, power, affluence, and experience. The members of the BoT are all politicians. According to Akinbade (2004, p. 154), a politician is that "person who is so pre-occupied with winning an election that he may sacrifice such notable values as justice, fairness, equity and transparency at the expense of his determination to win the election at all costs”. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, party affiliations are determined by the economy or business affiliations. In the Second Republic, for example, the NPN was a conglomeration of businessmen. Nigerian politicians are businessmen and all businessmen are politicians. It is difficult in most cases to differentiate a businessman from a politician in Nigeria. This set of people participated in the formation of political parties and are the financiers of the parties. They finance the parties to recruit more money to finance their businesses. They are all in politics. They are in politics to get party membership cards and use their financial capability to cause disaffection and factionalization among members. The fact is that who pays the piper dictates the tune because “nobody will pick anybody (candidate) that does not have somebody” (godfather or financer) in the polity (Interview with Engr. S. Alagbe, 2025)[3].

Political leaders usually maneuver the general interests of all the organs of the party including its members. That is why it is logical to say that the kind of structure of the political parties in Nigeria have failed to promote democracy since a few people at the top take the decision and control the party. For instance, the decision to re-register all the party members that decision was not democratically arrived at. It was more of an oligarchy within the party, where a few people created a division and became the alpha and the omega. And this had a major effect in 2015 general elections when many of members of PDP simply walked out of the party during the national convention in Abuja. Furthermore, it is the question of leadership, if the leaders become too partisan to the point that every decision is around partisanship it may challenge development. This affected the former president Jonathan who turns everything into politics. For instance, the oligarchic tendencies within the party organs exhibit undemocratic attitudes which led to changes of PDP national chairmen unceremoniously about eleven times within a space of 16 years (*New Telegraph Newspaper*, February 10, 2016). At the echelon of the party system, the leaders have not shown that public office is not a do-or-die matter, while the parties could not pursue some definite policies and programmes or observe the sanctity of constitutional government “a party acts by counting heads, a faction acts by breaking heads”. The Nigerian party system has chosen the breaking of heads within its ranks and files without putting their heads together for good governance for Nigerians and national development (Ogunwa, 2026). A chieftain of the PDP as well as a permanent member of the BoT, Chief Bode George (2025) observation is instructive:

> To me, wrangling cannot be eradicated, even in developed countries; it is part of the system because as human beings, some people get more emotional on issues than others. To some, they lay the issue for the other segments of the polity to see reason, consider and lobby them to see things the way they are, and also help resolve those issues in their favor. Democracy in Nigeria is just 26 years old. What is a child of 26 years be called, a mature mind? He is still growing up. America is over 200 years; the Britons had a long history. Since 1999 to date there has been a gradual improvement. We are moving gradually but surely. The national building takes time. Wrangling will continue but needs to be moderated or minimized[4].

The leadership crisis has led to the exodus of prominent party members from one party to another and without end in sight. The governors, senators, among other governmental functionaries have left their parties. A political party as an association is not like a family or union. Everybody has something at the back of his mind as a member of a political party. And if it becomes obvious that a member's interest cannot be guaranteed in that party, self-expulsion of party membership is expected to launch that person into another party to realize political ambition. The changing characters of the party leadership and individuals became powerful than the party themselves (Aluko, 2021). This is evident in Jonathan's administration because of the thirst for power and indiscipline as well as non-adherence to extant laws. Senator B. Omoworare (2025) observed thus:

> They were not able to handle their internal disagreements and … it means that our politicians have not learned from the political experience of the past. The people who had money in some cases had hijacked the party, you see the same party men and women with different loyalties and interests. For instance, in Imo State PDP was so strong until it was taken over by the opposition party, APC. It's simply because they could not manage the situation and also because of the selfish interest of those groups as well wanting to have a place where they would be able to control and bite as much as they could (Interview with [5].

The feud in the party leadership, in party system in the country is an indication that Nigerian politicians are only interested in the coveted public offices. Ake (1996, p. 5) argued rightly "as they pulled apart, they placed more value on capturing political power for themselves and grew increasingly fearful about what seemed to them to be the grave consequences of losing to their rivals in the completion for the control of state power". In this context, "the premium on political power rose higher and higher". The internal crisis shows that the party supremacy and party discipline are not in politicians' favour which resulted to loss of focus on governance, "much energy is dissipated on the crisis by the governors involved, and less time for governance at the home front" (Oladesu, quoted in *The Nation Newspaper*, Monday, 16, 2020, p. 31). The cumulation of these crises affected all levels of government across the country. They were distracted to attend to governance matters such as lingering insecurity, corruption, killings, bad roads, hunger, unemployment, unstable energy, among others (Ogunwa, 2026; Sambo, 2022).

Conclusion

The study has revealed that leadership is a necessity in all organizations. The existence of leaders is to direct running of the administration day-in and day-out. Like other organizations, political leaders in party organizations have the responsibilities to direct and influence decisions in the party and the government to achieve the set objectives, but the perennial leadership crises in the Nigerian political parties not only contributed to disorganizations, pathologies and proliferations of more political parties, but have rendered the utility of the party platforms to an intolerable and unacceptable level. The leadership influence in party institution and democratic institutions across the country owe largely to non-adherence and using the party platforms as personal and patronage-estate where prospective party members need to seek for support and be sponsored by godfathers before being nominated to represent their parties in general elections. One of the overwhelming challenges confronting party leadership is a deliberate attitude not to yield to democratic principles. Nigerian politicians cum party leaders are not democratic. Although, the position of Michels (1962) is that no organization is democratic, particularly party institution, for Nigerian politicians attaining democracy in the party system which they control is an uphill task. However, for sustainability and institutionalization, there is the need for equality and fairness along the liberal democratic principles. This is the essence of leadership which in turn will make party politics to harness various shades of interests and tone down the crises associated with governance within a political system. The leadership has quantum of responsibilities to sustain and maintain party organizations as well as members; if the leaders in the political parties are to remain and retain their positions as leaders and if the members as well will still remain in the party fold.

Though, a party is formed by a group of individuals before others are invited into the fold, this does not give absolute power to the founders to control the party as if it is a personal organization and as a sole proprietorship. Control in this manner has led to defections and proliferations of political parties. Yet, the numbers of parties have not contributed to good governance but constantly overheating the polity. The formation of a political party should be centered among the like-minds. Put this way, party formation entails those individuals who believe in the same issue/s and the strategies to achieve those matters of the moment. It may not immediately spread across the length and breadth, but gradually it would become known as a party to beat. The party leadership must also be democratic. When a leader is not democratic, the party organization he controls may not be democratic no matter how spread and laudable is the name, the constitution, the ideology and the manifesto. Adherence to internal party mechanism to solve party crisis is important for a political party to live long. Along this line, the party itself must be institutionalized and cover the people. The people must know the product they are buying in the political market of party politics where all political parties are showcasing their products for the electorates to buy. The more the product of a political party, the higher the party patronage.

Footnotes

1. Oral interview with Honourable O. Oduntan (2025)
2. Oral interview with Mr. Oluranti Jamiu (2025)
3. Oral interview with Engr. S. Alagbe (2025)
4. Oral interview with Chief Bode George (2025)
5. Oral interview with Senator B. Omoworare (2025)

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: March 21, 2026 **Accepted**: March 30, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: John, Elijah O. & Ike, Blessing N. (2026). "A Re-Evaluation of Plato's Concept of Leadership and its Implications for Nigeria's Political Development." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 97-108.

Article **Open Access**

A RE-EVALUATION OF PLATO'S CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIA'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
This study examined Plato's leadership model, and its implication for Nigeria political development. The concern for a peaceful social and political life motivated Plato to undertake a speculative formation of an ideal state raised on justice as a guaranteeing factor for its peace and stability. In this state, Plato formed his notion of leadership. The ideal form of leadership for Plato is aristocratic leadership (i.e. leadership of the philosopher-kings) which is justified by their ability to grasp the absolute truth (Form of good) of what is just for the state. The main aim of this study is to investigate, if Plato's choice of leadership can be used as a panacea for Nigerian political advancement. Using the philosophical tools of analysis, criticism, and speculation, this paper seeks to examine Plato's leadership model in respect to the attainment of his aim in Nigeria. It is the position of this paper that Plato's proposal undermines basic fundamental political right of citizenship, individual's freedom, and equality and therefore not an appropriate means to the intended end. The paper submit that, if leadership is woven around democratic ideals, it seems that the desired peace and stability which Plato envisaged would be more guaranteed than aristocratic leadership would. Plato's leadership concept would as such serve as a panacea to the ongoing political instability in Nigeria for National progress. The major challenges of Nigeria political system is in her leadership. It is obvious that Nigeria leaders lacks the qualities of true leadership as expounded by Plato in his concept of the philosopher King. This study conclude that the Nigerian political system needs urgent attention as regards her bad leadership pattern which has to a great extent mitigated political, financial and social advancement of Nigeria.

Keywords: Plato, Leadership, Nigeria, Political Development.

Introduction

The success of man's existence is tied to certain requisites, one of which is living socially. Plato is of the view that it is only by living in the society that a man can be fulfilled. For this reason, Aristotle conceives man as a political animal. The implication of this conception is that man must necessarily live socially and politically. That is, for man to fulfill his life, he has to live with other men in the society, influence others and be influenced by them. Therefore, no single individual can be successful without the support of others (society). Perhaps, this is the reason why Aristotle concluded that any man who fully lives without others is either a God, or a beast. But the society which is a necessity for the success of man does itself require something also for its own continuity. It would seem no human society can successfully exist without a leader. Leadership, therefore, becomes a necessity for the sustenance of a society, and since the society is necessary for man's development, leadership becomes a necessity for human development. Social evils such as war, hunger, poverty, sickness and premature death, faced by man even in the apex of his civilization perhaps, arise from ineffective leadership. Plato experienced these in his days and foresaw the tendency of its continued existence; hence, being concerned about harmonious social existence, he systematically tackled this issue and expounded what an ideal leadership entails. He postulated answers to fundamental socio-political questions such as: Who ought to lead? Whose interest is supreme in the state? What is the best form of leadership? The continued searched for answers suitable enough for these questions even in the 21st century informs our appraisal of Plato's proposals in order to ascertain their efficacy as the panacea for the overall peace and orderliness that is needed for human growth and development, in Nigeria.

Plato's Brief Profile

Plato was born in the year 428 BC in Greek-City-State of Athens. His father was a descendant of the last king of Athens and his mother, Perictione, was a descendant of Salon, the aristocratic reformer, who is said to have written the Constitution which established Athenian democracy. Later in his life, he came in contact with Socrates-a philosopher and joined the circle of young men under the tutelage of Socrates. Plato loved and respected Socrates very much for his wisdom and moral standards. As an expression of this affection and respect for his master, Plato is quoted by John (259) to have always said, "I thank God I was born Greek and not Barbarian, freeman and not slave, man and not a woman, but above all, I was born in the age of Socrates". Idang affirms these in the following words:

> Plato, born around 428 BC, came from a distinguished family in Athens. As a young man, he stood high among the Socratics at the age of 20, and had a profound affection and respect for him. He loved and regarded Socrates as the wisest and most excellent of men in his time. The death of Socrates was very painful and indeed, a disaster for Plato (162-3).

Thus, as a result of Socrates death in the hands of Athenian politicians, Plato who had over the years planned to become a politician, gave up his dream and redirected his interest towards philosophy to lead them out of the ignorance in which their political decisions, actions and judgements, especially the killing of Socrates, were based. Corroborating this, Esikot (18) asserts "… and the subsequent killing of Socrates, whom he had much respect for, caused him to turn away from politics and consequently developed hatred for Athenian democratic institutions".

What is Leadership?

The term 'leadership' is differently conceptualized by scholars, and as such it does not have a universally acceptable definition. In view of this, the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (672) defines leadership as, "the ability to be a leader or the qualities a good leader should have". Leadership is again conceptualized as "the action of leadeing a group of people or an organization, or the ability to do things", (online). On the other hand, Irish Ullman conceives leadership extensively as:

> A relational operation system within a political system, characterized by people interrelated by power who, on a basis of selected cooperation but in a context of competition and conflict, take public actions (lead) in order to provoke additional actions (followers) to realize common to correlating goals resulting in further differentiation between system and environment and measurable effect on system environment (online).

This conception is corroborated by Joshua when he posits in Uduigwomen and Ogbinaka that "Leadership derives from the verb "to lead" or to direct, as by persuasion or influence, to a course of action or thought. It also means to show the way, to direct the course of, to conduct in a certain direction, or to be the head (369)". Lisa Cash does not seem to differ with this view as she defined leadership as "the ability to guide others without force into a direction or decision that leaves them still feeling empowered", (online). Based on the different conceptualisations, we want to speak of leadership as an act of directing the affairs of a society for the attainment of peace and overall development of the entire citizens/dwellers.

Analytical Exposition of Plato's Leadership Model

Plato's Leadership Model: Plato is concerned with the prescription of an ideal state. For him, such state is founded on the principle of justice. Since no human society can continue to exist successfully without leadership, it seems therefore that for Plato, the end of leadership is to make justice prevail in the state. The much desired peace and order in the society that would guarantee human development is then tied to the existence of justice in the society. Thus, Plato is of the view that if we understand how the society originates, we would be able to understand how justice grows and operates in the society, hence, he asks, "If then we were to trace in thought the gradual formation of a city, should we see the growth of its justice or injustices?" (Republic 369a-d).

For Plato, the state (society) is the product of insufficiency of individual's ability. He contends that no man can solely produce all that is needed for his survival and thus, no man can fulfill his purpose in life by living in solitude but only through cooperation and mutual sharing of the individuals' skills that life is made meaningful. Thus, to make meaning out of life, men must necessarily come together and form a society, hence, Plato asserts:

> Thus it is, then that owing to our many wants, and because each seeks the aid of others to supply his various requirements we gather many associates and helpers into one dwelling-place, and give to this joint dwelling the name of city (369a-d).

Therefore, for Plato, the society is made of individuals each with special skill with which the conglomeration of all is able to solve all the needs of the society. Thus, for him, the optimum goal of the society (state) is to satisfy the citizens' needs. Perhaps for this understanding, Esikot (22) maintains that "without fear of contradiction, Plato can rightly be regarded as the founder of the organic theory of the state". In considering the state to be organic in nature, Esikot seems to mean that the state is naturally constituted by various parts and that it has a will or purpose of its own. An ideal state for Plato, is one in which members are grouped into three classes based on area of specialization and the need which each will solve in the society. According to Plato, these classes and their preoccupations include the artisans class whose duty it is to provide the material needs that the state has, the class of auxiliaries with the responsibility of defending the whole state both from internal and external aggression and, the guardian class whose duty it is to lead the entire state. For him, these classes should consist of both men and women with the same skill. It seems these classes in the society are made in line with the conception of the human psychology in his time. For him, the human soul is constituted by three elements viz, the appetitive element, the spirited element and, the rational element. According to Plato, like the classes in the state, these elements have their own separate duties of possessing a virtue.

Plato contends that there are four cardinal virtues namely; temperance, courage, wisdom and justice. In the human soul temperance is possessed by the appetitive element, courage by the spirited element and wisdom is possessed by the rational element. The fourth virtue-justice arises when the other two elements submit to the control of the rational element. In the same way, he argues, in the state the class of artisans possesses temperance, the auxiliary class possesses courage, while members of the class of guardians possess wisdom, and as in the soul, justice arises when the artisans and the auxiliaries focus on the areas of their specialization and the members of guardian class left with the sole responsibility of leading the state, that is, when there is no interference. It is based on this conception of the similarity between the constitution of the human soul and the state that Lavine (56) posit "Plato tell us that if you want to have a clearer picture of morality for the individual person, we must turn to the state, he says it is 'writ large' for us to see". But who are the people that constitute the guardian class such that the state is safe in their hands? To this question, Plato's answer is that:

> Unless it happens that either philosophers acquire the kingly power in state, or that those who are called kings, and potentates be imbued with a sufficient measure of genuine philosophy that is to say, unless political power and philosophy be united in the same person, most of those minds at present pursue one to the exclusion of other being peremptorily declared from either-there will be no deliverance,… for cities, nor yet, I believe, for the human race… (4736-474a).

The answer given by Plato implies that not all which is said to be philosophy is philosophy; consequently not all who claim to be philosophers are philosophers. Expounding those he regards as true philosophers and what characterizes them, Plato rhetorically asked:

> …since those who are able to apprehend the eternal and immutable are philosophers, while those who are incapable to this and who wander in the region of change and multiformity are not philosophers, which of the two, tell me, ought to be governors of a state? (484 a-d).

This seems to imply that even though some people claiming to be philosophers but who, in the true sense are counterfeit, man the position of leadership, the state will still suffer. However, talking about eternal and immutable, Plato means everlasting and unchangeable truth. Thus, the philosopher-kings are justified in their exercise of the state power by their ability to understand and acquire the unchanging and absolute truth (form of good) of what is just for the state. Thus, for Plato, leadership is based on the knowledge of the good.

Knowledge then is for Plato the fundamental requirement or prerequisite for the position of leadership. Accordingly he maintains:

> Then the constitution par excellence, the only constitution worthy of the name, must be the one in which the rulers are not men making show of political cleverness, but men really possessed of scientific understanding of the art of government. Then, we must not take into consideration on any sound principle of judgement whether their rule be by law or without them over willing or unwilling subjects or whether they themselves be rich or poor men (293c).

It seems what Plato meant here is that the best form of leadership is one which the leaders show that they have the knowledge of what it means to lead, and that they must lead whether their followers (citizens) be willing or unwilling, and whether they are guided or backed-up by the constitution or not. But do such people not have personal desires and needs which might conflict with societal goals? If they do, whose need is just for the leaders to embark upon, is it that of the entire community which conflict with those of the leaders, or those of the leaders which is against the common good? One of the answers given by others especially the sophists is that justice entails that the desires or needs of the leaders who are the stronger party be pursued. Thrasymachus who, on this issue, represents the sophists posits that:

> …each government has its laws framed to suit its own interest; a democracy making democratic laws, an autocrat despotic laws and so on. Now by this procedure these governments have pronounced that what is for the interest of them is just for their subjects, and whoever deviates from this is chastised by them as guilty of illegality and injustice (338b-339a).

But Plato maintains a contrary ground. He argued that leadership is rather not acting in the interest of the leaders, but in the interest of the followers. Expressing his view, Plato opines:

> …all who are in any place of command, insofar as they are rulers, neither consider nor enjoin their own interest, but that of the subjects for whom they exercise their craft; and in all that they do or say they act in an exclusive view of them, and to what is good and proper for them (342b-343a).

For him, there are two things that likely happen to a state under the leaders. It is either the leaders in line with the sophists' conception of what leadership demand, seek that the will of the stronger party (leaders) prevail and, the will of the people suffers, or the will of the entire state is allowed by the leaders to prevail over theirs. When the will of the leaders prevail, the result is that the people suffer, but when the general will is allowed to prevail, the whole state is made happy. Thus, whatever befall the people are in the hands of the leaders. In this respect, Plato asserts thus:

> …And when I call the rulers servants or ministers of the laws, I give them this name not for the sake of novelty, but because I certainty believe that upon such service or ministry depends the wellbeing or ill-being of the state (715).

But men are seeing to be naturally egocentric. That is, they think only about themselves and not about other people's need or want. In view of this, how can the philosopher-kings be checked from pursuing their goals at the detriment of the general will? In other word, how can egocentrism be checked among the leaders? Plato's belief is that it is out of ignorance that men allow their ego to motivate their actions without considering their moral values and the effects of such actions on others. Egoism among the leaders, for Plato, is detrimental to the growth of a state, hence, the leaders have to be led out of this ignorance. Thus, he recommended educational training that would take care of the moral and physical; status of the leaders. He introduces a thirty-five year educational program for the would-be-leaders which include training in gymnastic, music and dialectics. It seems these subjects did not have the same meaning as they are understood nowadays. However, Nwankwor capture their significance according to today conception thus:

> Physical test was necessary because Plato believed that ruling imposes severe physical strength upon men and that physical health was a prerequisite for mental health. Moral test was important because if a man cannot withstand moral temptation, he was likely to sacrifice the interests of the society at the altars of his own interest and morbid desires. Needless to say that intellectual test was necessary because he who should rule must be able to grasp the 'particulars' and the 'universals', 'the abstract' and, the 'mundane' (156).

For Plato, this is the first way/means of checking egoistic propensity among the philosopher-kings. In addition, he proposes communism for the leaders. Garnsey (69) asserted that '[communism is] the belief that society should be organized without private property, all productive property being held communally, publicly or in common". Garnsey seems to be right as Plato further maintains:

> In the first place, no one should possess private property, if it can possibly be avoided. Secondly, no one should have a dwelling or storehouse into which all who please may not enter; whatever necessaries are require by temperate and courageous men who are trained to war, they should receive by regular appointment from their fellow-citizens, as wages for their services, and the amount should be so as to leave neither a surplus on the year's consumption nor a deficit; and they should attend common messes and live together as men do in camp (416e).

But the platonic from of communism is not limited to material property, it rather include that of family – wives and children – as Plato further asserted that:

> These women shall be, without exception, the common wives of these men, and that no one shall have a wife of his own: likewise that the children shall be common, and that the parent will not know his child nor the child his parent. (457a-d).

The leadership form in which the leaders are so trained, live and own things, wives, and children in common, and are the wisest set in the state (the philosopher-kings) according to the Plato, is the closest and the best of all the imitations that participate in the Form or Ideal leadership which only exist in the World of Forms. Plato maintain that such form of leadership could be called by two names depending on the number of people who excel others in knowledge. Thus, if it is one person that excels all others in knowledge, Plato maintain that such shall be called kingdom. But if it is more than one person that excels the rest, it shall be addressed, according to Plato, as aristocracy. Perhaps, it is baded on this, that Appadorai (134) opine that "Aristocracy is literally government by the best citizens". However, Plato contends that there are other levels of imitation of the Forms of leadership that stand at variant degree from the 'real'. According to Plato, next to aristocracy is oligarchic form of leadership. Oligarchic leadership is for him, "A constitution grounded upon property qualification… 55oc).

Close to Oligarchic form of leadership is democratic form of leadership. Plato conceives of democratic form of leadership simply as, "the rule of the many" (Statesman 303a). He argues that democracy allows freedom for all citizens and also divides the sovereign authority among all members. These, according to Plato, enable all the citizens to live their lives as it suit their pleasure, thus, leading to diversity of character in the same society. For him, democracy is not a good form of leadership. Comparing democracy and the above forms of leadership, Plato argues that "…if therefore all three constitutions are law-abiding, democracy is the worst of the three, but if all flout the laws, democracy is the best of them" (Laws 303a-d). The last form of leadership for Plato is despotic/tyrannical form of leadership. For him, despotic form of leadership is "One man's rule defiant to the laws" (Statesman 3016-c). This is the only form of leadership according to Plato, which democracy is somehow better than. Thus, he concludes that "… indeed it is clear to everybody that a city govern by a tyrant is the most miserable of cities, whereas a city under kingly rule is the happiest of cities" (Republic 576d-7c). In the final analysis of Plator's leadership model, it would not be out of place to say that, for Plato, a state led by one man from his own dictate and not guided by the constitution, the citizens suffer the worst form of injustice. Whereas, a state led by a few best intellectuals, life is most bearable. Let us at this juncture critically evaluate these proposals.

Implications of Plato's Concept of Leadership For Nigeria's Political Development

Strengthening ethical/moral leadership in Nigeria

Leadership should be based on qualifications; this is why Onyeocha argues that:

> He must be suitably qualified in age and ability: personal exposure and knowledge of contemporary issues: awareness of the law of the land and preparedness to abide by them, interest in fostering a law-abiding society; awareness of the rights of citizens and disposition to uphold them, sensitivity to the people's needs and disposition to meet them: ability to reassure the people and allay their fears, experience in public service; integrity of life. They must also be had fearing, sincere, fair, just and human in their dealings with people; the process itself must aim at nation-building, capacity to weld the people together rather than divide them (58).

The problem here remains that leaders in Nigeria, lack this qualification enumerated above. Thus efficient leadership cannot be possible. The present leadership system in Nigeria promotes the principle of end justifying the means; during election campaigns, these leaders makes empty promises to the people, but fails to keep to this promises immediately the gets into power. Nigerian leaders who supposed to be the frontiers of ethics and morality are now examples of corruption. No. wonder Odimegwu, insist that:

> Virtually all human endeavours, be it in the home, corporate, religious and national settings, leadership is he pivot. Every leader has a primary jurisdiction. To the family head, it is his immediate environment. To the politician, it is those who voted him into office as a reaction of acceptance over his unfolding to the people his manifest of what he will do for the clergy, it is his parishioners that look up to him for moral and spiritual guidance(5).

The question remains, are our leaders actually responsible to us? are they accountable? The answer is "no". Plato suggests that leaders must be morally mortally upright.

i. **Strengthening the Rule of Law:** The principle of one rule of law states that "easy one is equal to be law. In contemporary societies like Nigeria, the law cannot be applied on some people .. is because they believe to immured to the rule that is why Omeregbe call them "the sacred cow".
ii. **Adopting Transparency and Competence:** In Nigerian leadership system. Plato's concepts of leadership upholds that leadership should be based on capacity, competence, accountability and character rather than financial, ethnic, or religious conditions. This implies that leadership should be selected out of merit not sentiments. In Nigeria's political system, the reverse is the case leaders and selected based on "Turn" system a leaders comes into power because he believe it's now how turn to control power.
iii. **A Reformed education system**: Plato emphasize on an intellectual preparation of the philosopher King from a certain age, if our institutions develop trainings similar to plato's, for prospective leaders, it will be of benefit to the political development of Nigeria. Most leaders in Nigeria lack the intellectual capacity to carry a big country like Nigeria along. The is why Amadi and Nwuche posit that, "political leadership is an important tool for the promotion of national development and should not be left in the hands of ignorant, educated or semi-educated fellow" (2023). This implies that leadership should be left in the hands of University graduates, who can apply different dynamics to face life challenges. Leaders should not come into power for their personal benefit, but with the intent of rendering unconditional service to the messes.
iv. **Civic Education for the Masses:** Plato emphasies on the intellectual training for all. In Nigeria societies majority of the masses are uneducated and sometimes cannot understand party symbols and manifestoes. Most Nigerian citizens are poor, and can be bought with gifts and promises, thereby instead of voting for ideology, they end up voting for sentiments.
v. **Electoral Reforms:** There should be new electoral policies that will allow everyone to vote and be voted for. This reform should promote transparency and accountability to allow for free and fair election in Nigeria, to reduce electoral mal-practice and political violence. In present day Nigeria where the leadership structure faces loopholes such as corruption, bad governance and weak inflectional structure, Plato's leadership concepts serves as a good example in addressing the contemporary failures in Nigeria's politics. Thus Re-evaluating his leadership concept serves as a great insight on how a good political structure produce accountable governance for good political advancement. Even though Nigeria is practicing democracy, it is believed that Plato's ideas can complement it to ensure accountability in governance and/or political development.

Evaluation of Plato's Leadership Model

The main aim of Plato's leadership model was to make postulations that would lead to the attainment of the much desired peace and order in the society, which in turn would engender human blossoming and sustenance. In view of this aim, our evaluation of Plato's leadership model is going to be done by considering the possibility or otherwise of his proposals leading to the attainment of these goals. It would not be out of context if we maintain that Plato argues that the leaders should lead insofar they are knowledgeable whether the citizens are willing or unwilling. This seems to advocate for the use of force to coercively suppress and subdue the citizens against their will. But it seems man, naturally wants to be in charge of affairs. He want to rule the world and also have control over himself for he feels nobody can understand his feelings better than himself. Reflecting on human desire, Thompson (7) maintain that “most young people are eager for independence, for the opportunity to take their own decisions and to control their own lives”. Hobbes confirm this when he writes in his Leviathan, “Every man sees his own wit at hand, and other men’s at a distance” (online). Thus, surrendering to the state and government for their necessities, it seems he still retains the right to be consulted by government and its agencies since their polices and programs are made about him. Perhaps it is for this reason that the natural-rights deontologists, according to Machivali (17), maintain that “no one ought to have political power over another unless the latter has consented to it”.

Such use of force and the neglect of consent, may lead to rebellion, for Bakuni (11) maintain that “man is endowed with two faculties- the power to think and the desire to rebel”. Therefore, reaction on the part of the citizens could lead to militancy, revolution, and/or rebellion which is also counterproductive to the existence of the state. On the other hand, if the citizens are willing to allow the status quo, it does not mean that it is something they desire nor that they like so, but might be lack of will to revolt or a humane instinct to make the society peaceful. Whichever way it goes, it is not in line with man desire. Therefore, the form of leadership that does not allow political participation by the citizens as proposed by Plato is not just and cannot guarantee peace. Again, it seems Plato denies the significance of equality to the attainment of the said peace in a state. It seems, peace can only be achieved when there is justice and, justice cannot be attained when equals are treated unequally. Thus justice does not go along with inequality perhaps, the reason for the popular saying that “He who goes to equity must go with clear hands”. Therefore, Plato’s attempt to secure peace through class-structure system in the state cannot guarantee the desired peace and order that lead to self fulfillment.

Finally, Plato justifies leadership of the philosopher-kings (aristocracy) in their exclusive ability to grasp absolute truth (merit). But are there absolute truths especially concerning moral and social issues? Are the philosopher kings the only one with the mental equipment to grabble-with the universal truth? Assuming there is such truth, Plato’s claim of the philosophers as the only purveyor of such truth could amounts to the suppression of all innovative criticism from the citizens which is also another way of contributing to the development of the society. This is evident in the operation of absolutist governments and churches as seen in the lives of Nicolaus Copernicus and Galileo Galilie who did not publish his findings for fear of authority and who was forced to deny his heliocentric view of the universe respectively. It was the belief to the possession of such knowledge of good that led Adolf Hitler to the massacre over six million Jews. These are evident that such position has only been able to lead to a violence gripped society. Plato’s proposal, therefore, seems to suppress two positive desires in man – the inclination to be free from being forced against his will when it is his right (freedom) and, the inclination to be treated equally especially in the allotment of fundamental rights (equality). The suppression of such natural desires stands against man’s yearning for a form of leadership that will allow his political participation either directly or indirectly. Thus, it seems, unlike Plato’s aristocratic leadership, democratic leadership is more a satisfactory form of leadership for man for it is built on the principles of freedom and equality and thus allows equal political participation either directly or indirectly. Perhaps it is based on this that Plato has been mostly criticized as being anti-democratic in his proposal.

Crossman, according to Mukherijee and Ramaswamy (93) maintain that "Plato made the profoundest attack on the basic premises of liberal democracy, namely equality, freedom and self-government". Popkin, et al, according to Nwankwor (158) claim that, "Plato's philosophy leads, by natural steps, to an anti-democratic, authoritarian philosophy. It is government for the people, but not by the people". Lawhead (61) opine that, "Plato's… political philosophy is highly critical of democracy". Popper, as captures by Mukherjee and Ramaswamy (94), accuses Plato as being 'enemies of the open society'. Omoregbe (48) maintain that for Plato, "…democratic government would be an irrational government". John (128) maintains that, "Plato's political philosophy would lead naturally to an anti-democratic authoritarian philosophy". Fite, according to Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, contend that, "Plato did not seek the happiness and self-development of the individuals, but to protect the few rulers". Lavine (64) argues that, "Plato rejected individualism and democracy and argued for the subordination of the individual to the supremacy and power of the state". Nwankwor (158) contends that the problem with aristocracy is that often the best intellectually are not the best morally or spiritually". Nevertheless, Plato's Notion of Leadership has a lot of contributions to the solution of issues arising from leadership. Plato therefore deserve applause for his consideration of women as citizens and for allotting them equal political right with their male counterparts. Based on their peaceful disposition, most women who are in positions of authority could be said to have acted in the way that guarantee peace than their male counterparts.

Plato, it would seem, is the first philosopher to have reflected on leadership. He pointed out the importance of leadership to the success of social/political existence. He redirected philosophers from the cosmic postulation to a thought on the relationship between governance and the nature of human beings i.e how one should govern given a specific abilities, inclinations, and dispositions on the part of the governed and the governing. Plato considerd this as one of the most crucial thing to philosophize about. Thus Plato laid the foundation upon which others build on. Plato has successfully changed the course of leadership, for he has given a new direction which is that, in leadership, the interest of the citizens, that is the interest of the state as a whole and not the subjective interest of the leaders, should be pursued. Although it cannot be said that leadership is altogether free from the interest of the leaders, however, today leadership cannot also be said to be altogether the interest of the citizen. Plato's recommendation of education, both moral and physical, for the leaders as well as for the citizens, it would seem, is the greatest innovation of all times. For sound and effective policies and decisions that would better the society to be made, the leaders have to be morally and rationally sound to be able to evaluate the implications, of the decisions they are about to take, and if the citizens must contribute to the growth of the state, they must know what rights are provided for them, their duties and obligation, then education is necessary.

Conclusion

Re-evaluating the concept of Plato's leadership concept exposes the relevance of ethics and morality in leadership, promoting transparency, accountability, political enlightenment, leadership based on merit and strengthening the rule of law for political and national development. The examination of Plato's leadership model has exposed the facts that for Plato, the leadership of the philosophy-kings (aristocracy) is the best because they (the philosopher-kings) have the potential to know what is good for the state. However, we have been confronted in the course of our examination of his proposal with what seem undeniable facts that Plato denied some of his citizens' political rights, freedom, and equality thus undermining their roles to the success of his mission. Nevertheless, Plato's success should not be weighed in what he has achieved but, according to Esikot (25) "…more on the fact that he identified problems militating against the existence of the state and set out to tackle them as best as he could". Thus we suggest that, since democracy appears to be more a satisfying form of leadership for men and in line with their desire, Plato's critics should rather focus on how to improve democracy, perhaps by applying those plausible prescriptions made by Plato like education, especially in logic, psychology and moral studies to the invigoration of our democratic ideals. It seems, until that is done, we shall not fully appreciate the work of this great philosopher on the issue of leadership.

Recommendations

i. Plato's leadership concepts, encourages civic participation. In Nigeria, the people should be empowered and educated to enable them choose accountable leaders through their wise votes, making sure that leaders are competent and educated like Plato's philosopher Kings.
ii. There should be promotion of ethical standards among leaders. This can be achieved if only individuals, who have been tested and trusted, that is, individuals with prove of having virtues of honesty, integrity, accountability and those who understands the common good, be entrusted with political responsibilities.
iii. The electoral system should be reformed to ensure that leaders emerge after every election based on merit, competence capacity and accountability and not on God fatherism, materialism (money politics/bribery), ethnicity and rigging.
iv. The leadership structure of Nigeria, should be institutionalized. This enables leaders, go through formal training to get prepared for political responsibility.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: March 15, 2026 **Accepted**: March 28, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Alabi, Tope; Nwabueze, Chigozie B. & Alabi, Stella O. (2026). "An Appraisal of Digital Technology and Workers Output in Federal Civil Service, Abuja, Nigeria." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 109-121.

Article **Open Access**

AN APPRAISAL OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND WORKERS OUTPUT IN FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE, ABUJA, NIGERIA

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Abstract
One of the major features in contemporary service delivery and policy implementation is the adoption of digital technology in the civil service. This adoption has tremendously affected service delivery of civil servants. This research therefore investigated the adoption of digital technology and its effects on workers' productivity in the Federal Civil Service Abuja. This study employed a survey research design, combining questionnaire and interviews, to gather comprehensive data on the experiences of civil service employees with respect to the adoption digital technology. Multi stage sampling technique was adopted coupled with cluster and simple random technique. Four ministries in Abuja were selected for this study namely; Ministry of industry, trade and investment, Ministry of youth, Ministry of education and Ministry of communications, Innovation and Digital Economy. The targeted population of study was 15867 civil servants drawn from 4 selected ministries in Abuja. A total of 396 respondents fully participated in the survey and 4 respondents were interviewed. Data was analyzed in descriptive form. Scientific administrative theory was adopted as a theoretical frame for the study. Qualitative insights from interviews corroborated that higher adoption of digital tools correlates with improved performance, though current usage remains minimal due to infrastructural deficits, skill gaps, and unequal access to sophisticated technological equipment across ministries. The study concludes that while the digital economy holds substantial potential to boost productivity, efficiency, data management, collaboration, and service delivery in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service, its benefits are currently under-realized due to persistent digital divide, low digital literacy,

inadequate infrastructure, and limited integration of digital platform. The study therefore recommended that the Federal Civil Service in Abuja should prioritize investing in digital skills training for its workers to keep up with the changing trends in the digital economy.

Keywords: Digital technology, workers, output, federal civil service, Abuja, Nigeria.

Introduction

The Nigeria federal civil service serves as executional machinery of the state; the roles of the officials of this service are to perform their duties with political neutrality, anonymity and impartiality. The major roles of civil servants are in policy execution, supportive in its national objectives and economic development (Kurama 2021). Efficiency is needed for civil servants at federal and states levels, since it measures the performance of tasks expected to be done. The introduction digitalized systems of operation like office automation and information technology has assisted to strengthen skills and knowledge of workers in the service. According to Bhuiyan (2011) major computerization and infrastructure development in the public sector in state has been taking place to replace internal manual work processes by ICT-based automation. Similarly, the impact of computer education on the efficiency of civil servants in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. The civil servants need to be educated in ICT and the use of digital tools, so that the use of typewriters, filling of information on papers in cabinets, keeping of documents and letters in files are modernized through automation. Therefore, for maximum performance and productivity by civil servants in a digitalized world, civil servants must be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to operate effectively and efficiently in the digital space. It is against this backdrop that this study focuses on the advent of digital economy and its effects on workers' productivity in the Nigeria civil service.

Statement of Problem

The advent of the digital technology has brought about a significant shift in the way business is conducted and has created numerous opportunities as well as challenges especially in the public service. One of the major challenges associated with the advent of the digital economy is the problem of digital divide especially as it relate to the level of workers performance and productivity. While the digital economy has the potential to promote inclusivity and bridge socio-economic gaps, there is a risk of exacerbating existing inequalities. Access to digital technologies, internet connectivity, and digital literacy are not evenly distributed globally, leading to a digital divide between different regions and socio-economic groups like the federal civil service. Not everyone has equal access to digital technologies and the internet, which creates a significant gap between those who can participate in the digital economy and those who cannot. This divide can exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities, limiting the opportunities available to certain groups and regions (Kunle, Adebimpe & Adedeji 2022). The unequal access of sophisticated technological equipment across most federal ministries has shown the level of digital divide in the federal civil service in Nigeria and have great implication on worker level of productivity and performance (Okeke, 2023).

Furthermore, Cyber security is a notable threat when using digital technology in transacting business. The Global Web Index 2020, reported Nigeria's population to be 203.6 million, with 169.2 million (83 percent) having mobile phone connections. 89.49 million (42 percent) are inter net users and 27 million (13 percent) are active social media users. The digital growth indicators in 2020 from that of 2019 indicate an increase of 5.1 million (2.6 percent) million in Nigerian population. There were 122.5 million internet users in Nigeria in January 2023. Nigeria's internet penetration rate stood at 55.4 percent of the total population at the start of 2023. Kepios analysis indicates that internet users in Nigeria increased by 2.9 million (+2.4 percent) between 2022 and 2023. For perspective, these user figures reveal that 98.63 million people in Nigeria did not use the internet at the start of 2023, suggesting that 44.6 percent of the population remained offline at the beginning of the year (Simon 2023). These figures indicate an important threshold in the study of cyber security and digital communication in Nigeria (Samuel, 2023).

As the digital economy expands, so does the risk of cyber threats and attacks. Malicious individuals are constantly finding new ways to exploit vulnerabilities in digital systems, posing a significant risk to businesses, individuals, critical infrastructure and national security. Strengthening cyber security measures and promoting awareness are crucial to protect the digital economy from cyber threats.it is worthy to note that most federal ministries have adopted digital platforms in performing some of their duties and exchanging informations. The level of cyber security cannot be quantified because of the vulnerabilities of the cyber space. As observed by Alemu and Omer (2014). the administration of public services infrastructure has undoubtedly been impacted by security concerns. Security has evolved into a crucial infrastructure for the development and deployment of innovative governmental applications. Threats to security have never been more common than they are now. Due to one cyber assault or another, agencies, institutions, service providers, and signal carriers have all suffered significant financial and service losses (Vaile, Kalinich, Fair & Lawrence 2013).

Objectives of the Study

The study is aimed at examining the nexus between the advent of digital economy and workers' productivity in the federal civil services in Abuja. The following objectives are imperative to the study:

i. To examine the extent to which digital economy impact on workers' productivity in the federal civil services in Abuja.
ii. To evaluate the extent to which digital technology support the level of workers performance in the federal civil services in Abuja

Hypothesis of the Study

H_0 There is no significant relationship between digital technology and the level of workers' performance in the federal civil service in Abuja.

Literature

Digital Technology Support and Workers Performance in the Federal Civil Services in Abuja:

Digital technology plays a crucial role in supporting the performance of workers in the federal civil services in Abuja, as it does in many other government organizations worldwide. Alobidyeen**,** Al-Edainat, Al-Shabatat and Sakher (2022), highlighted that digital technology contributes to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of workers. Digital technology allows for the automation of repetitive and time-consuming tasks, freeing up employees to focus on more complex and strategic aspects of their work. This can lead to increased productivity and efficiency within the civil services. Digital tools enable seamless communication and collaboration among workers, regardless of their physical location (Regina & Sara 2022). This is especially important in large government organizations where employees may be spread across different offices. Collaboration platforms, video conferencing, and instant messaging systems help streamline communication and facilitate teamwork. According to Okeke 2023, the Federal civil services deal with vast amounts of data. Digital technology supports the efficient management, storage, and analysis of data, enabling decision-makers to make informed choices based on accurate and up-to-date information. This can lead to better policy formulation and implementation. Nagy (2020), observed that the adoption of digital technology allows for the provision of online government services, making it easier for citizens to access information and interact with government agencies. This can reduce the workload on civil servants by automating certain processes, such as online forms and applications.

Digital technology facilitates continuous learning and professional development for civil servants. Online training programs, webinars, and e-learning platforms enable employees to acquire new skills and stay updated on the latest developments in their respective fields. Regina and Sara 2022 poised that Digital tools and systems assist in the effective management of resources, including finances, human resources, and equipment. This contributes to better budgeting, allocation of personnel, and overall resource optimization. It also enhance remote work facilitation especially relevant in the context of global events like the COVID-19 pandemic, digital technology supports remote work arrangements (Regina & Sara 2022). Cloud-based collaboration tools and secure remote access to government systems enable employees to work from different locations, ensuring continuity of operations. The integration of digital technology into the federal civil services in Abuja contributes to level of performance, improved efficency, enhanced decision-making, and a more responsive and citizen-centric government. As observed by Wu and Shao, (2022) and Byrne (2022), the ongoing evolution of digital tools will likely continue to shape and optimize the functioning of government organizations in the future.

Digitalization Technology and Efficiency at the Federal Civil Services

Digitalization has a direct impact on the performance of efficiency of service and organizations worldwide. As a result, it directly impacts an economy's total trade volume because it aids in enhancing the efficiency of any business. When it comes to trade, the world's services and organizations have enormous potential (Maiti & Kayal, 2017). Digitalization is positively related to firm efficiency and performance (Loebbecke & Picot, 2015). Digitalization has created new business models and ways to create value (Neumeier, Wolf, & Oesterle, 2017). It is a key driver of globalization and innovation as technological developments enable easier, faster, and more affordable interaction among people, companies, and governments without the restraints of time and presence (Vuori, Helander, & Okkonen, 2019). Digitalization has created new business models and also to create value (Neumeier et al., 2017). Digitalization of work may enable better use of knowledge, resulting in enhanced efficiency and productivity (Shujahat et al., 2019). The extent to which digitalization improves efficiency in federal civil services can vary depending on the implementation, technology adoption, and the specific processes involved. Generally, digitalization in the context of federal civil services refers to the integration of digital technologies to streamline operations, enhance communication, and improve overall efficiency. Digitalization allows for the automation of repetitive and routine tasks, reducing the time and effort required for manual processing. This can include tasks like data entry, document processing, and basic administrative functions.

Digital tools facilitate faster and more efficient communication within and between government agencies. This can lead to quicker decision-making processes, enhanced collaboration, and better coordination among different departments.it also enables better data management, storage, and analysis (Lanzolla, 2020). Federal civil services can leverage data analytics to gain insights, make informed decisions, and optimize resource allocation based on data-driven assessments. Providing online services and platforms can improve citizen engagement and satisfaction. It allows citizens to access information, submit applications, and interact with government services more conveniently, reducing the need for physical visits (Alabi, & Okeke, 2023). Digitalization can help streamline workflows by creating digital processes for various tasks. This reduces bureaucratic bottlenecks and ensures that tasks move through the system more smoothly. Digital systems can improve the security of sensitive government information and ensure compliance with data protection regulations. This is crucial for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of government operations. However, it's important to note that the successful implementation of digitalization requires careful planning, adequate training for employees, and addressing potential challenges such as cybersecurity concerns and resistance to change. the effectiveness of digitalization efforts in federal ministries may vary depending on the specific goals, policies, and technology infrastructure in place within a particular government agency.

Empirical Review

Martin, Jon, Daniela, Eun, Michael and Iryna (2021), carried out a research titled "The impact of digitalisation on productivity: Firm-level evidence from the Netherlands", The research analyses the role of intangibles and digital adoption for firm-level productivity in the Netherlands drawing on a newly constructed panel data set of Dutch enterprises. Results show that intangibles as measured by levels of digital skill intensity have a positive and statistically significant impact on firm-level productivity growth in the service sector and for younger firms. It was discovered that Productivity benefits from software investment are strong for low productivity firms. Together, these findings highlight the potential of intangibles to support the productivity catch-up of laggard enterprises. The evidence also suggests that productivity benefits from ICT hardware investment and the uptake of high-speed broadband are positive and sizeable. One setback of the study was that it only focused on Dutch enterprises in Netherlands, and thus the findings may not be generalizable to other regions. Guzmán-Ortiz, Navarro-Acosta, Florez-Garcia, and Vicente-Ramos (2020) examined the impact of digital transformation on employee performance in insurance companies in Peru. The study relied on the questionnaire method in collecting data from a sample of its people (305) employees aged 25 years and over in four insurance companies. Operating in Arequipa, Cuzco, Iquitos, Lima, Tacna, and Trujillo regions in Peru, the study results showed that the customer service experience based on digital transformation positively impacted task performance and contextual performance in return. At the same time, it did not affect the adverse behavior of employees. Based on digital transformation, it significantly affects the performance of tasks and contextual performance, and there is no effect on the opposite behavior.

Buthina**,** Sejood, Sager and Sakher (2022) in carried out a study on; "Digitalization and Its Impact On Employee's Performance: A Case Study On Greater Tafila Municipality". The study was aimed at measuring and analyzing digitalization's impact on employee performance in Greater Tafila Municipality. The study community consisted of all workers in Greater Tafila Municipality and its (5) administrative regions. To achieve the study's objectives and test its assumptions, a questionnaire was prepared and used as the main tool for data collection. The field study was conducted on a sample of (167) people, and the number of valid questionnaires for analysis was (160). Statistical methods, such as arithmetic averages, standard deviations, Cronbach alpha, and stability coefficient, were applied. The study found a positive correlation between digitalization and employee performance at the significance level (a _ 0.05). It also indicated a positive moral effect of digitalization on employee performance in Greater Tafila Municipality. Finally, it provides psychological support to reduce digital stress for employees in the municipality. Chen, Jaw, and Wu (2016) examined the impact of digital service gates on job performance in small and medium-sized companies in the Taiwanese textile industry. Connecting using the dimensions of the portal's utility, the portal interface, and the portal's service-oriented functions on the perceived results for users of small and medium-sized companies' products, the study relied on both descriptive and quantitative methods in testing the study's hypotheses. Data were collected using field interviews and surveys from senior executives in companies. The study results indicated that the dimension of the service-oriented portal function, which is cloud computing, significantly affects job performance. These service composition and results functions provide practical evidence as informative pointers for policymakers, information service providers, and SME executives to evaluate possible elements of web portal design in the traditional industry. The findings from this study may help portal service providers design better web portal functionality for SMEs.

James, Adedeji and Adebimpe (2022) carried out a research titled, "Digital transformation in Nigeria: The prospects and challenges of the gig economy" they observed that Rapid digital transformation has changed the way of life of humans and reshaped the global economy. Internet connectivity has drastically changed work as communication technologies and digital platforms have enabled the availability, execution and delivery of work from anywhere in the world. The study adopted the survey research design using online forms for data collection. The study population were undergraduate students of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, comprising only the internet savvy who were actively participating in the gig economy. Research data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study revealed a male to female respondents ratio of 78:22. However, the findings showed no significant relationship between respondents' gender and acceptability of the gig economy. The greatest challenge faced by gig workers in Nigeria is poor electricity power supply and internet access. 67% of the respondents are involved in freelancing and also inadequate digital skills. Half of the study population earns below 20,000 Naira monthly from gig work. Most of the respondents were engaged in the gig economy for 'flexibility' and 'more money' and were willing to take up gig work as full-time employment. It was recommended that the establishment of a regulatory body to guide operational standards for both organizations and gig workers, control pricing and improve payment platforms in Nigeria. The major setback of the research was that the sample size was relatively small.

Regina and Sara 2022 carried out a research for the European Union titled, "Digitalization and changes in the world of work". The aim of the study was to provide the members of the committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) with an updated review of findings from research on the impact of digitalization in the workplace. The literature review presented recent empirical (quantitative) impact studies and supplements these with qualitative research findings from relevant case studies. The research key findings were that although European countries show weaknesses in the use of digital technologies compared to the United States or China, there was a broad range of fast developing digital technologies already playing or likely to play a significant role in shaping the future of work. Indicators and new company surveys show that Covid-19 had "the great accelerator" not only for remote and platform work but also for the adoption of digital business models and processes in regular work settings. The study findings, however, agreed on the impact of workplace digitalization as uneven among workers with different skills levels. It was recommended that there should be an increased investment in digitalization, which would translate to increase in employment of high-skilled workers and reduced employment of low-skilled workers. Re-and up skilling might, however, not always be the silver bullet for individual workers with physical or mental limitations, One setback of the study was its Europocentric focus, thus the findings may not be generalizable to other regions.

Muhammad and al Ghubairi (2020), in their study, aimed to analyze the reality of digital transformation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia towards adopting its use in bringing about development, modernization, and continuous improvement for the renaissance and progress of the Kingdom and then determining the extent of its progress in dealing with digital and absorbing its contents. Through the study and analysis, it was found that digital transformation in the Kingdom was progressing at an annual rate of 5% from 2011 to 2017. The study made several recommendations, including intensifying and deepening the uses of communication and information technologies and integrating them in the design of operations and activities at all organizational levels. Policymakers must design policies appropriate to the implementation of digital transformation. The drawback was that the research did not explore primary data but relied on past literatures which may not capture contemporary prospects and digital tools.

Scientific Administrative Theory

This is a well-known management theory developed by Frederick Taylor in 1911. This theory is also important due to temporal factors and purpose of the investigation. In history his studies were the greatest event of the nineteenth century. The theory is mainly focused on maximum productivity. This theory delivers a proper solution for problems and challenges of industrialists (Tallman, 2004). Taylor believed that scientific management was the solution to business problems; he discussed scientific management theory in his book entitled as Principles of Scientific Management. He stated that certain efforts change the management system in some cases, so that interests of workers are converted into interests of management (Choi, 2008). Taylor worked on increasing efficiency using scientific methods, eliminating additional movements and transfers at workplace. He wanted to train workers for better jobs, divide the tasks between management and workers and implement scientific management style with respect to different practices and workers in action (Hilman & Abubakar, 2019). In this method, each group makes their best efforts, and he introduced some principles of scientific management theory to increase productivity. He also predicted that these principles are suitable for all kinds of human activities, from an individual simple task to complex organizational activities

In the digital economy, this concept applies to roles in IT, where specialists work on specific aspects of technology such as cyber security, data analysis, and software development. Division of labor ensures that each task is handled by someone with the necessary expertise. Fayol's principles highlight the importance of standardized processes and procedures for achieving organizational goals. In the digital economy, standardization is crucial for ensuring that digital products and services meet quality and security standards. Standardized coding practices, for example, help maintain the integrity and security of software applications. The theory emphasizes the importance of a clear hierarchy and chain of command within an organization. In the digital economy, this is essential for effective decision-making and project management. Agile methodologies, for instance, maintain a clear hierarchy with product owners, scrum masters, and development teams to ensure efficient development and delivery of digital products. Taylor's scientific management theory focused on optimizing efficiency and productivity. In the digital economy, this translates into optimizing digital processes, automating repetitive tasks through technologies like robotic process automation (RPA), and using data analytics to continuously improve operations. Both Taylor stressed the importance of employee training and development. In the digital economy, this is crucial as technology evolves rapidly. Organizations need to invest in training programs to ensure their employees have the skills and knowledge needed to work with digital tools and technologies effectively. The theory discussed the balance between centralization (concentrating decision-making at the top) and decentralization (delegating decision-making to lower levels). In the digital economy, this choice depends on the organization's size, structure, and industry.

Decentralization can promote innovation and agility, while centralization can ensure consistency and compliance in digital operations. Taylor's theory emphasized the role of incentives and fair compensation in motivating employees. In the digital economy, this translates into offering competitive salaries and benefits, as well as recognizing and rewarding digital innovation and excellence. Effective communication is a cornerstone of scientific administrative theory. In the digital economy, this means utilizing digital communication tools and platforms for efficient collaboration, knowledge sharing, and decision-making across geographically dispersed teams. Both Taylor and Fayol stressed the importance of clearly defining roles and responsibilities. In the digital economy, accountability is essential to ensure that digital projects and initiatives meet their objectives. Clear job descriptions and performance metrics help in this regard. While not explicitly part of the original scientific administrative theory, the digital economy places a strong emphasis on adaptability and continuous improvement. Organizations must be agile and ready to adapt to rapidly changing digital landscapes to remain competitive. In summary, scientific administrative theory provides a solid foundation for managing organizations in the digital economy. While the theory was developed in a different era, its principles can be adapted and applied to contemporary challenges and opportunities presented by digital technologies and the evolving nature of work.

Scientific Administrative Theory, focuses on the systematic study of work processes and the application of scientific principles to improve productivity and efficiency within organizations. When applied to civil servant productivity, this theory can provide valuable insights into how government agencies can optimize the performance of their employees. Here's an explanation of how Scientific Administrative Theory can be used to enhance civil servant productivity, Taylor's approach emphasizes the importance of time and motion studies. Civil service organizations can conduct detailed analyses of the tasks performed by their employees. By recording the time it takes to complete specific tasks and identifying unnecessary movements or delays, organizations can identify bottlenecks and inefficiencies. This information can then be used to streamline processes and reduce wasted time, ultimately increasing productivity. One key principle of Scientific Administrative Theory is the standardization of work processes. Civil service agencies can develop standardized procedures and best practices for common tasks. This ensures that all employees follow consistent, efficient methods, reducing variations in performance and improving overall productivity. Taylor advocated for the specialization of labor, where each employee focuses on a specific set of tasks they are highly skilled at. In a civil service context, this could mean assigning employees to roles that align with their expertise and training. Specialization can lead to increased efficiency as employees become experts in their assigned areas.

Taylor argued that selecting the right people for the job and providing them with proper training are crucial for productivity. Civil service organizations can use rigorous selection processes to match employees with roles that align with their skills and abilities. Additionally, ongoing training and development programs can enhance employees' skills and keep them up-to-date with the latest practices and technologies. Scientific Administrative Theory also advocates for the use of incentive systems to motivate employees to perform at their best. Civil service agencies can design performance-based incentive programs that reward employees for meeting or exceeding productivity targets. Incentives can include bonuses, promotions, or other forms of recognition. Taylor suggested that managers should only intervene when exceptions or deviations from standard procedures occur. In a civil service context, this means that supervisors should monitor employee performance and step in when there are issues or deviations from established standards. This approach allows managers to focus their attention where it is most needed, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently. Scientific Administrative Theory encourages a culture of continuous improvement. Civil service organizations should regularly review and revise their processes, based on data and feedback, to identify opportunities for enhancement. This iterative approach ensures that productivity continues to improve over time. By applying the principles of Scientific Administrative Theory to civil service operations, government agencies can enhance the productivity of their employees, deliver services more efficiently, and better meet the needs of the public they serve. This approach requires a commitment to data-driven decision-making, process optimization, and ongoing training and development for civil servants.

Data Analysis and Discussion of findings

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by digital technology literacy

digital technology literacy	Frequency	Percentage
Digital literate	134	35.3%
Not digital literate	246	64.7%
Total	380	100%

Source: field survey 2023

From Table 1, it is observed that 35.3% of respondents are digital literate, while 64.7% are not digital literate. This implies that most respondents are not digital literate. Not having a more digitally literate workforce in the civil service can have several negative implications on the efficiency, effectiveness, and overall functioning of the federal civil service especially when using digital platform in performing its duties.

Table 2 Distribution of Repondents by frequent internet usage

Frequent use of internet	Frequency	Percentage
Very Often	12	3.1%
Often	48	12.6%
Occasionally	270	71.1%
Rarely	50	13.2%
Total	380	100%

Source: field survey 2023

Table 2 depicts 3.1% of total respondents uses the internet very often, 12.6% make use of the internet often, while 71.1% uses the internet it occasionally, whereas 13.2% rarely use the internet. This implies that most of the respondents use the internet occasionally. It indicates that technology, particularly the internet, is not widely integrated into the daily activities of civil servants. This could be due to the decreasing and inadequate digitization of administrative processes, communication, and information management within the federal civil services in Abuja.

Table 3 Distribution of Respondents who make use of the Digital Technology in Performing their Work

Use of digital technology in work performance	Frequency	Percentage
YES	21	5.5%
NO	359	94.5%
Total	380	100%

Source: field survey 2023

Table 3. Shows 5.5% respondents use digital technology in job performance, while 94.5% do not. This implies that most civil servants in Abuja lack the necessary digital tools to perform their work. With less respondents using digital technology, this can lead to less informed and interconnected workforce. It's important to note that the implications can vary depending on the context, ministry, and specific individual associated with the usage digital technology. As observed by Ismail, Khater and Zaki, (2017), Accessible technology allows for streamlined communication, efficient task management, and quick access to information. Also Regina and Sara (2022), observed that there is a broad range of fast developing digital technologies already playing or likely to play a significant role in shaping the future of work. With majority of civil savant unable to perform their routine work using digital technology, digital divide can be exacerbated due to existing social and economic inequalities, limiting the opportunities available to certain groups and regions (James, Adebimpe and Adedeji 2022). The unequal access of sophisticated technological equipment across most federal ministries has shown the level of digital divide in the federal civil service in Nigeria.

Table 4 Response on the Rate to which digital technology supports level of workers performance

Level of workers performance	Frequency	Percentage
Higher performance	343	92.3%
Low performance	37	9.7%
Total	380	100%

Source: field survey 2023

Table 4 Shows the ratew to which digital technology supports workers performance, 92.3% said that digital technology supports higher workers performance. While 9.7% asserted that it only translates to lower performance. This implies that most respondents are of the view that digital technology supports higher workers performance.
In agreement with the above findings, the general consensus among most participants during the interview was that;

> Digital technology has greatly improved the level of worker performance, the higher the adoption of digital technology the higher the level of performance or vice vasa. (**IDI**, 2023)
> “The adoption of digital technologies in the civil service has greatly led to increased automation of routine tasks, reducing the time and effort required for administrative processes. This in turn can enhanced overall efficiency and allows civil servants to focus on more complex and strategic aspects of their work”. (**IDI**, 2023)

However a participants during the interview states that;

> Digital tools often enhance efficiency and productivity. Workers with limited access to these tools may find themselves performing tasks more slowly or less efficiently, potentially affecting overall productivity in the civil service. Workers without adequate access may face challenges in accessing such resources, limiting their ability to enhance their skills and advance in their careers. (**IDI**, 2023)

Table 6. Responses on the Level at which Digitalization Improve Efficiency of the Federal Civil Service

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Low	5	1.3%
Moderate	54	14.2%
High	321	84.5%
Total	380	100%

Source: field survey 2023

Table 6: Evaluates the level of efficiency in the federal civil service due to the impact of digitalization. 1.3% rated the Efficiency level low, while 14.2% of the sampled respondents evaluated it to be moderate. while 84.5% of respondents rate it High. This implies that digitalization \ highly improve the Efficiency of the Federal Civil Service.

Conclusion

The adoption of digital technologies in Nigerian Federal Civil Service will help workers do their jobs and make things run more smoothly. The truth is, it currently has not made a big impact because not many people are using digital tools due to problems of digital divide . The numbers from the study shows that there is a difference between people who have access to digital tools and those who do not. These numbers show that there are still a lot of problems like people not having access to tools not having the skills they need and being vulnerable to cyber threats. Even though digital tools are not being used much most of the people in the study, digital transformation can indeed do a lot to help the Nigerian Federal Civil Service like making workers more productive making it easier to get things done managing data better helping people work together and providing services. But this is not happening because the infrastructure is not good enough not many people know how to use tools and these tools are not being used enough. the research finds that although digital transformation offers considerable promise to enhance productivity, policy implementation, data handling, cooperation, and service provision in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service,.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: March 26, 2026 **Accepted**: March 30, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Emeje, Abubakar Y.; Abdulmalik, Mohammed D., Agih, Abdul, Oguche, Peter U. & Simeon, Ilemona D. (2026). "An Examination of Karl Marx's Concept of Alienation and the Nigerian Experience." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 122-130.

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AN EXAMINATION OF KARL MARX'S CONCEPT OF ALIENATION AND THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

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Abstract
Humankind's history is fundamentally a struggle between social classes. The productive capacity of the society is the foundation of that particular society, and as this capacity increases over time, the social relations of production, class relations evolve through struggle of the classes and pass through definite stages (primitive communism, share feudalism, capitalism). People are alienated not only from products of their labour but also from themselves through the process of production. The nature of labour's productive activity results in people's self -alienation. This comes about because work is not voluntary but imposed upon them. Such imposition induces a feeling of misery instead of well-being. So, rather than fulfilling themselves, they must deny themselves, not freely develop their physical and mental capacities but are instead physically exhausted and mentally debased. As a consequence, workers feel alienated from work because it is not their own work but work for someone else, the capitalist. According to Marx, 'man's ability to work and create makes him what he is'. It is work that distinguishes man from animals. But in the capitalist system man's work has become a process of alienation. Man works merely to survive. Marx argued that all aspects of the culture become capitalistically oriented with monetary value

attached to everything. Humans are used as mere instruments having no intrinsic value but only extrinsic instrumental value. Hence, this research took a study of Marx's view on alienation. It also brought in the connection it has with capitalism and its relationship with class struggle. The paper also relates the discussion to the Nigerian situation and suggests the possible way forward. Thus, with the philosophical tools of expository, analysis and synthesis, the research argued that Marx's critique of alienation was based on a tacit theory of human nature and desires that grounded an ethic of dignity that was systematically thwarted by political economy and masked by ideology.

Keywords: Alienation, Capitalism, Class Struggle, Exploitation, Human Dignity.

Introduction

Karl Heinrich Marx (1818-1883) was the last of the great critics in the western intellectual tradition. His ideas exerted a decisive influence on all aspects of human endeavour, and transformed the study of history and society. He was a brilliant agitator and polemicist, a profound economist, a great sociologist, and an incomparable historian. Marx was the first thinker to bring together the various strands of socialist thought into both a coherent world view and an impassioned doctrine of struggle (Howe, I. (Ed, 5). However, from its very inception Marxism was faced with a variety of criticism and critical acclaim. In fact, the controversies within Marxism are such that Marxism like liberalism has become an umbrella ideology. In the contest of Marx's writings, scholars spoke of two Marxs: the young and the old. The young Marx was concerned with alienation, human nature and morality; the old was more deterministic, with his in-depth study of the workings of capitalism (Mukherjee, and Ramaswamy,348). Nevertheless, this paper focuses on the concept of alienation in Marxian philosophy.

Humankind's history is fundamentally a struggle between social classes. The productive capacity of the society is the foundation of that particular society, and as this capacity increases over time, the social relations of production, class relations evolve through struggle of the classes and pass through definite stages (primitive communism, share feudalism, capitalism). The legal, political, ideological and other aspects of society are derived from these production relations as it is the consciousness of the individuals of which the society is composed. However, in his early work, economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844, Karl Marx analysed alienation from a historical, anthropological, and socio-economic perspective. Marx argued that the problem of "alienation" is a major problem of class divided society where one section of the people (Proletariats) has been exploited by another section (bourgeoisie). He argues that in capitalist society, an economic minority (the bourgeoisie) dominate, alienate and exploit an economic majority (the proletariat). According to Marx, the exploitation of proletariat could be measured with the help of surplus value-the difference between the wages paid to the labourers and the final price for which the product was sold. He held further that while the production process is socialised, ownership remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie, and as such the bourgeoisie will continue exploiting and alienating the proletariat. Without the elimination of the fetters of private ownership of the means of production, human society is unable to achieve further development and so exploitation and alienation will continue. Hence, for Marx, quoted in Mukherjee and Ramaswamy:

> Alienation and exploitation made possible the revolutionary transformation of capitalism. It was the individual as a producer who rebelled against society to free himself from exploitation and oppression. The basis for

> change was therefore moral. Unless private property was abolished, the worker could not be truly free. But once this was achieved, human nature would undergo a transformation, for a true communist society was one of socialised humanity (363).

In the *Manifesto*, Marx described the nature of communist society as one in which the classes and its antagonisms would have disappeared. The bourgeois society would be replaced by "an association", in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all (76). This paper is basically to discuss Marx's concept of alienation. But before we reach the critical climax, it is imperative to note that alienation of labourers is a result of the evil of capitalism that is exploitative in nature, which gives rise to a perpetual social class struggle, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Therefore a consideration of class struggle and analysis of capitalism is important. This shall aid our proper understanding of the concept of alienation. However, we shall in our evaluation and conclusion, relate the discussion to the Nigerian situation and suggest the possible way forward.

Class Struggle in Marx's Ideology

In every society there were two classes, the rich and poor, one that owned the means of production, and the other that sold its labour. During different historical phases, these two classes were known by different names and enjoyed different legal statuses and privileges, but one thing was common, that in the course of all these phases, their relationship had been one of exploitation and domination. According to Marx, freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, Lord and serf, guild master and journeyman, in a word oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another (76). Marx objected to the idea of the middle-class historians that class struggle has ended with the rise of the bourgeoisie, just as he opposed the perceptions of the classical economists that capitalism was eternal and immutable. He harnessed the rising consciousness and power among the industrial proletariat, and emphasized that it was their desire to bring about economic equality that kept class struggle and revolutionary change alive. He summed up his own contributions to the notion of class struggle in a letter to Josef Weydemeyer in 1852, wherein he confidently declared that class struggles would not be a permanent feature of society, but were necessitated by the historical development of production. Class struggle would end with the destruction of capitalism, for communism would be a classless society (Mukherjee, and Ramaswamy,360).

Class, for Marx, symbolises collective unity in the same manner as the nation in Hegel's theory. Each class produced its own ideas, and beliefs, and operated within a particular economic and social system. The individual was important with respect to his membership within a class, which determined his moral convictions, aesthetics preferences and every kind of reasoning (78). It is important to decisively state that, for Marx, ideology played a pivotal role in controlling the oppressed. There were three main features of ideas. First, they depicted the existing order as entrenched in forces that were beyond human control. Things were not arbitrary, but instituted by certain sections of people for their own benefit. Second, ideas explained how the existing order benefited everyone in society. Third, ideas depicted the existing order as beneficial in a particular way, namely to promote the interests of the dominant economic class and protect class privileges (Mukherjee, and Ramaswamy, 361).

Marx's Analysis of Capitalism

Marx defined capitalism by two factors, First, by the use of wage labour. In *Capital: A Critique of Philosophical Economy*, he pointed out that "capitalism arises only when the owners of the means of production and subsistence meet in the market with the free labourer selling his labour power." The basis of capitalism was wage labour. The second defining characteristics of capitalism were private ownership of the means of production, which was distinct from personal property, like household effects and home. The ownership of the means of production was the crucial feature of capitalism, for it was restricted to a few. Those who did not own anything were forced to sell their labour power and became wage earners. The idea that labour was only the property of the poor was derived from William Cobbert (1963-1835). Unlike the medieval guildsmen, they did not work for themselves but for others. Hence Marx observed as follows:

> The man who posses no other property than his labour power must, in all conditions of society and culture, be the slave of other men, who have made themselves the owners of the material conditions of labour. He can work only with their permission, hence live only with their permission (228).

Marx's chief criticisms of capitalism revolve around his theory of surplus labour. He began with what is known as the "labour theory of value," which was held by many of the economists of his day. The theory states that the value of any commodity is a function of the amount of labour that it took to produce it. In capitalism, the worker's labour is in commodity, so the value of the worker's labour is determined by its cost. What it takes to produce a worker's labour is what it takes to sustain him. Given what he thought was the most charitable account of capitalism, Marx assumed the product will be sold for its just price. However, this alone would have the capitalist without any profit. So the capitalist must find some way to work profit into this scenario. He does so by forcing the worker to labour more hours than is necessary for his own survival. (Quoted in Lawhead, W.F. 393). However, in the Communist Manifesto (1848), Marx paid some tributes to the bourgeoisie, while highlighting its negative side. There were three reasons that made capitalism attractive. First, it brought remarkable economic progress by revolutionizing the means of production and developing technology as never before. It built and encouraged the growth of commerce and factories on a scale unknown before.

By the very range and extent of its activity, capitalism made its second contribution. It undermines national barriers. In its search for markets and raw materials, capitalism and the bourgeoisie crossed national boundaries and penetrated every corner of the world, drawing the most backward nations into their fold. Capitalism was cosmopolitan and international (Mukherjee, and Ramaswamy, 362). Being worldwide, the third achievement of capitalism was within its territorial confines. It eliminated the distinctions between towns and country, and enabled the peasants to come out of what Marx called "the idiocy of rural life." Marx contended that, in spite of all these achievements, capitalism has outlived its use because of the sufferings and hardships it caused. It would have to yield itself to a new socialist organisation of production (Mukherjee, and Ramaswam,362). Marx outlined and examined the sufferings with capitalism, which were rooted in its origin: the eviction of workers from their land, the loss of their sources of income; an income that is based on starvation of wages, and most importantly, the creation of the proletariat. Hence, according to Mukherjee and Ramaswamy, 362:

> The suffering required for the creation of the free-wage labourer was the first cost of capitalism. The exploitation of the proletariat could be

> measured with the help of surplus value-the difference between the wage paid to the labourer, and the final price for which the product was sold. The rate of profit indicated the degree of exploitation. The capitalist squeezed the working class like a sponge to extract the last drop of profit. Exploitation was therefore the second disadvantage of capitalism. The third was the alienation of workers. To Marx, labour had to be satisfying and fulfilling, which was not possible under capitalism. The reason was the lack of control the workers had over productive process.

Marx asserted that capitalism contained within itself seeds of its own destruction. He rallied the working class under the call "workers of all countries unite," a phrase that he borrowed from Karl Sehapper. Within capitalism, increase in monopolies led to growing exploitation, misery and pauperization of the working class. Simultaneously, as the working class increased in number, it became better organized and acquired greater bargaining skills. This initiated a revolutionary process, leading to a new socialist arrangement in which common possession replaced private ownership of the means of production (Johnson, 56).

Marx's Concept of Alienation

Up until the 1930 both Marx's sympathizers and his critics had viewed his philosophy primarily as a ponderous economic and social theory that purported to give a scientific analysis of the large-scale forces operating in human history. The bulk of what we knew about Marx's system, represented by his monumental work in *Dris kapital*, seemed to have little concern for the individual and ignored any issues of existential significance. In 1932, however, Marx's early, unpublished manuscripts, now known as the Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844, came to light, which necessitated a complete reassessment of Marx's ideas. In this series of essays, written when he was twenty-six, Marx spoke eloquently about the human condition and the sense of alienation that has swept over humanity. Paralleling similar concerns in the existentialists, Marx claimed that the happy optimism of the nineteenth century that resulted from its uncritical faith in science, technology, and human progress, rested on a rotten underside (Lawhead, 385).

Alienation is a state of being separated from one's tune self. According to Marx (117), alienation, separation of the worker from himself, his species, fellow human beings, labour and the product of his labour, is inversely proportional to ownership of the means of production. One premise of this theory is that wage-labour creates surplus value that is the source of private property. Private properties, in turn, cause alienation, and was defined as owned income producing objects. This was the basis of the reason for the proletariat to have appropriated the means of production. Marx was motivated to solve the problem of alienation through communal ownership of the means of production, which was impossible for his theory of alienation, is physically untenable and thus his solution to alienation was wrong as a result of this (Russel, 385)

In earlier times, a person would toil long hard hours to cultivate the soil, construct a home, or build his fishing craft. He did not live a life of luxury, but he had the experience of meaningful labour. He owned his tools and materials, and he owned the product of his labour. It was the external embodiment of his individual, creative powers. But as capitalism developed, the workers relation to their labour changed. The means of production gradually fell into the hands of a few people. The majority, who were propertyless, had only one way to survive and that was to sell their labour as a commodity. This poses as a free exchange between the employer and the employee. However, the worker's lack of economic power turns into a form of servitude. The problem is that if meaningful work is the fundamental defining quality of human life, and if our work is alienating, then we are alienated from ourselves (Lawhead, 385).

The Four Types of Alienation

According to Marx, (117), alienation was inversely proportional to ownership of the means of production, and wage-labour created surplus value that was the source of private property. Private property, being owned income producing objects, in turn caused alienation and acting upon this conclusion the proletariat was to appropriate the means of production.

Marx insisted on “appropriation” and not destruction. This means that after the act of appropriation, the act of labour should no longer have been alienating. However, according to Marcuse “transition from capitalism to socialism was a political revolution; the proletariat destroyed the political apparatus of capitalism but retained the technological apparatus” (Marcus, 22). The power relationship was supposed to change under communism not the process of production, but in effect. Production continued as usual and alienation was carried over into communism because the process itself was not destroyed. The process had to be continued inorder to continue production. Mandel noted that alienation would be inevitable and still exist after such appropriation (Mandel and George, 33)

Alienation from the Product of Labour

Based on the “fact of private property” and by following the path or “material process” of private property. Marx concluded that labour was alienated since it did not own what it produced. The product, or objectification of labour, is lost to the labourer and the labourer becomes poorer the more objects he creates because they take on a life separate from the worker who has no control over them. The workers production of surplus value for the owner of private property may surpass the value returned to him. Hence, according to Marx:

> It is true that labour produces for the rich wonderful things-but for the worker it produces privation. It produces palaces-but for the worker, hovels. It produces beauty- but for the worker, deformity. It replaces labour by machines-but some of the workers it throws back to a barbarous type of labour, and the other workers it turns into machines. It produces intelligence-but for the worker idiocy, cretinism (7).

Alienation from Economic Activity or the Labour Process

The second dimension of alienation describes the alienation of the labourer form the act of production or economic activity. Here, it is necessary to differentiate between two distinct forms of alienation from economic activity. The first form describes the external character of labour, which is not part of human nature and does not generate spiritual and physical energy (Marx, 514). This type of labour is intrinsically alien to the worker and is not practiced or affirmed during leisure periods. To the worker, it is “forced labour,” an agent without an end itself: it is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it. The second form deals with the separation from private ownership and wage labour. Since labour belongs to the owner of the means of production rather than the labourer, the economic activity of the labourer is abstract, determined by others, and not liberating (Marx, 514). Here, Marx compares the alienation of labour to the alienation in religion where human independence is confronted by an external, divine or diabolical activity (514).

Alienation of Workers from Species-Being

For Karl Marx, the human is a species-being. In contrast to animals, humans act not only in their own interests, but also towards their own species (515). To Marx, the human is a social and working being, created as a representational species-being. Labour and productive life- freely practiced- is for Marx not merely a means of self-sufficiency but essential genus lifestyle. As labour evolves into simply a means of self -preservation and supply of food, the labourer becomes alienated from his species and the genius lifestyle becomes merely "an agent of individual life" (Thompson, 23).

Alienation of the Individual from Other Individual

Having been degraded themselves, the labourers view others as degraded also. They see their employer as merely a source of money and see one another as competitors for jobs and wages." The increasing value of the world of things," Marx argued proceeds in direct proportion to, the devaluation of the world of men. Labour, human potential and the genus lifestyle become the means of self-preservation (Marx, 71). Just as human interrelationship becomes a means rather than an end itself, so are individuals alienated from one another. As a result of alienated labour, the relationship of humans toward products, production and other humans is self-producing. It is important to note that Marx is not calling for piece meal adjustments in the way things are run. For example, he did not think a more equitable distribution of money was the solution. As he pointed out, an increase in wages would be nothing but better payment for the slave, and would not conquer either for the worker or for labour human status and dignity". Hence, according to Lawhead, what is necessary is nothingless than a radical reorganization of the structure of power and economics in society (380).

Evaluation and Conclusion

We have seen in this paper that historically speaking, as Marx asserted, is the struggle between social classes; the rich and the poor, the privileged and the less privileged, the oppressor and the oppressed, the factory owners and the workers, to put it in Marx most preferably terms, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This is because in capitalist society, the economic minority exploit and dominate the economic majority. However, Marx argues that alienation and class struggle would not continue in the society, for capitalism is not a permanent feature of the society. Hence exploitation and alienation made possible the revolutionary transformation of capitalism. This will lead to the emergence of socialism", the first stage of communism. Here the state takes over the means of production. However, this will eventually give way to the final stage of true communism, for a classless society was one of a socialized humanity. It is hard to deny that many of Marx's comments about capitalism hit the target. One hundred years after the publication of the Communist Manifesto, Sidney Hook listed the features of capitalism described by Marx that are still on-going concerns today:

> Economic centralization and monopoly, the cycle of boom and depression, unemployment and the effects of technological change, political and economic class wars, excessive specialization and division of labour, the triumph of materialistic and money values on the rest of our culture (Quoted in Lawhead, 396).

However, many of Marx's predictions were off the Mark. Most significantly, he thought the collapse of the capitalist system was just around the corner. But capitalism seems to have a resiliency he could not have fathomed. The power of labour unions, the government's prosecution of monopolies, the extensive regulations governing the health and safety of workers, affirming action programs, the increased leisure of workers, and numerous employee benefits are just a few of the developments in the twentieth-century workplace that Marx never imagined would develop within capitalism. He seemed to assume that the only alternatives were a total laissez-faire economy or a total collectivism and did not allow for the mixed economies of today's world (Lawhead, 396).

Another problem is Marx's conception that workers were alienated from the products of their labour and from the labour process. The labourers' creations are appropriated by strangers as their private property to be turned into their profits. But for Marx to suggest that the labourer should own the product or the means of production was to promote appropriation of what the labourer did not create. This means that the labourer did not necessarily design the machinery it used to make product, design the product itself, or owns the materials used in making the product. However, Marx would have rather speak emphatically of non-commensurable payment of workers' wages, the excessive surplus value enjoy by the capitalists and the right of the workers not to be forced to labour excessively outside work hours and days(Lawhead, 385). Marx's theory of alienation is of immediate relevance to the Nigerian situation, especially in the area of non-payment and non-commensurable payment of workers'salary and wages by both the government and the capitalists, when compared to their counterparts in world class nations. The implication of this is that, the Nigerian salary structure is exploitative and alienative in nature. A typical example is the perpetual conflict between the federal government of Nigeria (FGN) and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASSU), concerning their salary structure. According to Igboin, the reality today, in spite of the October 2009 FGN-ASSU Agreement, a professor earns lesser than a local government councillor, let alone a senator. According to him, in 2010, Aluko had showed the wide discrepancy in the salaries of a senator in Nigeria vis-à-vis a professor and their counterparts in America (Igboin, 334)

Whereas a National Assembly member earns a 'legitimate' sum of about N88 million per annum, a professor earns a paltry sum of N 3.5 million. In the US, a senator earns $169,000 per annum which is N25.4 millions; an American professor earns $116,000or N17.4 million. When we weigh the differences that have occurred in the remuneration policy in Nigeria, it will be absurd to conclude that the package being offered is an improvement of what had been. It can be argued on the contrary that with the economic consideration at present, what universities' lecturers earn is far different from the reality on the ground. It is certainly this poor condition of service that led to the intractable problem of brain drain, and sale of hand outs. There is need for proper rethinking in order to find solution to the problem of non-commensurable payment of workers' salaries and wages, which manifest a sense of exploitation and alienation in Nigeria. It is in view of this that I will suggest a reworking of our political arena, not necessary along line of western democracy, but also those that suit us and our existential political reality. This will enable us to restructure our economic structure, for what organizes society for its developmental end is not purely economic but also political.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: March 22, 2026 **Accepted**: March 30, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Muhammad, Muhammad & Abdulsalam, Jamilu M. (2026). "Political Party Financing, Electoral Competition, and Regulation in Nigeria: Evidence from Apc and Pdp in Malumfashi Local Government Area During the 2023 General Elections." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 131-141.

Article **Open Access**

POLITICAL PARTY FINANCING, ELECTORAL COMPETITION, AND REGULATION IN NIGERIA: EVIDENCE FROM APC AND PDP IN MALUMFASHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA DURING THE 2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract
The study investigated political party financing, electoral competition, and regulation in Malumfashi Local Government Area of Katsina State during the 2023 general elections, focusing on the APC and PDP. Using a quantitative method, data were collected from all 78 party officials and candidates through a validated and reliable questionnaire (CVI = 1; Cronbach's α = 0.98) and analysed with SPSS 23. Findings revealed that both parties relied mainly on donations, fund-raising activities, levies, and material support rather than membership dues. The APC enjoyed significantly greater financial and logistical resources, which enhanced its campaign effectiveness and electoral performance. Party finance was largely unregulated, as 70.5% of respondents indicated, prompting 92.3% to support stricter enforcement and the establishment of an independent regulatory agency. Consequently, the study recommended strengthening internal financing mechanisms, enforcing membership dues, institutionalizing transparent fund-raising, promoting equitable resource distribution, introducing limited public funding, enforcing campaign spending limits, and enhancing monitoring, auditing, and voter education to improve compliance, transparency, and accountability in Nigeria's electoral process.

Keywords: Political Party Financing, Electoral Competition, Regulation in Nigeria, APC and PDP, 2023 General Elections; Malumfashi LGA, Katsina State.

Introduction

Political parties constitute one of the most fundamental institutions of liberal democracy and the broader democratization project across the world. In democratic systems, political parties are expected to be responsive and accountable, while serving as intermediary and mediatory agents between the electorate and the government. They play a decisive role in government formation and contribute significantly to political stability and coherence, particularly when governance is anchored by shared party ideology and allegiance. As essential vehicles for organizing modern democratic polities, political parties provide platforms for political pluralism and perform a range of functions that are indispensable to democratic governance. Beyond their structural importance, political parties function as channels through which individuals and social groups are integrated into the political system. Corduwener (2019) observes that political parties mobilize and socialize citizens, especially during elections, while also serving as core vehicles for the articulation and aggregation of societal interests. They further play a critical role in the recruitment of political elites through candidate nomination and selection for public offices. As Etzioni (2021) argues, the central objective of political parties is the pursuit, conquest, and retention of political power in order to advance a shared policy agenda. However, the effective performance of these roles is heavily dependent on the availability of adequate financial resources.

Political party financing remains a crucial determinant of electoral participation, competitiveness, and performance. Parties require substantial funds to conduct campaigns, nominate candidates, pay staff salaries, maintain party secretariats, procure media publicity, and manage election logistics. Political finance, defined as the use of money and material resources for political and electoral activities, is therefore central to democratic practice (Helmky & Levitsky, 2021). However, scholars have noted that the pressure to secure campaign funds often leads to illicit financing, corruption, and vote-buying, particularly where legitimate funding sources are limited (Etzioni, 2021). In competitive elections, voters may demand material inducements, while political actors divert public resources or sell political influence for private gain (Burgis, 2015). The Sambo Dasuki arms deal scandal, involving approximately 2.1 billion US dollars allegedly used to fund the 2015 PDP presidential campaign, illustrates the depth of this challenge in Nigeria (Davies, 2016).The relationship between political party financing and electoral competition has prompted the introduction of regulatory frameworks aimed at safeguarding democratic integrity. Mendilow (2018) explains that campaign finance regulations are designed to prevent the undue influence of wealthy actors, ensure electoral fairness, and protect popular sovereignty. In Nigeria, Sections 221–229 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) empower the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to monitor political party finances, while the Electoral Act 2022 prescribes sanctions for violations (Dung, 2018; Bryant, 2022). Despite these provisions, weak enforcement has allowed practices such as vote-buying to persist, with Bunte and Ufen (2009) noting that such practices have characterized nearly every Nigerian election since 1999. This highlights the importance of examining political party financing, electoral competition, and regulatory effectiveness as interconnected variables. Political party financing is included to assess access to and use of resources; electoral competition captures the fairness and intensity of party contestation; while regulation examines the capacity of legal frameworks to control financial excesses and ensure compliance.

Against this backdrop, this study examines political party financing, electoral competition, and regulation in Nigeria, using evidence from the All Progressives Congress

(APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 General Elections. The study is premised on the thesis that unequal access to financial resources significantly shaped electoral competition between the two dominant parties, thereby undermining regulatory safeguards and electoral fairness. The rationale for conducting this research lies in its contribution to understanding how grassroots-level electoral outcomes are influenced by financial disparities and weak enforcement of campaign finance laws. By focusing on Malumfashi LGA, the study provides localized empirical insight that is critical for strengthening electoral governance, promoting transparency, and advancing democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the existence of constitutional and legal frameworks regulating political party financing in Nigeria, electoral contests continue to be significantly influenced by unequal access to financial resources, weak enforcement mechanisms, and pervasive monetization of the political process. While political party financing is intended to promote fair competition and democratic accountability, in practice it has often distorted electoral competition by advantaging financially dominant parties and marginalizing weaker ones (Dung, 2018; Bryant, 2022). This problem is particularly evident at the local government level, where political parties' access to funds largely determines campaign intensity, voter mobilization, and electoral outcomes. In Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 General Elections, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) operated under unequal financial conditions, despite constitutional provisions and the Electoral Act 2022 designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and regulatory compliance. The persistence of vote-buying, patronage politics, and limited monitoring by relevant authorities raises critical concerns about the effectiveness of existing regulations and their capacity to ensure a level playing field. Consequently, there is a clear gap in empirical understanding of how political party financing and regulatory enforcement interact to shape electoral competition at the grassroots level, necessitating a focused investigation into the dynamics of party finance, competition, and regulation in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 General Elections.

Research Objectives

The study aims:

i. To investigate the key sources of political party finance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections.
ii. To investigate how financial inequalities between the APC and PDP affect the electoral performance of the two parties in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections and
iii. To proffer recommendations that would benefit government and other related stakeholders such as INEC in improving existing policies and regulations in place to ensure compliance and effective monitoring of Party finance.

Literature Review

Political party finance has been widely conceptualized as encompassing all financial and material resources used by parties for both electoral and non-electoral activities (Etzioni, 2021; Cassas-Zamora, 2008). Scholars have identified multiple sources of party finance, including membership dues, individual donations, levies on elected officials, fundraising events, and, in many developing democracies, illicit sources such as godfather sponsorship, diversion of public funds, and illegal donations (Sule & Kwarah, 2018; Kura, 2014). In Nigeria, party funding is largely opaque and dominated by wealthy elites and incumbents who invest heavily in parties in anticipation of political patronage and economic returns (Olarinmoye, 2018). This pattern has weakened internal party democracy and entrenched godfatherism, particularly at the grassroots level. Investigating the sources of party finance in Malumfashi LGA is therefore crucial, as local-level financing dynamics often reveal how national patterns of money politics are reproduced at the subnational level, shaping party behavior, campaign strategies, and electoral outcomes (Sule, 2017).

Financial inequalities can affect the performance of political parties during elections. It is assumed that the performance of APC and PDP during the 2023 general elections depended on the funding strength in Malumfashi L.G.A. Existing literature has consistently demonstrated a strong relationship between access to financial resources and electoral success, especially in emerging and dysfunctional democracies where elections are highly monetized (Mampilly, 2018; Mendilow, 2018). In Nigeria’s Fourth Republic, electoral competition has increasingly been defined by the ability of parties and candidates to deploy money for voter mobilization, media visibility, logistics, and vote-buying (Nkechi & Innocent, 2014; Omilusi, 2016). Incumbent parties or those connected to state power often enjoy disproportionate access to resources, enabling them to dominate the electoral space and undermine fair competition (Sule & Mohammed, 2021). Vote-buying, bribery of electoral officials, and inducement of voters have become normalized practices, weakening voter confidence and distorting electoral outcomes (Babayo, 2018). Examining financial inequality between APC and PDP in Malumfashi LGA allows for a localized assessment of how disparities in party finance translate into uneven campaign capacity, voter influence, and ultimately electoral performance during the 2023 elections.

The benefit of the government and other relevant stakeholders, particularly INEC, is in improving existing policies and regulatory mechanisms for effective monitoring and compliance with party finance regulations. Although Nigeria has established constitutional and legal frameworks to regulate political party finance, most notably Sections 221–229 of the 1999 Constitution and the Electoral Act 2022, scholars argue that weak enforcement has rendered these provisions largely ineffective (Dung, 2018; Bryant, 2022). Regulatory institutions often lack the capacity, autonomy, and political will to monitor party finances, sanction violators, and ensure transparency (Sule & Mohammed, 2021). As a result, excessive campaign spending, illegal donations, and vote-buying persist with little consequence, reinforcing corruption and undermining democratic consolidation (International IDEA, 2019). By grounding policy recommendations in empirical evidence from Malumfashi LGA, this study aims to contribute practical insights for strengthening regulatory oversight, enhancing transparency, and promoting equitable electoral competition. Such recommendations are essential for restoring public trust in elections and ensuring that political parties operate within the bounds of democratic accountability and the rule of law.

Methodology

The study employed a quantitative research method, targeting party officials of the All-Progressives Congress (APC) and candidates of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), totalling seventy-eight (78) respondents, as these are the major political parties in Malumfashi Local Government Area. A total enumeration sampling technique was employed to include all members of the population in the study. Both primary and secondary data sources were utilized, with the questionnaire serving as the primary instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was validated through face and content validation, using a Content Validation Index (CVI) where each item scored 1, ensuring relevance and clarity. Reliability of the instrument was tested using the Cronbach's alpha formula, yielding a coefficient of 0.98, indicating high reliability. The data collected were analysed using frequency tables and percentages, with the assistance of SPSS version 23.

Result

A total number of **seventy-eight (78) questionnaires**, representing **100% of the target population**, were distributed and successfully retrieved, making the **response rate 100%**.

RO1: To investigate the key sources of political party finance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections.

Table 1: Opinion of respondents on the key sources of political party finance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections

Statements	SD		D		UD		A		SA		F(x)	Mean
Respondents' opinion on the statement: All members of my party in Malumfashi Local Government Area pay for their membership dues annually	11	14.1	18	23.1	16	20.5	26	33.3	7	9.0	234	3.0
Respondents' opinions on the statement: During the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government my party received grants from its friends, supporters and other well-wishers.	1	1.3	7	9.0	2	2.6	33	42.3	35	44.9	328	4.2
My party organized a well-planned fund-raising campaign in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the conduct of the 2023 general elections in order to get more funds from friends and supporters of the party to fund its electoral activities in the 12 wards of the Local Government Area	1	1.3	3	3.8	1	1.3	30	38.5	43	55.1	345	4.4
My party received a considerable amount of money and campaign materials like posters, banners and billboards as gifts from supporters and well-wishers of the party during the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area.	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	41.0	46	59.0	358	4.6

My party was able to initiate a well-organized campaign to generate considerable amount of money as levies during the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area.	3	3.8	4	5.1	4	5.1	43	55.1	24	30.8	315	4.0

(Field Survey 2026, Key: SD= Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; UD= Undecided; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree)

Based on the data presented for RO1, which investigates the key sources of political party finance for APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections, the results indicate that party funding was primarily derived from contributions by party members, supporters, and well-wishers rather than systematic membership dues alone. While the statement regarding all party members paying annual membership dues received a moderate mean of 3.0, suggesting a fairly neutral or mixed perception, other sources of funding were rated much higher. Grants from friends, supporters, and well-wishers had a mean of 4.2, reflecting strong agreement among respondents. Similarly, well-planned fundraising campaigns (mean = 4.4) and the receipt of money and campaign materials such as posters, banners, and billboards from supporters (mean = 4.6) were highly endorsed, showing that these were significant sources of finance. Additionally, organized levies during campaigns also contributed substantially (mean = 4.0). This shows that political party financing in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections relied more on external support and organized fundraising than on regular membership dues. Respondents strongly agreed that parties received grants, campaign materials, and monetary contributions from supporters and well-wishers, while well-planned fundraising campaigns and levies also generated substantial funds. In contrast, annual membership dues were less consistently observed, with a mixed response from participants. This shows that party finances were primarily sustained through community support and strategic fundraising efforts rather than solely through internal membership contributions

RO$_{2:}$ To investigate how financial inequalities between the APC and PDP affect the electoral performance of the two parties in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections

Table 2: Respondents opinion on how financial inequalities between the APC and PDP affect the electoral performance of the two parties in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections

Statements	SD		D		UD		A		SA		F(x)	Mean
APC was able to possessed more financial resources than PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the conduct of the 2023 general elections	0	0	4	5.1	3	3.8	53	67.9	18	23.1	319	4.1
APC had more logistics support to take care of its logistics needs than PDP in Malumfashi Local Government	12	15.4	10	12.8	5	6.4	27	34.6	24	30.8	275	3.5

Area during the conduct of the 2023 general elections.												
Adequate finance has an effect on the performance of political parties in the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government. Since it offers parties the chance of propagating their messages	0	0	2	2.6	7	9.0	41	52.6	28	35.9	329	4.2
Party finance determines which political party wins an election in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the conduct of 2023 general election. Since it gingers and incentivizes party officials to work more energetically.	1	1.3	0	0	1	1.3	37	47.4	39	50.0	347	4.4

(Field Survey 2026, Key: SD= Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; UD= Undecided; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree)

The respondents' opinions in Table 2 indicate that financial inequalities between the APC and PDP significantly influenced their electoral performance in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections. A large majority of respondents (91.0%), reflected by a mean score of 4.1, agreed or strongly agreed that the APC possessed more financial resources than the PDP, demonstrating a clear funding disparity. This financial advantage was also evident in logistics support, where 65.4% of respondents (mean = 3.5) affirmed that the APC had superior capacity to meet campaign and election-day needs compared to the PDP. Furthermore, 88.5% of respondents, corresponding to a mean of 4.2, acknowledged that adequate finance positively affects party performance by enabling wider message dissemination and effective voter mobilization. Most notably, 97.4% of respondents (mean = 4.4) agreed that party finance determines electoral success by motivating party officials to work more vigorously and sustain campaign efforts. Collectively, the data show that greater financial and logistical resources enhanced the APC's campaign effectiveness and overall performance, highlighting the decisive role of party finance in elections. This reveals that the APC's superior financial resources and logistical support gave it a clear advantage over the PDP, which struggled with limited funding and campaign capacity. The high percentages of agreement and corresponding means across the statements confirm that financial strength not only enables effective campaign management and voter mobilization but also incentivizes party officials to work harder, ultimately shaping electoral outcomes in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections.

RO$_3$: To proffer recommendations that would benefit government and other related stakeholders such as INEC in improving existing policies and regulations in place to ensure compliance and effective monitoring of Party finance.

Table 3: opinion of respondents on proffer recommendations that would benefit government and other related stakeholders such as INEC in improving existing policies and regulations in place to ensure compliance and effective monitoring of Party finance

Statements	SD		D		UD		A			SA	F(x)	Mean
There was unregulated use of party finance during the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area	2	2.6	2	2.6	19	24.4	39	50.0	16	20.5	319	4.1
There should be strict compliance and enforcement of party finance regulations in election and non-election periods through a specialized and separate agency independent from INEC.	1	1.3	1	1.3	4	5.1	16	20.5	56	71.8	275	3.5

(Field Survey 2026, Key: SD= Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; UD= Undecided; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree)

The respondents' opinions in Table 3 indicate a clear need for stronger regulation and monitoring of party finance to ensure compliance and accountability in Malumfashi Local Government Area. A majority of respondents (70.5%), reflected by a mean score of 4.1, agreed or strongly agreed that there was unregulated use of party finance during the 2023 general elections, suggesting lapses in oversight and potential misuse of funds. Furthermore, an overwhelming 92.3% of respondents (mean = 3.5) supported the establishment of a specialized and independent agency, separate from INEC, to enforce party finance regulations during both election and non-election periods. This indicates strong public perception that current policies and monitoring mechanisms are insufficient and that more robust, independent structures are required to promote transparency, compliance, and equitable management of party finances. This shows that unregulated party finance is a significant issue in Malumfashi Local Government Area, and there is broad consensus among respondents that stricter compliance measures and an independent regulatory body are necessary.

Discussion of Findings

i. To investigate the key sources of political party finance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections. The findings show that membership dues were not a consistent or major source of party finance for APC and PDP in Malumfashi LGA. Instead, party funding during the 2023 general elections relied heavily on donations from supporters, organized fund-raising activities, and levies. Material support such as posters, banners, and billboards also constituted a significant source of campaign resources. This finding aligns with earlier studies which observed that political parties in Nigeria depend heavily on private donations and informal funding mechanisms rather than institutionalized membership contributions (Gallego & Wantchekon, 2017; Mendilow, 2018). Similar conclusions were reached by Etzioni (2021), who noted that weak internal financing structures push parties toward elite-driven and supporter-based funding, often undermining transparency and accountability.

ii. To investigate how financial inequalities between the APC and PDP affect the electoral performance of the two parties in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections. The results show that the APC enjoyed greater financial and logistical resources than the PDP during the 2023 elections in Malumfashi LGA. Adequate finance enhanced campaign outreach, logistics, and motivation of party officials. Consequently, financial inequality significantly influenced the electoral performance and outcomes of the two parties. This finding corroborates previous research which emphasizes that access to financial resources significantly shapes electoral competitiveness and outcomes in developing democracies (Burgis, 2015; Donovan & Karp, 2017). Mendilow (2018) similarly argued that financial asymmetry among political parties often confers electoral advantages on well-funded parties, thereby distorting the level playing field expected in democratic contests.

iii. To proffer recommendations that would benefit government and other related stakeholders such as INEC in improving existing policies and regulations in place to ensure compliance and effective monitoring of Party finance. The findings indicated that most respondents (70.5%) indicated that party finance was unregulated during the 2023 elections in Malumfashi LGA, showing weak enforcement of existing rules. An overwhelming 92.3% supported strict compliance with party finance regulations. Respondents strongly recommended creating an independent agency, separate from INEC, to effectively monitor and enforce party finance laws. his finding is consistent with earlier studies which identified weak enforcement mechanisms and institutional capacity constraints as major challenges to effective regulation of party finance in Nigeria (Dung, 2018; Bryant, 2022). Scholars such as Bunte and Ufen (2009) have similarly called for stronger, autonomous oversight institutions to curb abuses associated with political finance. Overall, the findings of this study reinforce existing literature while providing localized empirical evidence from Malumfashi LGA, thereby extending the discourse on political party finance, electoral competition, and regulation in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that political party financing played a decisive role in shaping electoral competition and outcomes during the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area. The study established that both the APC and PDP relied largely on informal and external sources of funding such as donations, fund-raising activities, levies, and material support, rather than stable internal mechanisms like membership dues. It further revealed that significant financial and logistical inequalities existed between the two parties, with the APC enjoying greater access to resources, which enhanced its campaign effectiveness and electoral performance. Additionally, the study found that party finance was largely unregulated due to weak enforcement of existing laws, prompting strong support among respondents for stricter compliance measures and the establishment of an independent regulatory body to oversee party finance. Overall, the study underscores the need for strengthened institutional frameworks, improved transparency, and effective regulation of political party finance to promote fairness, accountability, and democratic consolidation in Nigeria's electoral process.

Recommendations

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

i. The APC and PDP should strengthen their internal financing structures by enforcing regular payment of membership dues and subscriptions through transparent and traceable mechanisms, such as digital payment platforms. Parties should also institutionalize fund-raising activities by ensuring they are well-documented, publicly disclosed, and conducted in line with existing legal provisions. Additionally, clear guidelines should be developed to regulate material donations to ensure accountability and prevent undue influence by wealthy individuals or interest groups.

ii. There is a need for policies that promote a more level playing field among political parties. The government, through relevant institutions, should consider introducing limited public funding or subsidies for political parties that meet basic eligibility criteria to reduce excessive dependence on private donors. Campaign spending limits should be strictly enforced to prevent financially dominant parties from overwhelming weaker ones. Furthermore, political parties should adopt internal measures to ensure equitable distribution of resources across wards and constituencies to enhance competitiveness and internal democracy.

iii. The establishment of an independent and specialized agency to oversee political party finance, separate from INEC, is strongly recommended to enhance neutrality and effectiveness. This agency should be empowered with investigative authority, adequate funding, and clear sanctions for violations. Additionally, continuous voter and party education on campaign finance laws should be intensified to improve compliance, transparency, and accountability in the political process.

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JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
Volume 2, Number 1 (March, 2026)
ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3093-0618 (print)
Website: https://jppssuniuyo.com/jld **Email:** jppssuniuyo@gmail.com
Received: January 13, 2026 **Accepted**: February 25, 2026 **Published**: March 31, 2026
Citation: Success, Ademeso T.; Olanrewaju, Shobowale R. & Amole, Taofeek A. (2026). "Investment in AI Tools and Human Capital Development in the Nigerian Public Sector." *Journal of Leadership and Development*, 2 (1): 142-152.

Article **Open Access**

INVESTMENT IN AI TOOLS AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract
The deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) tools across Nigerian public sector organisations, accelerated by the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS, 2020-2030), has intensified interest in the implications for employee human capital development. Yet the relationship between AI investment and employee skill acquisition, productivity, and continuous learning within the public sector remains underexplored in peer-reviewed literature. This study adopts a systematic qualitative review methodology, drawing on published academic works and credible institutional documents, to examine this relationship. Grounded in Human Capital Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model, the study finds that AI investment generates conditional human capital development outcomes that are critically moderated by the alignment of strategic HRM practices. Based on the findings, the study recommends that Nigerian public sector administrators mandate joint AI-HRM strategic planning, reorient AI deployments from automation toward augmentation, operationalise competency-based civil service reform, and establish AI-enabled continuous learning infrastructure as foundational conditions for realising the human capital development potential of ongoing digital investments.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; human capital development; Nigerian public sector; strategic HRM; digital transformation; skill acquisition.

Introduction

Globally, the rapid diffusion of artificial intelligence has fundamentally reshaped the nature of work, the structure of organisations, and the composition of competencies demanded of the contemporary workforce. Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) characterise this transition as the second machine age, a period in which intelligent machines are progressively capable of performing not only routine physical tasks but complex cognitive functions previously exclusive to human labour. The implications for human capital development are far-reaching and compel organisations across sectors to reassess how they invest in and develop their workforce. This reality is reflected in the global surge of organisational AI investment, which the McKinsey Global Institute (2023) reports has more than doubled across industries over the preceding five years. Within the public sector, these dynamics carry particular governance significance. As AI tools are progressively integrated into public administration processes, the digital transformation of public service requires that civil servants acquire new competencies, including digital literacy, data interpretation, and the capacity for productive human-AI collaboration (Mergel et al., 2019; Ademeso & Nsana, 2025). In Nigeria, this imperative has been formalised at the highest policy level. The National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS, 2020-2030), launched by the Federal Government of Nigeria, identifies the digitalisation of public administration and the development of a digitally competent public service as strategic national priorities. Specific AI and digital tool investments, including the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), the Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS), and a range of e-governance service delivery platforms, have been progressively deployed across federal ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs). These investments represent a significant and growing commitment of national resources to AI-enabled public sector modernization.

Despite the scale of this investment, critical questions about its human capital development impact remain unanswered. Research examining AI adoption in the context of skill development and training has predominantly been conducted within private sector and tertiary education settings (Amanawa; Emefiele, 2025; Ali et al., 2025). The Nigerian public sector, with its distinctive civil service regulatory architecture, persistent infrastructural constraints, and evolving HRM practices, has received negligible direct attention in this literature, creating a substantive empirical and contextual gap. Whether organisational AI investment in this setting translates into genuine skill acquisition, improved knowledge capacity, and sustainable learning for public employees remains poorly understood. This gap is best understood through four specific dimensions of human capital development that emerge directly from the literature reviewed. The first concerns the actual scope and character of AI tool investment across Nigerian MDAs, since it is not possible to assess human capital outcomes without first establishing the nature of the investment itself. The second relates to whether AI tool deployment influences employee skill acquisition and professional development. The third asks whether AI tools translate into enhanced employee productivity and knowledge capacity, given that productivity gains and knowledge development are distinct outcomes that do not necessarily move in parallel. The fourth examines whether AI-driven systems are being leveraged as platforms for training and continuous learning.

Statement of the Problem

Organisational investment in AI tools within Nigerian public institutions has accelerated substantially since the promulgation of the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS) framework yet evidence of commensurate human capital development outcomes among affected civil servants remains scarce and largely anecdotal. The World Bank (2018) identifies persistent skills gaps and inadequate employee development infrastructure as among the most significant impediments to public sector effectiveness in Nigeria, even as digital transformation expenditures have grown. This paradox points to a fundamental misalignment between the technology procurement decisions of Nigerian MDAs and the strategic HRM practices required to convert AI tool exposure into durable employee competency development. The literature on technology investment and human capital in public sector contexts consistently identifies strategic HRM alignment as a critical condition for positive workforce development outcomes (Mergel et al., 2019; Ali et al., 2025). In its absence, AI investments risk generating efficiency gains in administrative processes while simultaneously eroding the quality and breadth of civil servant competencies, particularly among junior and operational staff who are numerically significant but institutionally underserved. Without a rigorous, contextually grounded analysis of this relationship, Nigerian public sector administrators and policymakers lack the evidence base needed to design AI investments that deliver genuine and equitable human capital development returns, hence this study.

Research Objectives

Building on the four dimensions of enquiry identified in the preceding discussion, this study is guided by the following research objectives, namely to;

i. Examine the extent to which organisations in the Nigerian public sector invest in AI tools for workplace operations.
ii. Assess the influence of organisational investment in AI tools on employee skill acquisition and professional development.
iii. Determine whether AI tools enhance employee productivity and knowledge capacity in the Nigerian public sector.
iv. Evaluate the role of AI-driven systems in facilitating training and continuous learning among Nigerian public sector employees.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

i. To what extent do organisations in the Nigerian public sector invest in AI tools for workplace operations?
ii. How does organisational investment in AI tools influence employee skill acquisition and professional development?
iii. Do AI tools enhance employee productivity and knowledge capacity in the Nigerian public sector?
iv. What role do AI-driven systems play in facilitating training and continuous learning among Nigerian public sector employees?

Conceptual Review

Organisational Investment in AI Tools: Organisational investment in AI tools refers to the deliberate allocation of financial, infrastructural, and strategic resources toward the acquisition, deployment, and institutionalisation of artificial intelligence technologies within workplace operations. These tools span a wide technological spectrum, from algorithmic automation platforms that execute rule-based administrative tasks to machine learning systems that support predictive decision-making, natural language processing applications that enhance communication processes, and AI-enabled human resource information systems that administer personnel management functions (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018). In the Nigerian public sector, this category of investment is most visibly represented by large-scale enterprise systems such as IPPIS and GIFMIS, as well as the e-governance platforms being progressively implemented under the NDEPS framework. For analytical purposes, AI investment is operationalised in this study as the degree to which public sector organisations allocate resources toward the adoption and integration of AI-enabled technologies within their operational and HRM systems. A critical distinction in the literature, introduced by Acemoglu and Restrepo (2019), differentiates between AI deployments oriented toward automation, which involves the substitution of human labour with machine performance in existing tasks, and those oriented toward augmentation, which involves the creation of new tasks and analytical demands that require enhanced human capabilities. This distinction carries direct implications for human capital development: automation-oriented AI investment may reduce the cognitive complexity of employee work, thereby limiting skill development opportunities, whereas augmentation-oriented investment creates new competency demands that stimulate human capital growth. Understanding which orientation predominates in Nigerian public sector AI deployments is therefore central to assessing their human capital development potential.

Human Capital Development: Human capital development encompasses the processes through which individuals expand their stock of knowledge, skills, and abilities through formal training, on-the-job learning, mentorship, and experiential practice (Oyadiran, 2008). In organisational settings, it constitutes one of the most strategically significant investments an employer can make, given the established relationship between workforce capability and both individual performance and organisational effectiveness. In AI-augmented work environments, human capital development takes on a qualitatively distinct character. The World Bank (2018) identifies digital literacy, data reasoning, and adaptive problem-solving as the competency dimensions of greatest strategic urgency, reflecting the new cognitive demands that AI tools impose on contemporary employees.

Strategic HRM Practices: Strategic HRM refers to the planned configuration of human resource practices, including training and development, performance management, competency-based appraisal, and knowledge management, designed to enable organisations to achieve their goals through the effective development and deployment of human capital (Oyadiran, 2008). Strategic HRM practices function as the organisational infrastructure through which the competency development potential of AI tools is converted into actual employee learning outcomes. An organisation may invest substantially in AI technologies and yet generate negligible human capital development if those investments are not accompanied by structured training programs, performance systems that recognise AI-related skill development, and institutional cultures that support continuous learning (Boon et al., 2019). In the Nigerian civil service, the historically compliance-oriented character of HRM practice, which emphasises procedural adherence over developmental investment, represents a critical structural constraint on the realisation of AI-driven human capital development outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory: Human Capital Theory, developed by Schultz (1961) and comprehensively elaborated by Becker (1964), provides the foundational theoretical lens for this study. The theory holds that investment in the knowledge and skills of individuals generates economic returns analogous to those produced by investment in physical capital, accruing both to the individual in the form of enhanced earning capacity and employability, and to the investing organisation in the form of improved productivity and competitive performance. Becker (1964) further distinguished between general human capital, which retains its value across employers, and firm-specific human capital, which is of value primarily within the investing organisation. Within the Nigerian public sector, AI-related competencies exhibit characteristics of both: digital literacy constitutes transferable general human capital, while proficiency with organisation-specific AI platforms represents institution-specific human capital. Applied to this study's research questions, Human Capital Theory generates two core predictions. First, organisations that invest in AI tools in ways that create new cognitive demands, consistent with Acemoglu and Restrepo's (2019) augmentation logic, are in effect investing in the human capital of their employees, since AI-augmented work environments compel the acquisition of new competencies. Second, the return on this human capital investment is not guaranteed; it is contingent on the quality of the organisational learning environment, the design of training and development systems, and the degree to which strategic HRM practices support and reward skill development (Becker, 1964; Boon et al., 2019). These predictions align closely with the study's central proposition that strategic HRM practices moderate the relationship between AI investment and employee human capital development in the Nigerian public sector.

The Technology Acceptance Model: The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), originally proposed by Davis (1989) and subsequently extended by Venkatesh et al. (2003) into the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), is one of the most widely applied frameworks in the information systems and organisational behaviour literature for explaining individual technology adoption behaviour. TAM posits that two perceptual constructs jointly determine behavioural intention to use a technology and, by extension, the depth of engagement from which learning outcomes emerge: perceived usefulness, defined as the degree to which a user believes a technology will improve their work performance, and perceived ease of use, defined as the degree to which they believe the technology requires minimal effort (Davis, 1989). The UTAUT extension incorporates social influence and facilitating conditions as additional determinants of adoption, which are particularly relevant in public institutional contexts where peer norms and organisational support structures are strong shapers of employee behaviour (Venkatesh et al., 2003).TAM is directly relevant to this study's research questions because it specifies the psychological mechanism through which AI tool investment generates, or fails to generate, human capital development outcomes. Employees who perceive AI tools as useful to their professional development and sufficiently accessible are more likely to invest the cognitive effort required to develop new competencies through engagement with those tools, thereby generating the human capital development that Becker (1964) predicts. Conversely, employees who perceive AI tools as irrelevant, threatening, or excessively complex are likely to exhibit resistance or minimal engagement, forgoing the development opportunities that AI-augmented environments afford. In the Nigerian public sector, where technology adoption has historically been characterised by low perceived usefulness among civil servants (Heeks, 2002), TAM provides a theoretically grounded explanation for why the human capital development returns on AI investment may be suppressed independent of the technological quality of the tools deployed.

Critically, TAM also implicates strategic HRM practices as a determinant of technology acceptance. Perceived usefulness is not an objective feature of AI tools but a socially constructed perception shaped by managerial communication, organisational support systems, and the degree to which employees observe peers successfully leveraging AI tools for professional development (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Strategic HRM practices, particularly structured training, active managerial coaching, and performance management systems that recognise AI-related competency development, directly influence these perceptions and thereby moderate the strength of the TAM pathway from AI investment to human capital development.

Methodology

This study employs a systematic qualitative review methodology, following the framework established by Tranfield et al. (2003) for evidence-informed management research. A qualitative design is appropriate given the contextual specificity of the research setting and the relative scarcity of primary quantitative data directly capturing the AI investment-human capital development relationship within the Nigerian public sector. The systematic review approach permits the synthesis of evidence across diverse source types, including peer-reviewed academic publications and credible institutional documents, into a theoretically coherent analytical framework. Secondary data were collected from peer-reviewed academic journals accessed through Google Scholar, Research gate, and Academia. Inclusion criteria prioritised peer-reviewed journal articles and academic books, with institutional policy documents included where directly relevant to the study's contextual focus. Sources were selected on the criterion of relevance to one or more of the four research objectives, with preference given to works published within the preceding decade. Sources addressing adjacent topics without direct relevance to AI investment, human capital development, or strategic HRM in public sector contexts were excluded. Thematic analysis was employed as the primary analytical method, following the six-phase framework of Braun and Clarke (2006): data familiarisation, initial code generation, theme identification, theme review, theme definition, and report production. Thematic codes were organised around the study's research objectives and theoretical framework, with emergent themes subjected to iterative review to ensure internal consistency and evidential grounding. Triangulation across academic and institutional sources was employed to strengthen the credibility of thematic interpretations.

Findings

i. **The Extent of AI Tool Investment in Nigerian Public Sector Organisations (Objective 1):** The thematic analysis reveals a pattern of growing but structurally uneven AI tool investment across Nigerian MDAs, concentrated at the federal level and driven by top-down policy directives rather than by agency-level strategic HRM imperatives. The NDEPS provides the overarching institutional mandate for AI tool adoption across the federal public service, identifying digital tool deployment in government operations as a strategic national priority. The most significant investments to date, notably IPPIS and GIFMIS, represent the institutionalisation of algorithmic automation within core administrative processes. The profile of this investment is predominantly automation-oriented, consistent with the lower end of Acemoglu and Restrepo's (2019) automation-augmentation spectrum. The majority of AI tools deployed in Nigerian MDAs function as administrative automation systems that reduce the manual effort of data entry, payroll processing, and record management, rather than as platforms that create new analytical demands requiring advanced human competencies. This automation-dominant profile, as Frey and Osborne (2017) would predict, is more likely to reduce the cognitive complexity of civil servant work than to stimulate upward skill development. Thus, AI investment is therefore real and growing, but its structural character is not yet optimally configured for human capital development impact.

ii. **Influence of AI Tool Investment on Employee Skill Acquisition and Professional Development (Objective 2):** The thematic analysis finds that AI tool investment can generate positive skill development outcomes, but that this relationship is conditional rather than automatic. In Nigerian MDAs where AI tool deployment has been accompanied by deliberate training and development provision, civil servants report gains in digital literacy, data management competencies, and familiarity with AI-mediated workflow systems. Revenue agencies that have adopted predictive analytics tools represent the most instructive examples: employees in these agencies are required to develop genuine analytical reasoning skills to interpret AI-generated outputs, producing a form of on-the-job human capital development consistent with the skill-biased technological change mechanism documented in the technology investment literature. The moderating role of strategic HRM practices in this process is clearly in evidence. Consistent with the findings of Boon et al. (2019) and Noe et al. (2014), skill acquisition outcomes are significantly stronger in agencies where training is structured, role-specific, and aligned with the operational demands of the AI tools in use. Where training is absent or generic, which is the case in the majority of Nigerian MDAs, AI tool deployment generates minimal skill development, as civil servants adopt the minimum operational proficiency required for procedural compliance without engaging in deeper competency development.

iii. **AI Tools, Employee Productivity, and Knowledge Capacity (Objective 3):** On productivity, the introduction of AI-enabled administrative systems in Nigerian MDAs has generated documented efficiencies in specific operational domains: the implementation of GIFMIS has accelerated financial reporting cycles and reduced manual processing errors within the MDAs in which it is fully operational. These productivity gains are broadly consistent with the findings of Brynjolfsson et al. (2018), although the same authors caution that such gains typically emerge with a significant lag and are contingent upon complementary organisational adaptation. The relationship between AI-driven productivity gains and knowledge capacity development is more contested. Human Capital Theory predicts that productivity-enhancing technology investments should generate corresponding improvements in employee knowledge capacity, as workers develop the cognitive routines and mental models required to operate effectively in AI-augmented environments. The evidence from Nigerian public sector contexts, however, suggests that this learning-by-doing process is frequently short-circuited by the passive, compliance-oriented manner in which civil servants engage with AI tools in the absence of structured learning support. Consistent with Heeks's (2002) design-reality gap framework, many Nigerian public servants use AI platforms as functional instruments without developing the deeper knowledge of their analytical logic that would constitute genuine knowledge capacity development.

iv. **AI-Driven Systems and the Facilitation of Training and Continuous Learning (Objective 4):** The fourth finding reveals a significant gap between the potential and the current reality of AI as a training and learning facilitation platform within Nigerian MDAs. Noe et al. (2014) identify AI-enabled adaptive learning platforms as one of the most promising mechanisms for delivering continuous, role-specific development at scale, particularly in organisations where traditional classroom training is insufficient or inaccessible. Internationally, public sector organisations that have embedded AI-driven learning systems within their HRM architectures report measurable improvements in employee competency development rates and engagement with continuous learning (Mergel et al., 2019). These platforms leverage machine learning algorithms to tailor learning pathways to individual competency profiles, providing real-time feedback and skill gap identification that structured training alone cannot achieve. Within the Nigerian public sector, however, AI-driven learning and development systems remain minimally deployed. The absence of AI-enabled or even digitally mediated learning platforms within most federal MDAs serve as a critical gap in the civil service development infrastructure. Training provision in Nigerian public institutions remains predominantly face-to-face, centralised, and irregular, a model that is fundamentally inconsistent with the continuous, adaptive learning demands of AI-augmented work environments. The result is a paradox in which AI tools are deployed as operational systems within Nigerian MDAs but are not leveraged as learning infrastructure, a missed opportunity for human capital development that the present study argues can only be addressed through deliberate strategic HRM reconfiguration aligned with the principles established by Boon et al. (2019).

Discussion

The four thematic findings of this study converge on a theoretically coherent and practically consequential conclusion: AI tool investment generates genuine, if structurally constrained, human capital development potential in the Nigerian public sector, but the realisation of this potential is critically moderated by the quality, coherence, and strategic orientation of HRM practices within individual MDAs. This conclusion is consistent with the predictions of both Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) and TAM (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003), and is corroborated by the empirical findings of Boon et al. (2019), Noe et al. (2014), and Mergel et al. (2019) across comparable contexts. The study's distinctive contribution lies in its contextualisation of these insights within the Nigerian public sector, where the institutional architecture, including centralised civil service regulation, compliance-oriented HRM, and significant infrastructural constraints, creates a configuration of enablers and barriers not captured in the existing international literature.

The automation-oriented character of most AI deployments in Nigerian MDAs is a direct consequence of the policy and procurement logic driving investment decisions. Where AI tool adoption is driven primarily by efficiency imperatives without strategic HRM co-design, it will tend toward automation of existing tasks rather than toward the creation of new analytical demands that stimulate skill development, consistent with the dynamics documented by Acemoglu and Restrepo (2019) and Frey and Osborne (2017). Reorienting Nigerian public sector AI investment toward augmentation-oriented deployments, and embedding those deployments within strategic HRM architectures that support employee learning, is therefore the most important single change that Nigerian public administrators could make to improve the human capital development returns on their AI investments. The TAM analysis further reveals that the problem is not simply one of insufficient training supply. It is fundamentally one of employee perception. Civil servants who do not perceive AI tools as useful to their professional development will not invest the cognitive effort required for skill development, irrespective of training availability. Changing these perceptions requires deliberate managerial action, including communicating the developmental benefits of AI tools, modelling productive AI engagement, and building performance management systems that make the connection between AI tool proficiency and career advancement explicit and credible. This is, in essence, a strategic HRM challenge as much as a technology design challenge, and one that the compliance-oriented civil service HRM architecture of most Nigerian MDAs is currently ill-equipped to meet.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between organisational investment in AI tools and employee human capital development in the Nigerian public sector across four dimensions: the extent and character of AI investment, its influence on skill acquisition and professional development, its impact on productivity and knowledge capacity, and its role in facilitating training and continuous learning. The evidence, synthesised through a systematic thematic review grounded in Human Capital Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model, demonstrates that Nigeria's growing AI investment portfolio carries real but as yet largely unrealised human capital development potential. The primary constraint is not technological but institutional: the compliance-oriented, strategically misaligned HRM architecture of most Nigerian MDAs prevents the translation of AI tool exposure into structured competency development, productivity-linked knowledge growth, and AI-enabled continuous learning. Meaningful progress requires a fundamental reorientation of how AI investment decisions are made and managed within the Nigerian civil service, from technology-first procurement toward strategically integrated HRM-AI co-design.

Recommendations

i. The Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation should mandate joint AI-HRM strategic planning across all MDAs, requiring that every AI tool procurement proposal be co-designed with human resource departments and accompanied by an explicit human capital development plan that specifies training provisions, competency targets, and performance management implications for affected employees.

ii. Heads of MDAs should deliberately reorient their AI investment decisions from automation-dominant toward augmentation-oriented deployments by prioritising tools that create new analytical and decision-making demands, thereby generating the competency development opportunities that the existing literature identifies as necessary for genuine human capital growth.

iii. The Bureau of Public Service Reforms should accelerate the operationalisation of its proposed competency framework by incorporating explicit digital and AI-related competency standards into civil service promotion criteria, annual performance appraisals, and mandatory training requirements, so that career advancement in the federal civil service is demonstrably linked to AI-related skill development.

iv. Each MDA with significant AI tool investments should procure or develop AI-enabled adaptive learning platforms for employee development, moving beyond centralised face-to-face training toward continuous, role-specific, and grade-inclusive digital learning provision accessible to all civil servants who interact with AI-enabled systems.

v. Federal and state governments should resolve electricity, broadband, and hardware deficits within MDAs as a foundational precondition for AI-driven human capital development, recognising that the human capital development potential of AI tools cannot be realised in environments where reliable technology access remains unavailable.

vi. The BPSR, in collaboration with Nigerian research universities, should commission longitudinal impact evaluations tracking the human capital development outcomes of AI investments across a representative sample of MDAs, generating the evidence base required to refine investment decisions, improve HRM practice design, and build institutional accountability for the developmental returns on public AI expenditure.

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