

JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

ISSN: 1595-9457 (Online); 3043-4211 (Print)



Volume 2, Number 4, September, 2026

**A Publication Domiciled in the Department of Philosophy
University of Uyo, Nigeria**

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT JPPSS

Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies (JPPSS), an international, open access, indexed and peer-reviewed scholarly journal is currently receiving submissions for its December, 2026 edition. As a peer-reviewed academic journal, JPPSS accepts original research manuscripts in various areas of philosophy, policy and strategic issues including book or paper reviews, conceptual framework, simulation, analytical models, empirical and technical works and case studies in the humanities, education, business/science management, social science and other related fields. JPPSS provides the needed platform for academics, researchers, institutions and professionals to share various ideas and insights on current issues as well as contributing to expanding the frontiers of knowledge globally.

Guidelines

Authors submitting manuscripts to JPPSS must ensure that each paper submitted adheres to the following guidelines:

1. Is original, well researched and referenced.
2. Does not exceed 7,000 words or 15 pages (inclusive of abstract, keywords, works cited or references and so on).
3. Has not been submitted to another publication house.
4. Is typed double-spaced, submitted in MS word format, using Times New Roman or Tahoma and 12 font size.
5. Uses MLA (9th edition) or APA (7th edition) documentation style; with author's surname, year and page in the in-text citations.
6. Has an abstract of not more than 250 words. The abstract should state the research problem, the main aim, research method, main finding(s) or implication(s), recommendations of the work and conclusion.

Disclaimer

Views and opinions expressed in JPPSS are not necessarily shared by the Editorial Board.

Submission

All manuscripts must be sent via email to: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com.

Publication Fees

For contributors within Nigeria, every submission must be accompanied by Five Thousand Naira (₦5,000.00) for vetting. Any paper accepted for publication will be required to pay Fifteen Thousand Naira (₦15,000.00) for Online Edition only and Twenty Thousand Naira (₦20,000.00) for Online and Print Editions.

Additional Copy - ₦8,000.00

Institution - ₦10,000.00

Bank Details

(Strictly for contributors within Nigeria)

Bank: First Bank

Account: 2046034601

Name: Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies

BUT:

For contributors outside Nigeria, every submission must be accompanied by Ten Dollars (US\$10). Any paper accepted for publication will be required to pay Forty Dollars (US\$40) for Online Edition only and Fifty Dollars (US\$50) for Online and Print Editions.

Additional Copy - US\$10

Institution - US\$20

Bank Details (Strictly for contributors outside Nigeria):

Bank: Wema Bank

Account: 0621820757

Name: Prof Elijah Okon John

For Further Information, Contact:

Prof. Elijah O. John

(Editor-in-Chief)

08028322626

Prof. Michael O. Etim

(Editor)

08029848312

Samuel E. Inyang

(Secretary/Editorial Assistant)

09073958669

Or visit our website URL: <https://jppssuniuyo.com>

Contact:

Department of Philosophy, University of Uyo, PMB 1017, Uyo. Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

© All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical including photocopying, recording or any retrieval system, without permission from the Editor-in-Chief

Printed By: **Omega Books**

Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

07032878735

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief: Prof. Elijah O. John

Editor: Prof. Michael O. Etim

Secretary/Editorial Assistant: Samuel E. Inyang

Business/Production Manager: Dr. Anthony R. Etuk

Associate Editors

Dr. Nwachukwu M. Anyim

Dr. Idara Thomas

Dr. Sunday Umanah

Dr. Edemekong D. Edemekong

Dr. Chidimma S. Ikea

Dr. Christopher Udofia

Dr. Uwem Jonah Akpan

Editorial Consultants

Prof. Godfrey O. Ozumba, University of Calabar, Nigeria.

Prof. Muiyiwa Falaiye, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

Prof. Isaac Ukpokolo, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

Prof. Paul Ogugua, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria.

Prof. Ashong C. Ashong, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Mark O. Ikeke, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.

Prof. Aniekan S. Brown, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Olu Awofeso, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife, Nigeria.

Prof. Gabriel E. Idang, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Happiness Uduk, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Christopher O. Akpan, University of Calabar, Nigeria.

Prof. Ntiedo Umoren, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Bassey Ettah, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. T. V. Ogan, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Rev. Fr. Prof. Columbus N. Ogbujah, Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Prof. Paul Haaga, Nasarawa State University, Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Prof. Peter F. Omonzejele, University of Benin, Nigeria.

Prof. Richard Ajah, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Rev. Fr. Prof. Jude Onuoha, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria.

Prof. Bernard Matolino, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Prof. Udoh Elijah Udom, Washington Adventist University, Washington DC.

Prof. Rotimi Omosulu, The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.

Prof. Joseph A. Ushie, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Iniobong Daniel Umotong, Akwa Ibom State University, Nigeria.

Prof. Effiong Johnson, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Nsikak Idiong, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Uwaezuoke Precious Obioha, Akwa Ibom State University, Nigeria.

Prof. Dennis E. Igwe, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Prof. Ubong Essien Umoh, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

1. **Edward Uzoma Ezedike**, PhD, is a Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
2. **Senimetu Ileuma**, PhD, is a Professor of Educational Management in the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria.
3. **Akuva Isaac**, PhD, is a Professor of Political Science in the Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina, Nigeria.
4. **Ogah Musa Ari**, PhD, is a Professor, of International Relations and Strategic Studies in the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
5. **Abdullahi Dan'Asabe Jibrin**, PhD, is a Professor, of Political Economy and Development Studies, in the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
6. **Nsikan-Abasi Sam Nkana**, PhD, is a Professor of Broadcasting in the Department of Broadcasting, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, University of Uyo, Nigeria.
7. **Samuel Asuquo Ekanem**, PhD, is a Professor of Technology and Leadership Education in the Department of Philosophy, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.
8. **Damian Tersoo Anyam**, PhD, is a Professor of Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy, Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, Nigeria.
9. **Tope Alabi**, PhD, is a Professor of Industrial Sociology at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Science, University of Abuja, Nigeria.
10. **Susan Oluyomi Pitan**, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Science Education in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria.
11. **Chinenye Precious Okolisah**, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.
12. **Umar Mohammed Idris**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Institute of Governance and Development Studies, College of Postgraduate Studies, Federal University Lokoja, Nigeria.
13. **Peter Onyebuchim Nwogu**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the School of General Studies, University of Environment and Technology, Koroma/Saakpenwa, Ogoni, Rivers State, Nigeria.
14. **Monday Akpakpan**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration, University of Uyo, Nigeria.
15. **Michael E. Abam**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science/General Studies, Western Delta, University, Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria.
16. **Gabriel Asuquo**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of General Studies, College of Social and Management Sciences, Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria.
17. **Abui Abraham Abui**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Buwaya, Kaduna State, Nigeria.
18. **Timothy Dopkesi Adidi**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, Veritas University, Abuja, Nigeria.
19. **Sabastine Nwankwo, Jr**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

20. **Lateef Okikiola Olanipekun**, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer at the Accra Institute of Technology Business School, Accra Institute of Technology, Ghana.
21. **Michael Adekunle Oderinde**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria.
22. **Akinjide Isaac Yusuf**, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Educational Management, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria.
23. **Ruth Oreun Atureta**, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, University of Abuja, Abuja, Nigeria.
24. **Richard Agyapong**, MA, is a Lecturer in the Department of Business Administration, Accra Institute of Technology, Ghana and a Doctoral Scholar at the Open University of Malaysia.
25. **Christopher Boachie**, MSc, is a Lecturer in the Department of Finance, Central University, Accra, Ghana.
26. **Samuel O. Ukutegbe**, MEd, is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Educational Management, University of Ibadan, Oyo, State, Nigeria.
27. **Victoria Eboetale Oriwoh**, MA, is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Edo State University, Iyamo, Nigeria.
28. **Gbemisola Funmilayo Oguntola**, MEd, is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria.
29. **Answer Charles Mezu**, MSc, is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Political Science, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
30. **Christiana Omoo Agbo**, MA, is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, Nigeria.
31. **Enoch Amila Shehu**, MSc, is a Lecturer and Doctoral scholar in the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
32. **Ajoke Oluwafisayo Ajidele**, MEd, is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria.
33. **Mustapha Abdullahi Bature**, MSc, is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina, Nigeria.
34. **Aminu Yusuf**, MSc, is a Research Scholar in the Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
35. **Musa Ibrahim Mustafa**, MSc, is a Lecturer at the Center for Peace and Security Studies, Modibbo Adama University, Yola, Nigeria.
36. **Joshbriliem J. Immanuel**, MA, is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
37. **Uyouko Effiong Ukpe**, MSc, is of the Department of Public Administration, University of Uyo, Nigeria.
38. **Amachondi Hikon Yohanna**, MA, is a Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.
39. **Raphael Onyeji Anayo**, MA, is a Lecturer in the Directorate of General Studies, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria.
40. **Prospect Isobeye Peters** is a Research Scholar in the Department of Broadcasting, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Epicurean Calculus of Jeremy Bentham on the Principle of Utility <i>By Edward Uzoma Ezedike and Peter Onyebuchim Nwogu.</i>	1-7
2.	Russian-Ukraine War and Its Impact on Cross-Border Small Scale Trade Between Nigeria and Niger Republic 2022-2024 <i>By Aminu Yusuf.</i>	8-17
3.	Educational Management as a Catalyst for Promoting Equity and Inclusive Education in Nigeria: Challenges and Strategies <i>By Ajoke Oluwafisayo Ajidele and Senimetu Ileuma.</i>	18-24
4.	Hisbah and Community Policing as Complementary Strategies for Combating Armed Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria <i>By Akuva Isaac and Mustapha Abdullahi Bature.</i>	25-36
5.	Policy Paradigms and Political Leadership: Catalyzing Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria <i>By Umar Mohammed Idris.</i>	36-48
6.	Electoral Violence in Nigeria and Lessons for Future General Elections <i>By Enoch Amila Shehu, Ogah Musa Ari and Abdullahi Dan'Asabe Jibrin.</i>	49-59
7.	Historical Analysis of Community Resilience against the Boko Haram Insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria <i>By Musa Ibrahim Mustafa.</i>	60-70
8.	Ethics and Morals of Igbo Apprenticeship System: Foundational Factors of Entrepreneurial Formation <i>By Joshbriliem J. Immanuel.</i>	71-84
9.	Work-Life Balance and Employee Productivity in the Public Sector: A Study of Selected Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Stations in Southern Nigeria <i>By Uyouko Effiong Ukpe and Monday Akpakpan.</i>	85-96
10.	An Essencist Examination of Religious Languages in the Interpretation of "the Kingdom of God Suffereth Violence and the Violent Taketh it by Force" and the Jihadist Motivation <i>By Samuel Asuquo Ekanem, Chinenye Precious Okolisah and Amachondi Hikon Yohanna.</i>	97-108
11.	Ethics of Energy Transition: Nigeria and the Moral Imperative of Climate Responsibility <i>By Gabriel Asuquo, Abui Abraham Abui and Timothy Dopkesi Adidi.</i>	109-121
12.	Ethics and the Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Conflict Studies <i>By Victoria Ebosetale Oriwoh and Michael E. Abam.</i>	122-132
13.	Parent-School Partnership: Conceptual and Empirical Review of Academic Success in Secondary Schools in Nigeria <i>By Gbemisola Funmilayo Oguntola & Susan Oluyomi Pitan.</i>	133-144
14.	The Political Class and Financial Management in Obio Akpor Local Government Council, Rivers State, Nigeria, 2015-2026 <i>By Answer Mezu Charles and Sabastine Junior Nwankwo.</i>	145-157
15.	Ethical Implications of Invitro Fertilisation on Christian Families in Benue State <i>By Damian Tersoo Anyam and Christiana Omoo Agbo.</i>	158-169
16.	Occupational Safety Culture and Programmes on Employees Performance in Lafarge Cement Industry <i>By Michael Adekunle Oderinde, Lateef Okikiola Olanipekun and Samuel O. Ukutegbe.</i>	170-184

17.	The Moderating Role of Bank Size on the Relationship between Banking Reforms and Banks' Financial Performance By <i>Richard Agyapong and Christopher Boachie</i>	185-194
18.	Modern-Day Technology and Examination Malpractice: Implications for Education Output in Nigeria By <i>Dr. Akinjide Isaac Yusuf</i>	195-204
19.	Issues and Constraints to the Health Seeking Behaviour among the Elderly in Abuja, Nigeria By <i>Alabi Tope and Ruth Oreun Atureta</i>	205-217
20.	Machiavelli's Conception of Political Order and its Relevance to Contemporary African States By <i>Raphael Onyeji Anayo</i>	218-228
21.	Television Coverage and Citizen Attitude Towards the State of Emergency in Rivers State, Nigeria By <i>Nsikan-Abasi Sam Nkana and Prospect Isobeye Peters</i>	229-244



JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT (JLD)

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF UYO, NIGERIA

ISSN: 3093-0618

CALL FOR PAPERS

Journal of Leadership and Development (JLD), an international, open access, indexed and peer-reviewed scholarly journal is currently receiving submissions for its Volume 2, Number 4, December 2026 edition. As a peer-reviewed academic journal, JLD accepts original and well researched manuscripts in various areas of leadership and development issues including book or paper reviews, conceptual framework, simulation, analytical models, empirical and technical works and case studies in the humanities, education, business/science management, social science and other related fields. JLD provides the needed platform for academics, researchers, institutions and professionals to share various ideas and insights on current issues as well as contributing to expanding the frontiers of knowledge globally.

GUIDELINES:

Authors submitting manuscripts to JLD must ensure that each paper submitted adheres to the following guidelines:

- Is original, well researched and referenced.
- Does not exceed 7,000 words or 15 pages (inclusive of abstract, Keywords, Works Cited or References and so on).
- Has not been submitted to another publication house.
- Is typed double-spaced (2.0), submitted in MS word format, using Times New Roman or Tahoma and 12 font size.
- Uses MLA (9th edition) or APA (7th edition) documentation style; with author's surname, year and page in the in-text citations.
- Has an abstract of not more than 250 words. The abstract should state the research problem, the main aim, research method, main finding(s) or implication(s), recommendations of the work and conclusion.

SUBMISSION All manuscripts must be sent via email to: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

PUBLICATION FEES For contributors within Nigeria, every submission must be accompanied by Five Thousand Naira (₦5,000.00) for vetting. Any paper accepted for publication will be required to pay Fifteen Thousand Naira (₦15,000.00) for Online Edition only and Twenty Thousand Naira (₦20,000.00) for Online and Print Editions.

BANK DETAILS: (Strictly for contributors within Nigeria)

BANK: First Bank **ACCOUNT:** 2046034601
NAME: JPPSS (Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies)

For contributors outside Nigeria, every submission must be accompanied by Ten Dollars (US\$10).

Any paper accepted for publication will be required to pay Forty Dollars (US\$40) for Online Edition only and Fifty Dollars (US\$50) for Online and Print Editions.

BANK DETAILS (STRICTLY FOR CONTRIBUTORS OUTSIDE NIGERIA):

Bank: WEMA Bank **Account:** 0621820757 **Name:** Prof. Elijah Okon John

For Further Information, Contact:

Prof. Elijah O. John
(Editor-in-Chief) - 08028322626

Prof. Moses Ikoh
(Editor) - 07034372361

Dr Emem Bassey Inyang
(Secretary/Editorial Assistant)- 08028769672

Or visit our website
URL: <https://jppssuniuyo.com>



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES (JPCI)

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF UYO, NIGERIA

ISSN: 3093-060X

Call for Papers

Journal of Philosophy and Contemporary Issues (JPCI), an international, open access, indexed and peer-reviewed scholarly journal is currently receiving submissions for its Volume 2, Number 5, December, 2026 edition. As a peer-reviewed academic journal, JPCI accepts original and well researched manuscripts in various areas of philosophy and contemporary issues including book or paper reviews, conceptual framework, simulation, analytical models, empirical and technical works and case studies in the humanities, education, business/science management, social science and other related fields. JPCI provides the needed platform for academics, researchers, institutions and professionals to share various ideas and insights on current issues as well as contributing to expanding the frontiers of knowledge globally.

GUIDELINES:

Authors submitting manuscripts to JPPSS must ensure that each paper submitted adheres to the following guidelines:

- ✓ Is original, well researched and referenced.
- ✓ Does not exceed 7,000 words or 15 pages (inclusive of abstract, Keywords, Works Cited or References and so on).
- ✓ Has not been submitted to another publication house.
- ✓ Is typed double-spaced (2.0), submitted in MS word format, using Times New Roman or Tahoma and 12 font size.
- ✓ Uses MLA (9th edition) or APA (7th edition) documentation style; with author's surname, year and page in the in-text citations.
- ✓ Has an abstract of not more than 250 words. The abstract should state the research problem, the main aim, research method, main finding(s) or implication(s), recommendations of the work and conclusion.

SUBMISSION

All manuscripts must be sent via email to: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

PUBLICATION FEES

For contributors within Nigeria, every submission must be accompanied by Five Thousand Naira (₦5,000.00) for vetting. Any paper accepted for publication will be required to pay Fifteen Thousand Naira (₦15,000.00) for Online Edition only and Twenty Thousand Naira (₦20,000.00) for Online and Print Editions.

BANK DETAILS:

(Strictly for contributors within Nigeria)

BANK:

First Bank

ACCOUNT:

2046034601

NAME:

JPPSS (Journal of Philosophy,
Policy and Strategic Studies)

Contributors outside Nigeria should

note that every submission must be accompanied by Ten Dollars (US\$10).

Any paper accepted for publication will be required to pay Forty Dollars (US\$40) for Online Edition only and Fifty Dollars (US\$50) for Online and Print Editions.

BANK DETAILS

(STRICTLY FOR CONTRIBUTORS OUTSIDE NIGERIA):

Bank: WEMA Bank

Account: 0621820757

Name: Prof. Elijah Okon John

For Further Information, Contact:

Prof. Elijah O. John
(Editor-in-Chief) -
08028322626

Dr. Anthony R. Etuk
(Editor)
08095033470

Samuel Fno Inyang
(Secretary/Editorial Assistant)
09073958669

Or visit our website: URL: <https://jppssuniuyo.com>



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 11, 2026 Accepted: September 06, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Nwogu, Peter O.; Ezedike, Edward U. & Peter, Confidence C. (2026) "Epicurean Calculus of Jeremy Bentham on the Principle of Utility." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 1-7.

Article

Open Access

EPICUREAN CALCULUS OF JEREMY BENTHAM ON THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

Peter Onyebuchim Nwogu¹, Edward Uzoma Ezedike² & Confidence Chioma Peter³

School of General Studies, Federal University of Environment & Technology, Koroma/Saakpenwa, Ogoni¹

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities, University of Port Harcourt²

Department of Public Relations & Advertising, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies,
University of Port Harcourt³

Corresponding Email: Peter.nwogu@fuet.edu.ng¹

Abstract

The Epicurean Calculus, associated with Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian philosophy in the late eighteenth century, provides a systematic framework for evaluating the moral worth of human actions according to their consequences. Rooted in the principle of utility, Bentham argues that actions should be judged by their tendency to promote pleasure or happiness and reduce pain or suffering. The calculus therefore seeks to determine the net consequences of an action by examining seven important criteria: intensity, duration, certainty, propinquity, fecundity, purity, and extent. Intensity refers to the strength of pleasure or pain produced, while duration considers how long the consequence is likely to last. Certainty examines the probability of the consequence occurring, and propinquity concerns how soon it will be experienced. Fecundity assesses whether an initial pleasure or pain is likely to produce further consequences of the same kind, while purity considers whether pleasure is likely to occur without accompanying pain. Extent refers to the number of people affected by an action. Collectively, these criteria provide a framework for assessing whether an action is likely to maximize happiness or minimize suffering. The study adopts a qualitative philosophical and doctrinal methodology, appropriate for examining the conceptual foundations and ethical implications of Bentham's theory. It relies on Bentham's philosophical writings, relevant books, scholarly articles, and other academic literature. Through conceptual, critical, and interpretive analysis, the study examines the meaning, application, strengths, limitations, and contemporary relevance of the seven criteria. No empirical data are employed, as the study focuses on philosophical arguments and ethical

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

reasoning. The Epicurean Calculus represents a significant attempt to make moral decision-making systematic and consequence-oriented. Its strength lies in encouraging individuals and institutions to consider the broader effects of their actions on human welfare. However, pleasure and pain are difficult to measure objectively, and people may value happiness differently. Despite these limitations, the calculus remains a useful ethical tool for evaluating consequences and encouraging decisions aimed at maximizing overall happiness while minimizing suffering.

Introduction

Epicureanism is a system of philosophy founded in 307 BCE and based upon the teachings of Epicurus, an ancient Greek philosopher. Epicurean calculus, also known as the hedonic or felicific calculus, is a utility theory that rates the making of ethical decisions by weighing present and future pleasures against pains. A method that applies the Principle of Utility to determine the morality of an action. According to Marimuthu Prahasan (2024), he proposed that the right action is the one that produces the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people by quantitatively measuring the pleasure and pain of an act using factors. This understanding was properly developed by the British philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748 - 1832) in the late 18th century as a way to rationalise and compute the pleasure and pain produced by an act or occurrence. It is a tool used in utilitarian ethics to assess the moral worth of an action based on its ability to generate contentment or reduce anguish. The theory revolves around how human beings are driven by the passion for contentment and the avoidance of pain, and that the right course of action is the one that maximizes happiness. (Eden Lin 2022).

The Principle of Utility posits that actions are right if they promote pleasure or happiness and wrong if they produce pain or unhappiness. David Gordon McFarland (2023) asserted that it involves choosing actions that result in the greatest net pleasure over the long term, even if it means tolerating a short-term pain for a greater future pleasure or avoiding an immediate pleasure that could lead to more significant pain later. It is a rational way to judge actions based on their overall consequences. The core principle is to compare the potential pleasure and pain that will emanate from each action as humans make different choices. It explains that it is better to look beyond immediate gratification and consider the long-term effects of an action. Sometimes, small pain may be worth enduring if it leads to a greater pleasure; more lasting pleasurable benefits; and immediate pleasure should be avoided if it will cause a greater amount of pain in the future. (MA Vilar · 2017)

Jerome Warren (2020) opined that calculus is not a precise calculation but a careful reasoning that involves the weighing of options, advantages and disadvantages to determine the best path to follow. For example, intensive studying in a higher institution might involve a short-term sacrifice of less fun because of determination to succeed, but it will lead to the greater, long-term pleasure of a good grade and a sense of accomplishment. Based on the Epicurean calculus, studying would be the better choice since it leads to greater overall pleasure and less future pain. MacGillivray, E. (2015) stated that it is a seven-factor system—intensity, duration, certainty, propinquity, fecundity, purity, and extent—that is used to evaluate the total pleasure or pain of an action to determine the most favourable ethical choice, and the above formed the basis of his utilitarianism. Expanding on the felicific or hedonic calculus, which is the same as Jeremy Bentham's. (1789) Epicurean calculus stated that the principle of utility is the rock on which Bentham's philosophy of calculus is laid, asserting that all actions should be evaluated based on their consequences for human well-being. He argued that human life is governed by pleasure and pain, and the goal of morality

is to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. For Bentham, "greatest happiness for the greatest number" is the guiding principle for moral and political decision-making that can lead to greater pleasure for the people. This is a moral theory which exemplifies the principle of the best action or decision to take in order to maximize utility or pleasure, usually defined as that which produces the greatest well-being of the individual. In other words, it is a system for calculating the total utility of an action by measuring its potential for pleasure or pain. (Kusev P., van Schaik P., Martin R., Hall L., Johansson P.2020)

Factorial Fundamentals

The theory of Epicurean, hedonic or facilitic calculus is based on some tested factors. They involve methods of calculating the net pleasure or pain from an action to determine the best course of conduct. In the Social Sciences, Gustav Klimt (2022) observed that to use the calculus, one must consider the pleasure and pain for each individual affected by an action. Sum the total pleasure and subtract the total pain to get a net utility score. Repeat this process for all possible alternative actions. The action with the highest net score is considered the most ethically right one. Bentham used the calculus as a guide for legislators to create laws that would maximize the "greatest happiness for the greatest number". However, application of it to every decision is often impractical; it serves as a model for ideal calculation in ethical dilemmas or policy decision-making. Bentham's Epicurean Calculus proposes that the value of an action can be measured based on several criteria. Such as detailed below:

- i. **Intensity:** Intensity shows how strong the pleasure or pain is to the individual, the impact of the pleasure or pain on human well-being and what the action or event will lead to for individuals. It is a key enabler used to determine the overall value of an action as it affects the individual, the significance and the consequences of the action on human well-being. (Andrew Moore 2019). Ole Martin Moen (2016). Posited that the more intense the pleasure or pain, the greater its impact on the overall calculation of happiness or suffering; therefore, intensity is an essential element in moral decision-making (Davies, R. 2017)
- ii. **Duration:** How long the pleasure or pain lasts and its effect on well-being. This is an uncontested consideration of the utility calculus since the length of time that a pleasure or pain will last as a result of an action or event is significant to all. Duration is used to evaluate how long an individual can endure the effects of pleasure or pain from an action because duration plays a significant role in determining whether an action is morally right or wrong, as the lasting effects of an action can contribute more to overall happiness or suffering than short-lived ones. Therefore, when calculating the net effect of pleasure or pain resulting from an action, it is important to consider not only the intensity of the experience but also how long it persists. The calculus is not about immediate gratification but about achieving lasting pleasure. (Kusev P., et al 2018). Additionally, actions that lead to long-lasting happiness or pain are more significant in the Epicurean Calculus, as their effects contribute to a greater or lesser amount of well-being. Essentially, calculating the consequences of an action aimed at achieving greater benefit is valuable when applying this theory. (Ivar Labukt 2012).
- iii. **Certainty:** Certainty refers to the likelihood or probability that an action will lead to a particular outcome, whether pleasure or pain. The concept of certainty is critical in making moral decisions, as individuals must consider how certain or uncertain the results of their actions are. Secondly, the calculation is to find out how the pleasure or pain is to occur or the probability that an action when occurs will lead to pleasure or

pain outcome. It is used to assess the overall value of an action in terms of its potential impact on human well-being. This is critical in making moral decisions, as individuals must consider how certain or uncertain the results of their actions will be. The Calculus was not just about calculating potential pleasure or pain, but also about evaluating the reliability of those outcomes. The more certain an action is to result in a positive outcome (pleasure), the more favorable it is considered. Conversely, the more uncertain the outcome, the less reliable an action is in terms of producing happiness or minimizing suffering. (Connolly, Patrick J., 2021).

- iv. **Propinquity:** Propinquity which means Nearness, measures how soon the pleasure or pain will be felt. It is all about the closeness or immediacy of the pleasure or pain resulting from an action. It considers how soon the effects of an action will be experienced, helping to distinguish between short-term and long-term consequences. The closer the consequence is to the action, the more relevant it becomes in determining the choice considering the ethical value attached to the action. (Ole Martin Moen 2016).
- v. **Fecundity:** It examines the likelihood of a pleasure leading to more pleasures, pain leading to more pains. Secondly, fecundity determines the overall moral value of an action in terms of its long-term impact on human well-being. Fecundity focuses on the idea that certain actions can trigger a chain reaction, where the initial experience of pleasure or pain may lead to additional experiences of the same kind. (Jerome Warren 2020) An action's ability to produce more pleasure or pain in the future is an important consideration when calculating its overall effect according to Bentham. A pleasurable action that leads to additional positive experiences is deemed more valuable, just as an action causing pain that leads to further suffering is seen as more harmful. The potential for future outcomes plays a significant role in moral evaluations, as it helps account for the cumulative impact of actions.
- vi. **Purity:** It indicates whether the action will lead to pain, and level of freedom that will accompany the pain or the likelihood of the pleasure not being followed by pain, or pain not being followed by pleasure. Conversely, it refers to the degree to which pleasure is free from any associated pain, or vice versa. Purity considers whether the pleasure or pain experienced from an action is mixed with the opposite emotion, influencing how "clean" or untainted the experience is. Calculating the moral value of an action, for Bentham, it is important to assess whether the resulting pleasure is pure or accompanied by pain.
- vii. **Extent:** The concept incorporates the number of people who are affected by the action, the degree of pleasure or pain it generates for them. The concept of extent emphasizes that the consequences of an action are not limited to the individual performing the act but can affect a broader group of people. When calculating the moral value of an action, the number of people affected is crucial in determining the total amount of happiness or suffering generated. An action that leads to widespread happiness or minimizes pain for a large number of people is considered more morally favorable than one that affects only a few individuals. (Chappell, R.Y. and Meissner, D. 2023). The calculus reveals the immediate weight of pleasures and pains against what should be sacrificed. When calculating the moral worth of an action, it is essential to consider not only whether the action will lead to pleasure or pain but also the intensity, the duration to which these feelings are felt, most importantly, the sureness of the action combined with nearness or intimacy that will be experienced at the time of action, whether the action will lead to

greater pleasure or not and how transparent and the extent of coverage are all essential elements of the model because a small pain could be endured to achieve a greater pleasure, and a small pleasure could be sacrificed if it leads to greater pain (Connolly, Patrick J., 2021)

Critical Considerations

In modern reasoning, accessibility to adequate Information before actions are taken by individuals reduces the veil of inconsistency between what is morally sound judgements when making choices; therefore, the veil of ignorance as established by utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham is broken., this makes one to measure human utility behaviour in advance whether it will end in pleasure or pain and promote its societal benefits. (Faulhaber A.K.,etal 2019). In his work Jeremy Bentham point out two sensations of pleasure and pain arguing that rather than relying on beliefs or intuition to determine the moral appropriateness of an action, one should instead employ reason, stating that action is one that produces the greatest happiness of the greatest number; in that, reducing pain and increasing the pleasure of those affected. Therefore, intended pleasure to be maximised and pain to be minimised where possible, and accordingly suggested that pleasure can be measured in terms of utility, and pain measured in terms of disutility. Bentham coined this moral doctrine (The Greatest Happiness Principle Utilitarianism) while in other consequentialist theories, utilitarianism encompasses the logic of utility maximisation: the ends justify the means. In other words, as long as the end goal maximises utility, then any potentially egregious act required in order to deliver the goal can be justified. (Martin R., Kusev P., van Schaik P. 2021). It is also possible to maximise one's utility for self-interest in spite of the consequences and in the absence of the interest of others, for instance altruistic consequentialism aims to maximise utility for others, in the absence of self-interest since goal of utilitarian consequentialism is to maximise utility for the greatest number of people, or according to Bentham's slogan: "it is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong" (Chappell, R.Y. and Meissner, D. 2023).

According to Jeremy Bentham, those vested with the authority to make decisions on behalf of others should conduct the affairs as impartial spectators, urging those in authority particularly the legislators to behave as impartial and this approach differs from egoistic and altruistic consequentialism, since egoistic decisions are intended to directly benefit the decision-maker which is very common with legislators these days and altruistic decisions can in some cases cause the decision-maker to use the legislative powers to harm others. (Huebner B., Hauser M.D. 2011), (Kusev P., etal 2018). Mill J.S. (2014), first published in (1863), stated that Bentham's theory of utilitarianism was focused on pleasures and pains in terms of their quantity. However, pleasures and pains are not easily quantifiable. Mill argued that pleasures can differ from one another based on qualitative distinctions and not only quantitative and some pleasures are considered higher than others based on these qualitative distinctions rather than quantitative and this concern whether pleasures require human or limited animal faculties to experienced it. Mill therefore argued that higher pleasures were more worthwhile pursuing, particularly if a person is faced with a choice between experiencing the sensation of a lower or higher pleasure, and the pain. Finally, Fish, J. and Sanders, K. (2011), MacGillivray, E. (2015) and Bown, A. (2016) argued that the calculus is for the greatest good for the greatest number of individuals if the development were permitted to go ahead in every area of life. However, this assumes that non-human animals) are not relevant to the calculation of pleasures and pains. Yet, if pleasure is all that matters for how well a life goes, then it is not clear why animals, that may be able to

experience some form of pleasure and can almost certainly experience pain, should be excluded from the calculation process.

Conclusion

The calculus encourages a life of moderation and self-sufficiency and behavioral ethics to avoid actions that may lead to greater future pain; therefore, it will be wrong for one to pursue every pleasure, but instead, leave some if they will lead to greater pain in the future. It encourages that some pains should be endured if they result in a greater, long-term pleasure. Epicurus's system recognizes the fact that the highest pleasure does not always lead to fulfilment, but the absence of pain and disturbance (painlessness) is more essential. The calculus involves assessing the advantages and disadvantages of any decision, factoring in both the immediate and future effects of each action. Conclusively, there is a need to balance personal interests with the obligations owed to others or compromises that are acceptable in pursuit of envisaged goals. Considering people's values and priorities, which they are attached to and care about, they feel frustrated if they must choose between them and regret thereafter.

References

- Bentham, J. (1970). *An introduction to the principles of morals and legislation*. Hafner Publishing. (Original work published 1789)
- Bown, A. (2016). Epicurus on truth and falsehood. *Phronesis*, 61, 463–503.
- Chappell, R. Y., & Meissner, D. (2023). Theories of well-being. In R. Y. Chappell, D. Meissner, & W. MacAskill (Eds.), *An introduction to utilitarianism*. <https://www.utilitarianism.net/theories-of-well-being>
- Connolly, P. J. (2021). Susanna Newcome and the origins of utilitarianism. *Utilitas*, 33, 384–398.
- Crimmins, J. (2020). Jeremy Bentham. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Summer 2020 ed.). Stanford University. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/bentham/>
- Davies, R. (2017). The measure of pleasure: A note on the *Protagoras*. *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 301–315.
- Eden, L. (2022). Well-being, part 1: The concept of well-being. *Philosophy Compass*, 17(2).
- Faulhaber, A. K., D. et al. (2019). Human decisions in moral dilemmas are largely described by utilitarianism: Virtual car driving study provides guidelines for autonomous driving vehicles. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 25, 399–418. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-018-0020-x>
- Fish, J., & Sanders, K. (2011). *Epicurus and the Epicurean tradition*. Cambridge University Press.
- Huebner, B., & Hauser, M. D. (2011). Moral judgments about altruistic self-sacrifice: When philosophical and folk intuitions clash. *Philosophical Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515089.2010.534447>
- Klimt, G. (2022). *The secret to happiness* [Artwork]. Google Art Project.
- Kusev, P., et al. (2018). Adaptive anchoring model: How static and dynamic presentations of time series influence judgments and predictions. *Cognitive Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.12476>
- Kusev, P., van Schaik, P., Martin, R., Hall, L., & Johansson, P. (2020). Preference reversals during risk elicitation. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 149, 585–589. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000655>

- Labukt, I. (2012). Hedonic tone and the heterogeneity of pleasure. *Utilitas*, 24(2), 172–199.
- MacGillivray, E. (2015). Epitomizing philosophy and the critique of Epicurean popularizers. *Journal of Ancient History*, 3, 22–54.
- Martin, R., Kusev, P., & van Schaik, P. (2021). Autonomous vehicles: How perspective-taking accessibility alters moral judgments and consumer purchasing behavior. *Cognition*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2021.104666>
- Mill, J. S. (2014). *Utilitarianism*. Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1863)
- Moen, O. M. (2016). An argument for hedonism. *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, 50, 267–281.
- Prahasan, M. (2024). Applying Epicurean philosophy to managing modern pursuits of happiness and life satisfaction: An analytical perspective. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 12(8), 1916–1923. <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijsrcm/v12i08.sh01>
- Warren, J. (2020). *Bentham's two sovereign masters: Examining Bentham's influence on the social sciences*.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 13, 2026 Accepted: September 08, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Yusuf, Aminu (2026). "Russian Ukraine War and Its Impact on Cross-Border Small Scale Trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic 2022-2024." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 8-17.

Article

Open Access

RUSSIAN UKRAINE WAR AND ITS IMPACT ON CROSS-BORDER SMALL SCALE TRADE BETWEEN NIGERIA AND NIGER REPUBLIC 2022-2024

Aminu Yusuf

Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, Nigeria

Corresponding Email: aminupillow@gmail.com

Abstract

The Russia-Ukraine war, which began in 2022, has had far-reaching global economic consequences, including disruptions in supply chains, inflationary pressures, and energy crises. This study examined the impact of the war on cross-border small-scale trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic from 2022 to 2024. This study adopted Regional Integration theory founded by Haas and Schmitter in 1964 which emphasizes on the integrative process at the international level as primarily consensual or communication based issues. To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument (interview guide) for this study, it was subjected to expert review and validation. The process involved the assessment of the instrument by experts. The research findings are that, the war has contributed to rising costs of essential goods, currency depreciation, and logistical challenges, exacerbating existing trade difficulties. Additionally, international sanctions, fuel price hikes, and disruptions in agricultural imports have negatively affected local economies and livelihoods. The research highlights the resilience strategies adopted by small-scale traders to mitigate these challenges, including informal trade networks and alternative supply routes. By providing insights into the broader implications of the war on regional trade, the study recommended that, the governments of Nigeria and Niger should reinforce bilateral and regional trade frameworks to remove trade barriers, harmonize tariffs, and ensure uniform enforcement of cross-border trade regulations, joint cross-border trade facilitation centers should be established to support small-scale traders with reliable access to trade information, affordable financing, and conflict resolution mechanisms, and governments of Nigeria and Niger should ensure policies targeting small-scale traders are fully implemented, regularly monitored, and evaluated for effectiveness.

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

Keywords: Russian-Ukraine War, Cross-border Trade, Trade Disruption, Border Market, Niger, Nigeria.

Introduction

The protracted crises between Russia and Ukraine, though geographically distant, have had a significant impact on the African economy. Since the onset of the Russian-Ukraine war when the Russian tanks began to roll into Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the international community has become more and more fragile; making the global peace and security situation more perilous and making the Russia's and Ukraine's relations worse (Hatab, 2022). The polarization tend to gather new strength with opposing antagonistic blocs. The impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict is alarming as the conflicting situation pose ominous threats to the African countries most adversely. The impact of the war is more obtainable in Africa due to the spikes in energy prices and food prices driven by the war-linked supply chain and disruptions of trade relations. Despite various efforts made by international community to deescalate or bring an end to the Russia-Ukraine war coupled with the fierce sanctions the West imposed on Russia to send indirect signals to end the war and various negotiations underway between Russian and Ukrainian leaders, the war rather escalated. According to the World Food Programme (2023), in the last quarter of 2023, the price of rice skyrocketed by 21% while the price of a 25kg bag of rice had surged to 50% only between August and October. This study conducts a timeline analysis of the issues that occurred from onset of the Russian aggression to the present time. The study also conducted an analysis of the impact of Russian Ukraine war on African economy particularly cross-border small scale trade by focusing on Niger and Nigeria. The study is therefore unique in its otherness in utilizing various reports and media information curated to provide an extended analysis of the issues with the aim to provide concrete policy insights. The study further linked the issues of the cross-border small scale trade with the military coup in Niger thereby providing a comprehensive account and analysis of the economic outlook for Niger and Nigeria.

Statement of the Research Problem

The Russian-Ukraine war, which began in 2019, has had far-reaching global impact beyond the immediate conflict zone. One area significantly affected is cross-border small scale trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic. This trade which is vital for the livelihood of many communities in both countries has experienced disruptions due to the war's impact on global supply chains, commodity prices and economic stability. Cross border trade between Nigeria and Niger has been formal which obviously encompasses political, economic, administrative, and cultural and so forth. The trade between the Nigeria and Niger Republic conduct cross border trade has a great influence thereby shaping the formation of government modalities towards policies for micro region development (Taylor, 2008). The Russia's invasion of Ukraine since inception in 2022 has put the African dependent economy in danger by driving up commodity prices and choking up the food supply chains across the world. The quality and price of food has changed with emergence of Russian-Ukraine War in Nigeria and Niger Republic. In December, 2021, the price of family size grand loaf, one of the popular breads in Abuja Nigeria was N600. As of April, 2022, the piece jumped to N850, an increase of about 41 per cent with decrease in quality of the bread (Theophilus and Daniel, 2022). The price of milk, also imported from Ukraine and Russia, has increased. For instance, a 400g of powered Peak Milk, which used to sell for N1,150 (\$2.74), is now increased to N1,300 (\$3.10) (Theophilus and Daniel, 2022).

Given these challenges, this study aims to investigate the specific ways in which the Russia-Ukraine war which has tremendously impacted small-scale cross-border trade between Nigeria and Nigeria Republic from 2022 to 2024. The study aims to fill gap in literature which include substantial literature on the global economic impacts of the Russian-Ukraine war where there is a limited focus on its specific effects on the regional trade, particularly in sub-Sahara Africa. Also, the study identified lack of comprehensive data on informal trade sectors between Nigeria and Nigeria which are crucial for understanding the full impact of the Russian-Ukraine War on small-scale trade. Inadequate exploration of supply chains disruptions were overlooked by certain researches these disruptions caused by the Russian-Ukraine war and their effects on trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic. This study addressed the extent to which the Russian-Ukraine war has affected the small-scale cross border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic from 2022 to 2024. The conflict has led to global economic instability, affecting supply chains, commodity prices and trade regulations. By understanding the impacts, policy makers and stakeholders can develop strategies to mitigate negative effects and support the resilience of small-scale traders in the two countries (Nigeria and Niger Republic).

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are the following:

- i. How has Russian-Ukrainian War affected cross-border small scale trade between Nigeria and Niger?
- ii. Does the Russian-Ukraine crisis pose any threats to the smooth operation of cross-border small scale trade between Nigeria and Niger?
- iii. How do the Cross-border small-scale traders between Nigeria and Niger adapt to sustain their businesses amid the challenges posed by the Russian-Ukraine crisis?
- iv. Are there any possible solutions to the incessant challenges being faced by cross-border small scale traders in Nigeria and Niger?

Research Methodology

The research was designed as a qualitative study to explore how the Russia-Ukraine war affected small-scale cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic from 2022 to 2024. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand the experiences, perceptions and responses of traders and other relevant stakeholders to the changes in the cross-border trading environment. Data were collected through interviews, with information recorded through field notes, and through a review of relevant documents and reports. The interview guide served as the research instrument and was subjected to expert review and validation to enhance its validity and reliability. The interview and documentary materials were examined qualitatively and organized into themes reflecting the major effects of the Russia-Ukraine war on cross-border small-scale trade, including transportation costs, profit margins, exchange-rate volatility, trade volumes, livelihoods, changes in traded goods and government policy responses.

Conceptual Clarifications

Small-scale Trade: Small-scale Trade is a form of business which has limited start-up capital with a small number of employee and profits margin.

Cross-border Trade: This is a kind business transaction in goods and services happening or being carried out between two or more divide (countries).

Russia-Ukraine War: Russia-Ukraine War refers to the actual conduct of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine including military operations, economic impacts, political strategies and humanitarian consequences.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts Regional Integration theory in its framework for analysis of cross border trade with particular reference to Nigeria and Niger Republic in West Africa Sub Sahara region. Regional Integration Theory started with a broad comparative regional and organizational scope in the 1950s and 1960s, it has since focused on European integration and the European Union. The prominent exponents of Regional Integration Theory (Haas and Schmitter, 1964). The theory later underwent modification in Europe in the mid-1960s and other scholars like Hoffmann (1965), Taylor (1983) and Moravcsik (1991, 1993 and 1998) were included as scholars of Regional Integration Theory. According to Schmitter (1970, p. 836), the Regional Integration entails how national units or different countries located in a given territory come to share part or all of their decisional authority in terms of political, social and economic aspect which connotes cross-border trade for the development of such national units. Thus, the theory of regional integration undergoes modifications and changes so that certain conditions formalized to incorporate challenges of integration movements. It equally enhances principles for development between the integrating countries. It is in view of this, that, this research finds it pertinent to adopt the theory of Regional Integration in the framework for its analysis. The theory of Regional Integration is anchored on the following assumptions:

- i. State as a rational actor tries to control the process in such a way that it serves its interests.
- ii. State tends to attain within a territory of a sense of community and institutions strong enough to assure for a long time dependable expectations of peaceful change among its populations.
- iii. Participating states in Regional Integration emphasizes on the integrative process at the international level as primarily consensual.
- iv. Policies that are perceived to threaten national sovereignty, identity, and solidarity are less integrated and less subject to backlash than those that are less relevant to the self-determination of national communities.

Application of the Theory

Complex Interdependence: Regional Integration theory emphasizes that states are connected through multiple economic and social relationships, creating incentives for cooperation because disruption in one area can affect other areas. This is directly applicable to Nigeria-Niger cross-border small-scale trade because traders and border communities depend on the movement of goods, transport services, markets and currency across the two countries. The findings of this study show that the Russia-Ukraine war increased fuel and transportation costs, disrupted the availability and prices of commodities, and contributed to declining trade volumes. These effects demonstrate that a distant conflict can transmit economic pressures into the Nigeria-Niger trading corridor through global markets and supply chains. The resulting pressures create a reason for Nigeria and Niger to deepen economic interdependence by keeping viable trade corridors open, facilitating the movement of essential goods, supporting alternative sources of supply, and reducing unnecessary transaction costs. Such cooperation is prompted by their shared interest in protecting livelihoods, food supply and economic activity in border communities.

The application of this dimension is not based on the European Union experience alone. In the Nigeria-Niger context, mutual dependence and complementary economic interests can be seen in the movement of agricultural products, livestock, consumer goods, transport services and currencies across the border. Where policies, customs procedures or border controls are poorly coordinated, the cost of inter-state transactions increases and small-scale traders are more likely to shift towards informal routes. The study's findings on increased inspections and fees, border-related difficulties and the growth of informal trading therefore demonstrate why greater policy coordination between Nigeria and Niger is necessary. Regional and bilateral institutions can provide mechanisms for coordinating trade rules, sharing information and reducing uncertainty, thereby making legitimate cross-border trade more predictable and less costly (Marks, Hooghe and Blank, 1996).

Liberal Inter-governmentalism: Regional Integration theory also emphasizes that states cooperate when cooperation serves identifiable national interests and can be achieved through negotiation. This perspective is relevant to Nigeria and Niger because the effects identified in this study create interests that neither country can adequately address in isolation. Rising transport costs, unstable prices, reduced trade volumes and livelihood losses affect traders and consumers on both sides of the border. These pressures provide a practical reason for the two governments to negotiate measures that facilitate legitimate trade, improve customs coordination, reduce avoidable charges and strengthen border security without unnecessarily restricting small-scale commerce. Such negotiations are therefore prompted not simply by the existence of the Russia-Ukraine war, but by the domestic economic costs that the conflict has transmitted to both countries and the shared interest in keeping essential cross-border markets functioning.

Constructivism: Regional Integration also draws attention to the role of shared norms, identities and understandings in shaping cooperation. This is applicable to Nigeria and Niger because their border communities have longstanding social, cultural and commercial relationships. These shared connections can create expectations that the two countries should cooperate when external shocks threaten the welfare of communities that depend on cross-border commerce. The findings show that traders responded to shortages and rising prices by relying more on local alternatives, joint transport arrangements and other adaptive practices. These responses reveal common economic interests and shared practical needs across the border. Consequently, cooperation through regional institutions such as ECOWAS, as well as through bilateral mechanisms, can be encouraged by a shared understanding that maintaining legitimate trade and protecting vulnerable traders are common regional interests. The prompt for such cooperation is therefore the combination of shared border relationships and the common economic pressures produced or intensified by the conflict.

Regional organizations are also relevant because they can provide common rules and institutional mechanisms for managing inter-state economic relations. Such frameworks can reduce uncertainty and transaction costs by establishing agreed procedures for trade and cooperation. In this study, the importance of this function is demonstrated by the finding that inconsistent policies, increased border charges and weak implementation encouraged some traders to use informal routes. Regional and bilateral institutions can help Nigeria and Niger coordinate responses to external economic shocks, exchange information, improve implementation of trade arrangements and create mechanisms through which the interests of small-scale traders can be represented. In this sense, participation in regional regimes can

influence state strategies and can broaden the understanding of national interest from narrowly domestic concerns to interests that are also protected through regional cooperation (Hasenclever, Mayer and Rittberger, 1997).

Neo-functionalism: Regional Integration theory further suggests that cooperation in one functional economic area can generate pressure for cooperation in related areas. This is particularly relevant to the findings of this study because the Russia-Ukraine war did not affect only one component of Nigeria-Niger trade. Rising fuel prices affected transportation; supply disruptions affected the availability and prices of goods; exchange-rate volatility affected transactions; and declining profitability affected traders' participation. Because these problems are interconnected, addressing one sector can create a need to coordinate other sectors. For example, reducing the cost of moving goods would have limited effect if customs procedures remain costly or if traders cannot obtain reliable market and currency information. The economic pressures generated by the conflict therefore provide incentives for Nigeria and Niger to extend cooperation across transport, customs, market information, border management and support for small-scale traders.

The neo-functionalist argument is therefore applicable to this study not because Nigeria and Niger are expected to reproduce the European Union model, but because the problems revealed by the study are functionally interconnected. The disruption of international supply chains and the resulting increase in food, fuel and other commodity costs create pressures for closer cooperation in the economic sectors through which the two countries can cushion the effects of external shocks. Strengthening cooperation in trade facilitation can consequently create further demands for improved transport infrastructure, coordinated border management, market information, financial support and other related measures. This provides a theoretical explanation for the study's recommendation that Nigeria and Niger reinforce bilateral and regional trade frameworks, establish joint trade facilitation mechanisms and improve the implementation of policies affecting small-scale traders (Rosamond, 2000).

Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which explored the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on small-scale cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger. Using qualitative content analysis, data were collected through interviews and document reviews and coded thematically into major patterns:

Key Themes and Findings

Rising Fuel Prices and Transportation Costs: Many traders reported severe increases in transportation costs linked to global fuel price surges. A union leader in Maradi stated that the war led to an inadequate supply of fossil fuels, devastating transport businesses. A Katsina trader said: "Before the war, I spent ₦50,000 to transport goods to Kano; now it's ₦80,000 due to fuel costs." Border traders also lamented fuel shortages, vehicle scarcity, and price fluctuations. These factors limited mobility and disrupted the timely delivery of goods - especially perishables - leading to financial losses.

Reduced Profit Margins

With rising transport and commodity costs, traders were forced to absorb losses to retain customers. As one trader noted: "We can't raise prices too much, or customers won't buy. So we absorb the losses." A government official confirmed that profitability in the region had significantly declined since 2022, threatening business sustainability.

Exchange Rate Volatility

The depreciation of the Naira against the CFA Franc caused pricing unpredictability. A currency dealer explained: “The exchange rate fluctuates so much that we lose money when converting CFA to Naira.” Traders also cited inflation and the devaluation of the Naira as major barriers, often resulting in lost profits or stalled trade deals.

Impacts on Livelihoods and Trade Volumes

The war’s economic ripple reduced income levels and increased poverty in border communities. A trader shared: “Before the war, I could feed my family and pay school fees. Now I struggle to make ends meet.” Trade volumes plummeted. Where traders once imported five truckloads monthly, now only two are feasible. Government officials observed that trans-border activities, especially grains and currency trades, have collapsed or significantly eroded.

Shifts in Traded Goods and Practices

Due to disrupted supply chains from Ukraine and Russia, many traders substituted foreign goods with local alternatives. A trader from Maradi stated: “We couldn’t get wheat at a reasonable price, so we started selling millet and livestock instead.” There was also a rise in informal trade routes, joint transportation ventures, and even barter systems to navigate inflation and documentation hurdles.

Local Alternatives and Food Insecurity

With shortages of fertilizers and grains, local food prices surged, worsening food insecurity. Traders noted: “People now buy more local grains because they’re cheaper and available.” NAFDAC officials warned of increased consumption of unregulated contraband food items, heightening health risks in the region.

Ineffective Government Responses

Twenty four participants expressed disappointment in government interventions, citing corruption and poor implementation of relief programs. “Only big businesses benefit from subsidies; small traders are left to struggle,” said one trader. Border closures since 2019 compounded the economic strain, while increased inspections and fees discouraged trade, forcing many traders into illegal routes.

Analysis and Interpretation

- i. **Transportation Costs:** Driven by global fuel hikes and local insecurity, transport became more expensive, limiting trade volume and frequency.
- ii. **Profit Margins:** Operational costs outpaced earnings. Traders could not raise prices significantly without losing customers.
- iii. **Currency Volatility:** Naira depreciation against the CFA Franc disrupted pricing, increased risk, and led to hoarding of foreign currencies.
- iv. **Livelihood Impacts:** Many traders, especially women abandoned trade, shifting to subsistence activities. Income and food security deteriorated.
- v. **Decline in Trade Volumes:** Trade was redirected toward essential and local goods due to affordability and availability issues.
- vi. **Adaptation Strategies:** Traders changed practices—shifting to informal systems and collaborating to cut costs, showing resilience but increasing informality.
- vii. **Policy Weakness:** Poorly implemented support measures failed to cushion small-scale traders. Corruption and inconsistent policies further deepened hardship.

Discussion of Findings

This study explored the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on small-scale cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger from 2022 to 2024. A time-series analysis conducted using ARDL models revealed that the fuel subsidy burden increased government expenditure by 15% in 2022, eroding the fiscal gains from higher crude oil exports. Although the conflict occurred far from West Africa, it triggered a chain reaction of global economic disruptions that deeply affected regional trade, especially among vulnerable trading communities. The following key themes emerged:

- i. **Rising Transportation Costs:** The surge in global fuel prices due to the war significantly increased the cost of transporting goods. Traders had to contend with higher diesel prices and growing insecurity along trade routes, which required additional expenses such as bribes and armed escorts. This forced a reduction in trade frequency and volume. **Implication:** These costs limited trade accessibility and profitability for small-scale traders, weakening their ability to sustain operations.
- ii. **Reduced Profit Margins:** As operating expenses rose, traders found it difficult to adjust prices without losing customers. Many absorbed losses or exited the trade altogether, especially those with minimal financial cushion. **Implication:** Profit erosion made cross-border trade unsustainable for many small traders, threatening livelihoods and long-term participation in regional commerce.
- iii. **Exchange Rate Volatility:** The war-induced global supply shocks contributed to the depreciation of the Naira against the CFA Franc, leading to unpredictable price swings. Traders faced difficulties in pricing goods, managing currency losses, and forecasting profits. **Implication:** Exchange rate instability introduced significant uncertainty and risk, undermining business confidence and reducing investment in cross-border trade.
- iv. **Social and Livelihood Impacts:** Economic hardship extended beyond traders to affect entire households and communities. Many, especially women and youth, abandoned trade and shifted to subsistence farming or informal domestic businesses. This marked a loss of stable income sources in already marginalized regions. **Implication:** The decline in trade exacerbated poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment in border communities that heavily rely on commerce.
- v. **Decline in Trade Volumes:** Trade volumes contracted sharply due to rising costs, currency instability, and stricter border regulations. Traders focused on essential commodities, abandoning non-essential and luxury goods due to affordability concerns. **Implication:** This reduction weakened Nigeria-Niger economic interdependence and reduced market activity in border areas.
- vi. **Shifts in Traded Goods and Practices:** With foreign goods becoming too expensive or unavailable, traders increasingly turned to local substitutes. Grains, textiles, and livestock replaced wheat and imported goods. Many also adopted informal trading strategies, such as smuggling, barter, and shared transport, to minimize losses. **Implication:** While these shifts show resilience, they also indicate a growing trend toward informality, complicating efforts to regulate and support trade.
- vii. **Increased Demand for Local Alternatives:** The collapse of international supply chains opened opportunities for domestic production. Traders and consumers turned to locally sourced products like millet, maize flour, and shea butter. **Implication:** This trend fostered local industries and encouraged regional self-reliance, though it was more out of necessity than strategic development.
- viii. **Policy Responses and Structural Gaps:** Government interventions—such as subsidies and currency controls—had little meaningful impact due to poor enforcement, lack of

transparency, and corruption. Small-scale traders, in particular, were sidelined by policies that favored large enterprises. **Implication:** Policy inadequacy deepened the crisis for border traders and underscored a disconnect between national policies and grassroots realities.

- ix. **Overall Interpretation:** The findings of this research underscore how the Russia-Ukraine war, while geographically distant, intensified vulnerabilities in Nigeria-Niger cross-border trade. Traders faced cascading challenges - from transportation costs to currency devaluation and weak institutional support. Though many adopted innovative survival strategies, these adaptations often pushed trade further into informality. The study reveals a strong link between global conflicts and local economic stability. Addressing such challenges requires responsive and inclusive policies, regional coordination, and investment in infrastructure, especially in border communities. Strengthening trade resilience means supporting small-scale traders through accessible finance, streamlined regulations, and corruption-free border management.

Conclusion

This study has revealed the profound and multifaceted impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war on small-scale cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger. Although the conflict occurred far from West Africa, its global ripple effects disrupted supply chains, inflated fuel prices, triggered exchange rate volatility, and curtailed trade volumes. These disruptions hit small-scale traders the hardest, many of whom lacked the capacity to absorb economic shocks or adapt quickly to rapidly changing conditions. The findings underscore the deep interconnection between global events and local economic realities. In the face of rising costs and reduced profitability, traders resorted to informal practices such as smuggling, currency hoarding, and reliance on local substitutes. While these adaptive strategies allowed some level of continuity, they often bypassed formal regulatory structures, reducing trade transparency and undermining government revenue. Socially, the war exacerbated existing vulnerabilities in border communities, especially among women and youth, leading to income loss, increased poverty, and a shift away from traditional livelihoods. Despite these challenges, government policy responses were largely insufficient—hindered by poor implementation, corruption, and exclusion of the most affected groups. Ultimately, the study highlights an urgent need for proactive and inclusive policy frameworks that can cushion small-scale traders from external economic shocks. Strengthening local production, improving border infrastructure, and ensuring fair access to government support are essential to safeguarding the livelihoods of cross-border traders in times of global crisis.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed to mitigate the impact of global disruptions—such as the Russia-Ukraine war—on small-scale cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger:

- i. **Strengthen Regional Collaboration:** The governments of Nigeria and Niger should reinforce bilateral and regional trade frameworks to remove trade barriers, harmonize tariffs, and ensure uniform enforcement of cross-border trade regulations. Establish joint cross-border trade facilitation centers to support small-scale traders with reliable access to trade information, affordable financing, and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- ii. **Stabilize Exchange Rates:** Adopt macroeconomic policies aimed at stabilizing the Naira-CFA Franc exchange rate, including strengthening foreign currency reserves and exploring bilateral currency swap agreements. Provide small-scale traders with direct

- access to foreign exchange at official rates to reduce reliance on volatile black markets and minimize transaction losses.
- iii. **Reduce Transportation Costs:** Introduce targeted transport subsidies or grants for small-scale traders to offset rising fuel and logistics costs. Invest in critical trade infrastructure particularly roads, checkpoints, and storage facilities along key trade corridors to enhance security and reduce transit time and cost.
 - iv. **Improve Border Management:** Simplify and digitalize customs clearance and inspection procedures to reduce delays, corruption, and informal charges at border crossings. Build the capacity of border personnel through training in ethics, customer service, and trade facilitation, with strict accountability mechanisms for misconduct.
 - v. **Promote Local Production and Self-Reliance:** Support local industries with incentives such as tax relief, access to credit, and grants to produce substitutes for imported goods, especially food items and household essentials. Encourage the development of community cooperatives and small enterprises through skills training and infrastructure support, enhancing domestic trade resilience.
 - vi. **Strengthen Policy Implementation and Oversight:** Ensure policies targeting small-scale traders are fully implemented, regularly monitored, and evaluated for effectiveness. Involve trader associations and grassroots stakeholders in policy design and feedback mechanisms to improve relevance and accountability.
 - vii. **Enhance Resilience to Global Shocks:** Develop national contingency frameworks for managing the effects of global crises on local trade, including the diversification of trade partners and supply chains. Promote financial literacy, savings schemes, and risk management training for small-scale traders to enhance their preparedness for future disruptions.

References

- Barnett, M. & Finnemore, M. (2004). *Rules for the world: International organizations in global politics*. Cornell University Press.
- Haas, D. & Schmitter, E. (1964). *Economics and differential patterns of political integration: Rejection about unity*. Omu- Aran: Landmark University Publishers.
- Hataab, A. (2022). Russia's invasion of Ukraine jeopardizes food security in Africa. The Nordic Africa Institute.
- Hoffman, Melly & Walther, (2017). *Incentives and constraints of informal trade between Nigeria and its neighbors*. West African Papers: OECD publishers.
- Marks, G., Hooghe, L., & Blank, K. (1996). European integration from the 1980s: State-centric vs multi-level governance. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 34(3), 341-378. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j/1468-568.1996/tb00577.x>
- Rosamond, D. (2000). *Businesses in Britain, EU brace for impact of Ukraine conflict*. Politico Publications.
- Taylor, I. (2008), *The Dynamics of Cross Border Micro Regionalism in Africa*. (Ed) Nordiska Africa Institutet.
- Theophilus, A. & Daniel A. (2022). *Russia invasion of Ukraine threatens food security in Nigeria*. International Center for Investigative Reporting.
- World Food Programme, (2023). *Rapid food security and nutrition assessment among internally displaced households in Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara States of Nigeria*.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 14, 2026 Accepted: September 09, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Ajidele, Ajoke O. & Ileuma, Senimetu (2026). "Educational Management as a Catalyst for Promoting Equity and Inclusive Education in Nigeria: Challenges and Strategies." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 18-24.

Article

Open Access

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AS A CATALYST FOR PROMOTING EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

Ajoke Oluwafisayo Ajidele¹ & Senimetu Ileuma²

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Lead City University, Ibadan^{1 & 2}

Corresponding Email: fisayoajidele@gmail.com¹

Abstract

Education serves as a cornerstone for social transformation and national development, and its effective management is essential for promoting equity and inclusive learning opportunities. This paper examines educational management as a catalyst for achieving equitable and inclusive education in Nigeria. It explores the concepts of educational management, equity, and inclusion, emphasizing the importance of strategic leadership, policy implementation, and resource coordination in ensuring that all learners, regardless of gender, socio-economic status, or ability, have equal access to quality education. Drawing from existing literature, the study highlights the pivotal roles of educational management in policy formulation, resource mobilization, teacher development, and community engagement, all of which contribute to advancing inclusivity in schools. However, several challenges persist, including inadequate funding, poor policy execution, a shortage of trained teachers, infrastructural deficits, and socio-cultural barriers that hinder inclusive practices. The paper proposes practical strategies such as increased educational funding, continuous professional development, community sensitization, and stronger policy enforcement as pathways to overcoming these obstacles. It concludes that effective educational management remains central to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Consequently, strengthening educational leadership and governance structures is imperative for fostering a more just and inclusive educational system in Nigeria.

Keywords: Educational Management, Equity, Inclusive Education.

Introduction

Education remains a fundamental instrument for social transformation and national development, and its management plays a decisive role in ensuring that all learners, regardless of background, enjoy equal access to quality learning opportunities. In Nigeria, the pursuit of equity and inclusion in education has become increasingly critical in the face of diverse socio-economic, cultural, and regional disparities that continue to hinder universal access to education (Akinola, 2021). Educational management, therefore, serves as a vital catalyst for promoting equity and inclusive education by ensuring that resources, policies, and practices are effectively coordinated to meet the diverse needs of all learners (Eze & Okonkwo, 2022). Effective educational management involves strategic planning, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of educational programs aimed at removing barriers to participation and learning (Ogunyemi, 2020). Through sound leadership and policy formulation, educational managers can foster inclusive school environments that accommodate learners with disabilities, gender differences, and socio-economic inequalities (UNESCO, 2023). This approach aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which emphasizes “inclusive and equitable quality education” and lifelong learning opportunities for all. In Nigeria, achieving inclusive education requires more than policy declarations; it demands proactive and equitable management practices that promote fairness in resource allocation, teacher training, curriculum adaptation, and infrastructural development (Okorie & Uche, 2021). Thus, educational management acts as the engine that drives the realization of equitable and inclusive education, fostering a system where every child, regardless of ability, gender, or background, can reach their full potential. To enhance understanding of this paper, some key concepts are clarified below.

Conceptual Clarification

Educational Management: Educational management refers to the systematic process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling educational resources and activities to achieve set educational goals and objectives (Peretomode, 2020). It involves the effective coordination of human, material, and financial resources within an educational system to promote teaching, learning, and institutional development (Nwankwo, 2019). According to Akomolafe (2021), educational management is both an art and a science that focuses on decision-making, leadership, and policy implementation to enhance efficiency and quality in education. Educational management is grounded in administrative and leadership theories that emphasize the role of managers and administrators in achieving educational excellence (Okeke, 2020). It encompasses functions such as strategic planning, supervision, evaluation, communication, and motivation, all directed toward ensuring the smooth functioning of educational institutions (Olorunsola & Arogundade, 2022). As noted by Ogbonnaya (2019), effective educational management is essential for maintaining discipline, improving teacher performance, ensuring accountability, and fostering innovation in schools. Furthermore, educational management plays a crucial role in shaping educational policies and ensuring their proper implementation for the overall development of the educational system (Adebayo, 2021). It serves as a bridge between policy formulation and classroom practice, translating national educational objectives into actionable strategies (Ololube, 2020). In essence, educational management is not only about administration but also about leadership, vision, and continuous improvement in education.

Equity and Inclusive Education

Equity and inclusive education are central principles in modern educational discourse, emphasizing fairness, justice, and equal opportunities for all learners regardless of socio-economic status, gender, disability, ethnicity, or geographical location (UNESCO, 2023). Equity in education refers to the provision of resources, support, and learning opportunities in ways that recognize and accommodate learners' diverse needs, ensuring that no one is disadvantaged due to systemic barriers or personal circumstances (Adebisi & Oyeleke, 2020). According to Okeke and Ogbu (2021), educational equity goes beyond equal access; it entails the fair distribution of educational opportunities and outcomes to bridge the gaps between privileged and marginalized groups. Inclusive education, on the other hand, is a process of addressing and responding to learner diversity by increasing participation and reducing exclusion within and from the education system (Eze & Okonkwo, 2022). It involves transforming schools and educational systems to accommodate all learners especially those who are vulnerable or have special needs within mainstream classrooms (Obi & Umeh, 2021). As noted by Booth and Ainscow (2019), inclusion is not merely about placement but about restructuring cultures, policies, and practices in schools to create learning environments where every learner feels valued and supported. Equity and inclusion together promote social justice and uphold the right to education for all, as emphasized in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which calls for "inclusive and equitable quality education" and lifelong learning opportunities for everyone (United Nations, 2022). In the Nigerian context, achieving equity and inclusive education requires deliberate policy implementation, adequate funding, teacher training, and community engagement to ensure that every child, regardless of background or ability, can learn and thrive (Akinyemi, 2021).

Roles of Educational Management in Promoting Equity and Inclusive Education in Nigeria

Educational management plays a pivotal role in ensuring that Nigeria's education system becomes more equitable and inclusive by implementing strategic policies, resource allocation, and administrative practices that promote fairness and equal opportunities for all learners. According to Akomolafe (2021), effective educational management ensures that educational policies are translated into actionable plans that address disparities in access, participation, and learning outcomes. Through proper planning and administration, educational managers can identify marginalized groups and implement targeted interventions to meet their unique educational needs (Eze & Okonkwo, 2022). One key role is policy formulation and implementation. Managers and administrators at various levels of education are responsible for designing and executing inclusive education policies that align with national goals and international frameworks such as Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2023). As noted by Adebayo (2021), educational managers serve as change agents who ensure that schools adopt inclusive curricula, adapt learning materials, and create enabling environments for learners with disabilities and other special needs. Another crucial role is resource mobilization and equitable distribution. Educational managers ensure that financial, human, and infrastructural resources are allocated fairly to reduce inequalities between urban and rural schools (Okeke & Ogbu, 2021). This includes recruiting qualified teachers, providing assistive learning technologies, and constructing inclusive classrooms that support all learners (Akinyemi, 2021). Equity-oriented management also involves continuous teacher training and professional development, equipping educators with the skills to handle diverse classrooms effectively (Olorunsola & Arogundade, 2022).

Additionally, educational management fosters monitoring, evaluation, and accountability systems to ensure that inclusive education policies are properly implemented

and that no group of learners is left behind (Obi & Umeh, 2021). According to Ogbonnaya (2019), consistent supervision helps identify gaps and challenges in policy execution and allows for data-driven decision-making to improve equity outcomes. Finally, educational management promotes collaboration and community participation in education. By engaging parents, local communities, and stakeholders in decision-making, educational managers can create a sense of ownership and support for inclusive education initiatives (Adebisi & Oyeleke, 2020). This participatory approach helps address cultural and social barriers that often perpetuate exclusion, ensuring that every learner, irrespective of ability, gender, or background, has equal access to quality education in Nigeria.

Challenges Facing Educational Management in Promoting Equity and Inclusive Education in Nigeria

Despite the crucial role of educational management in advancing equity and inclusive education in Nigeria, several challenges continue to hinder effective implementation. One of the most significant challenges is inadequate funding of the education sector. Many public schools lack sufficient financial resources to provide inclusive facilities, specialized instructional materials, and training for teachers to support learners with diverse needs (Akinyemi, 2021). According to UNESCO (2023), underfunding leads to disparities in educational quality between urban and rural schools, thereby undermining efforts to achieve equitable access to education. Educational managers often struggle to allocate scarce resources equitably, resulting in systemic inequalities (Okeke & Ogbu, 2021). Another major challenge is the shortage of trained and qualified teachers capable of implementing inclusive education practices. Many Nigerian teachers lack the necessary pedagogical skills and knowledge to manage classrooms with learners of varying abilities (Obi & Umeh, 2021). As noted by Eze and Okonkwo (2022), inadequate professional development opportunities for teachers limit their capacity to adopt inclusive instructional methods and use assistive technologies effectively. This situation weakens the ability of educational managers to promote inclusion across the education system.

Poor policy implementation and weak administrative structures also pose serious obstacles. Although Nigeria has formulated several education policies aligned with the principles of equity and inclusion such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act and National Policy on Inclusive Education their implementation remains inconsistent (Akomolafe, 2021). Factors such as bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of political will, and corruption often undermine the effectiveness of educational management in achieving inclusive goals (Adebayo, 2021). Socio-cultural barriers further complicate the promotion of equity and inclusion. Deep-rooted cultural beliefs and societal attitudes toward disability, gender roles, and poverty contribute to exclusion and discrimination within the school environment (Adebisi & Oyeleke, 2020). Educational managers face difficulties in changing these societal perceptions and mobilizing community support for inclusive practices (Okorie & Uche, 2021). Finally, infrastructural inadequacies remain a persistent challenge. Many schools in Nigeria, especially in rural areas, lack adequate classrooms, ramps, accessible toilets, and learning aids for students with disabilities (Olorunsola & Arogundade, 2022). These deficiencies limit the ability of educational managers to create inclusive learning environments that support all learners. Without adequate infrastructure and resources, achieving equity and inclusion remains a distant goal.

Strategies for Overcoming the Challenges Facing Educational Management in Promoting Equity and Inclusive Education in Nigeria

Addressing the challenges confronting educational management in promoting equity and inclusive education in Nigeria requires a multi-dimensional approach involving effective planning, policy reform, capacity building, and resource mobilization. One of the foremost strategies is adequate funding and equitable resource allocation. The government must increase budgetary allocations to the education sector to ensure that inclusive education programs are adequately supported (UNESCO, 2023). According to Adebayo (2021), equitable resource distribution enables educational managers to provide necessary infrastructure, instructional materials, and assistive technologies that accommodate learners with diverse needs. Establishing transparent financial management systems also ensures that resources are efficiently utilized (Okeke & Ogbu, 2021). Another key strategy is continuous teacher training and professional development. Teachers are central to the successful implementation of inclusive education; hence, regular in-service training should be provided to equip them with skills in differentiated instruction, classroom management, and special needs education (Obi & Umeh, 2021). Akomolafe (2021) emphasizes that educational managers must organize workshops, seminars, and collaborations with universities and special education experts to enhance teachers' competencies in inclusive practices.

Strengthening policy implementation and administrative structures is also vital. Educational managers should ensure that existing policies, such as the National Policy on Inclusive Education and the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act, are effectively executed at all levels (Eze & Okonkwo, 2022). This involves establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track progress and ensure accountability (Akinyemi, 2021). According to Olorunsola and Arogundade (2022), decentralizing decision-making and empowering school administrators can also enhance policy responsiveness and adaptability to local needs. To combat socio-cultural barriers, there is a need for extensive community sensitization and stakeholder engagement. Educational managers should collaborate with parents, traditional leaders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and religious groups to promote awareness about the importance of inclusive education and the rights of all learners (Adebisi & Oyeleke, 2020). Such partnerships can help change negative attitudes toward marginalized learners and foster a more inclusive school culture (Okorie & Uche, 2021). Finally, improving educational infrastructure and technology integration is crucial. Schools must be equipped with inclusive facilities such as ramps, accessible toilets, and specialized classrooms to support learners with disabilities (Ogbonnaya, 2019). The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) can also bridge learning gaps and enhance participation for students with special needs (UNESCO, 2023).

Conclusion

Educational management serves as a cornerstone for promoting equity and inclusive education in Nigeria, as it provides the administrative, policy, and strategic framework necessary for ensuring that all learners regardless of gender, ability, socio-economic status, or location have access to quality education. The concept of educational management, as highlighted by Peretomode (2020) and Akomolafe (2021), involves the effective coordination of human and material resources to achieve educational goals. When aligned with the principles of equity and inclusion, it ensures fairness in access, participation, and learning outcomes (Okeke & Ogbu, 2021). However, despite notable policy efforts and global advocacy for inclusive education, numerous challenges persist in Nigeria's educational

system. These include inadequate funding, a shortage of trained teachers, weak policy implementation, socio-cultural barriers, and infrastructural deficiencies (Akinyemi, 2021; Eze & Okonkwo, 2022). Such constraints continue to hinder educational managers' ability to create equitable learning environments where every child can thrive. The persistence of these issues underscores the need for systematic and sustainable reforms in educational governance and administration.

To address these challenges, strategies such as improved funding, effective policy execution, continuous teacher training, and community participation have been recommended (Obi & Umeh, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). Strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will also ensure accountability and transparency in implementing inclusive education policies (Olorunsola & Arogundade, 2022). Moreover, promoting positive social attitudes and fostering collaboration among stakeholders including parents, government agencies, and civil society is essential to sustaining inclusivity in education (Adebisi & Oyeleke, 2020). In conclusion, educational management remains a powerful catalyst for promoting equity and inclusive education in Nigeria. Through strategic leadership, sound policy implementation, and adequate resource mobilization, educational managers can transform schools into inclusive spaces that embrace diversity and foster social justice. As UNESCO (2023) asserts, achieving inclusive and equitable quality education is not only a moral imperative but also a critical pathway to sustainable national development. For Nigeria to meet this vision, educational management must continue to evolve, prioritizing inclusivity, equity, and excellence as the guiding principles for educational transformation.

References

- Adebayo, F. A. (2021). *Educational management: Theories and practices in developing nations*. Ibadan: University Press.
- Adebisi, T. A., & Oyeleke, O. O. (2020). Promoting equity and inclusion in Nigerian education. *Journal of Inclusive Education Studies*, 8(1), 33–47.
- Akinola, M. O. (2021). Educational leadership and equity in Nigerian schools. *Journal of Educational Management and Policy Studies*, 7(2), 45–58.
- Akinyemi, A. O. (2021). Challenges and prospects of inclusive education in Nigeria. *African Journal of Education and Development Studies*, 11(2), 64–78.
- Akomolafe, C. O. (2021). *Principles and practice of educational management*. Lagos: Graceville Educational Publishers.
- Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2019). *The index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools* (4th ed.). Bristol: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE).
- Eze, C. N., & Okonkwo, F. I. (2022). Management strategies for inclusive education in Nigeria. *African Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 14(1), 72–85.
- Obi, E. O., & Umeh, F. C. (2021). Inclusive education and special needs learners in Nigeria: Emerging issues. *International Journal of Educational Policy and Practice*, 9(3), 121–135.
- Ogbonnaya, N. O. (2019). *Foundations of education administration and planning*. Nsukka: Great AP Express Publishers.
- Okeke, B. S. (2020). *Philosophy of education and management in Nigeria*. Awka: Doone Publishers.
- Okeke, B. S., & Ogbu, N. O. (2021). *Educational equity and social justice in Nigeria*. Enugu: Great AP Express Publishers.

- Okorie, C. U., &Uche, C. O. (2021). Equity and access in Nigerian education: The role of management and policy. *International Journal of Educational Administration*, 9(3), 112–126.
- Ololube, N. P. (2020). *Educational management, planning and supervision: Model for effective implementation*. Port Harcourt: Pearl Publishers.
- Olorunsola, E. O., &Arogundade, B. B. (2022).Modern approaches to educational leadership and management.*Journal of Educational Policy and Administration*, 10(1), 23–37.
- Ogunyemi, A. D. (2020). *Effective school management for inclusive learning environments*. Lagos: Spectrum Publishers.
- Peretomode, V. F. (2020). *Introduction to educational administration, planning and supervision*. Benin City: Justice Jeco Press.
- UNESCO. (2023). *Global education monitoring report 2023: Inclusion and education – All means all*. Paris: UNESCO.
- United Nations. (2022). *Sustainable Development Goals report 2022*. New York: United Nations Publications. Education in Nigeria.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 16, 2026 Accepted: September 10, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Bature, Mustapha A. & Akuva, Isaac I. (2026). "Hisbah and Community Policing as Complementary Strategies for Combating Armed Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 25-35.

Article

Open Access

HISBAH AND COMMUNITY POLICING AS COMPLEMENTARY STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING ARMED BANDITRY IN NORTHWESTERN NIGERIA

Mustapha Abdullahi Bature¹ & Isaac Iorhel Akuva²

Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutsin-Ma^{1&2}

Corresponding Email: akuvaaisaac@gmail.com²

Abstract

Armed banditry has emerged as one of the most severe security threats confronting Northwestern Nigeria, resulting in widespread killings, kidnappings, cattle rustling, destruction of livelihoods, forced displacement, and the erosion of public confidence in state security institutions. This paper examined the complementary roles of *Hisbah* and community policing in combating armed banditry in Northwestern Nigeria. Adopting a qualitative doctrinal research design, the study relies on documentary analysis of classical Islamic sources, relevant legislation, government reports, and contemporary scholarly literature on security governance, Islamic jurisprudence, and community policing. The paper argued that the institution of *Hisbah*, founded on the Islamic principles of *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar* (commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong), justice (*'adl*), public trust (*amānah*), consultation (*shūrā*), social solidarity (*takāful*), and the objectives of the *Shari'ah* (*Maqāsid al-Shari'ah*), provides a strong ethical and institutional foundation for supporting community policing initiatives. It further revealed that effective collaboration between *Hisbah* organizations, the Nigeria Police Force, traditional institutions, religious leaders, and local communities can significantly enhance intelligence gathering, early warning mechanisms, public confidence, and preventive security measures against armed banditry. Challenges such as inadequate legal frameworks, limited operational capacity, insufficient funding, inter-agency rivalry, political interference, and weak community trust tend to constrain the effectiveness of these collaborative efforts. The paper concluded that integrating the moral authority of *Hisbah* with the participatory framework of community policing offers a culturally relevant, ethically grounded, and sustainable strategy for addressing armed banditry and strengthening community security in

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

Northwestern Nigeria. It recommended institutional collaboration, capacity building, legal reforms, and sustained community engagement to enhance the effectiveness of this integrated security model in promoting lasting peace, justice, and social stability.

Keywords: Hisbah, Community Policing, Armed Banditry, Northwestern Nigeria.

Introduction

Security remains one of the foremost responsibilities of every government because the protection of lives, property, and human dignity constitutes the foundation of sustainable development, political stability, and socioeconomic prosperity. No society can achieve meaningful progress in an atmosphere characterized by violence, fear, and persistent insecurity. In recent years, however, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented escalation of diverse security threats, including terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, communal conflicts, farmer-herder clashes, secessionist agitations, and, most significantly, armed banditry. Among these challenges, armed banditry has become one of the most devastating forms of organized criminality in Northwestern Nigeria, particularly Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto, Kebbi, Kaduna, and parts of Niger State. The activities of armed bandits have resulted in thousands of deaths, mass displacement of rural populations, destruction of agricultural livelihoods, closure of schools, disruption of commercial activities, and the creation of an enduring climate of fear and uncertainty. Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria was originally associated with cattle rustling and rural armed robbery within a short time, it evolved into a sophisticated criminal enterprise involving kidnapping for ransom, illegal taxation of rural communities, village raids, sexual violence, destruction of public infrastructure, and attacks on security personnel. The increasing sophistication of these criminal networks is facilitated by widespread poverty, youth unemployment, weak governance, porous international borders, proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, environmental degradation, and the existence of vast forest reserves that serve as operational bases for criminal groups. These multidimensional drivers have exposed the limitations of conventional security responses that rely predominantly on military operations and centralized policing (Okoli, Al Chukwuma, 2018).

Despite sustained efforts by the Nigerian Armed Forces, the Nigeria Police Force, and other security agencies, armed banditry has continued to persist. It indicates that coercive measures alone cannot provide a lasting solution to the crisis. It is worthy of note that effective crime prevention requires active collaboration between security institutions and the communities they serve. This realization has brought community policing to the forefront of modern security governance as a participatory approach that emphasizes trust-building, intelligence sharing, community engagement, conflict prevention, and joint responsibility for maintaining public safety. Through partnerships involving law enforcement agencies, traditional rulers, civil society organizations, religious institutions, and local residents, community policing seeks to address both the immediate manifestations and the underlying causes of insecurity. Parallel to modern security approach is the Islamic institution of *Hisbah*, which has historically served as a mechanism for promoting public morality, social justice, market regulation, conflict resolution, and community welfare within Islamic governance. Derived from the Qur'anic principle of *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar* (literally translated as: commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong), *Hisbah* represents a proactive system of public accountability that encourages collective responsibility for safeguarding society against corruption, injustice, and social disorder. Throughout Islamic history, the institution of *Hisbah* functioned not only as a regulatory

mechanism but also as an instrument for preserving public order, protecting vulnerable members of society, and strengthening the relationship between the governing authority and the community (Yusufari, 2020). In several states of Northern Nigeria, *Hisbah* organizations continue to play important roles in public enlightenment, mediation, conflict management, crime prevention, and the promotion of social harmony.

Conceptual Clarifications

- i. **Hisbah:** Hisbah is one of the most significant institutions of Islamic public administration, established to safeguard public morality, promote social justice, protect public interests, and maintain peace and order within society. Linguistically, the Arabic word *hisbah* is derived from the root *ḥasaba*, meaning "to reckon," "to account," or "to seek reward from Allah." In Islamic jurisprudence, however, the term assumes a broader institutional meaning that encompasses public supervision, accountability, and the promotion of societal welfare through the implementation of the Qur'ānic injunction of *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*; translated as: commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong. Classical Muslim jurists defined Hisbah from both legal and administrative perspectives. Al-Māwardī (1996) defines Hisbah as "the duty of commanding what is right when its abandonment becomes apparent and forbidding what is wrong when its commission becomes manifest" (p. 240). This definition portrays *Hisbah* as a preventive institution established to preserve public order by ensuring that societal conduct conforms to Islamic ethical and legal standards. Similarly, Ibn Khaldūn (1967) described *Hisbah* as "a religious office included among those instituted to promote good and prevent evil," emphasizing that its objective is to supervise public affairs in accordance with the *Sharī'ah* (p. 461). Ibn Taymiyyah (1983) broadened the scope of *Hisbah* by asserting that its fundamental purpose is the realization of justice and public welfare (*maṣlahah*) through the elimination of corruption (*fasād*) and oppression. According to him, "the objective of authority in Islam is to establish justice among people and to command the good that Allah has commanded and forbid the evil that He has prohibited" (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1983, p. 15). Modern scholars equally regard *Hisbah* as a comprehensive regulatory institution. For instance Kamali (2008) observed that *Hisbah* constitutes "an institutional mechanism for ensuring compliance with ethical standards in both public and private life" (p. 192). The conceptual foundation of *Hisbah* is deeply rooted in the glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad (SAW). Allah commands, "Let there arise from among you a group inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and they are the successful" (Qur'ān 3:104). Similarly, Allah (SWT) describes the Muslim community as, "The best nation produced for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah" (Qur'ān 3:110). These verses establish collective responsibility for promoting righteousness and preventing wrongdoing as an essential characteristic of Islamic society. The Prophet Muḥammad (SAW) further institutionalized this obligation when he stated, "Whoever among you sees an evil should change it with his hand; if he is unable, then with his tongue; and if he is unable, then with his heart and that is the weakest of faith" (Muslim, 2000, Hadith No. 49). This Prophetic tradition establishes varying levels of responsibility according to one's authority and capability, thereby providing the ethical basis for organized public institutions such as Hisbah.
- ii. **Community Policing:** Community policing has emerged as one of the most influential policing philosophies in contemporary criminal justice and security governance. It developed as a response to the limitations of traditional policing models, which largely

emphasized reactive law enforcement, centralized decision-making, and incident-based responses to crime. Rather than focusing exclusively on arresting offenders after crimes have been committed, community policing advocates proactive crime prevention through collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. It recognizes that sustainable security cannot be achieved by the police alone but requires active participation, trust, and shared responsibility among government institutions, traditional authorities, civil society organizations, religious leaders, and citizens. Scholars have offered diverse but complementary definitions of community policing. Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990) defined community policing as "a philosophy and organizational strategy that promotes a new partnership between people and their police" (p. 5). According to the authors, the philosophy seeks to improve public safety by encouraging collaborative efforts to identify, prioritize, and solve community problems that contribute to crime and social disorder. This definition underscores the importance of public participation and partnership in achieving effective policing outcomes. In Nigeria, community policing has become a central component of policing reforms aimed at addressing the country's growing insecurity. The Nigeria Police Force formally adopted community policing to strengthen public confidence, improve intelligence gathering, encourage community participation, and enhance crime prevention. The approach seeks to transform the relationship between the police and citizens from one characterized by suspicion and fear to one founded on mutual trust, cooperation, transparency, and shared responsibility (Alemika, 2009). This transformation has become particularly important in Northwestern Nigeria, where armed banditry has exposed the limitations of conventional security responses.

Armed Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria

Armed banditry has become one of the most devastating forms of organized criminal violence confronting Nigeria, particularly in the Northwestern geopolitical zone. Although the phenomenon is not entirely new, its intensity, sophistication, and geographical spread have increased significantly over the last decade, transforming it from isolated incidents of cattle rustling into a complex security crisis with profound humanitarian, economic, and political consequences. Today, armed banditry is characterized by coordinated attacks on rural communities, mass kidnappings for ransom, cattle rustling, village raids, highway robberies, sexual violence, destruction of farmlands, illegal taxation of local populations, and attacks on security personnel. The term banditry generally refers to organized criminal activities perpetrated by armed groups outside the authority of the state for economic, political, or social gains. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2023), organized armed criminal groups frequently exploit weak governance structures, limited law enforcement capacity, and difficult terrains to establish operational bases from which they engage in violent criminal enterprises. In the Nigerian context, armed banditry has evolved beyond ordinary criminality into a highly organized network involving sophisticated weaponry, intelligence sharing among criminal groups, transnational arms trafficking, and extensive financial operations driven largely by kidnapping for ransom. The Northwestern region, comprising of Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna, Sokoto, Kebbi, Jigawa, and parts of Niger State has become the epicentre of armed banditry in Nigeria. The vast forest reserves of Rugu, Kamuku, Falgore, Kuyanbana, Sububu, and Dumburum have provided strategic hideouts for criminal groups, enabling them to launch attacks on surrounding communities while evading security operations. The difficult terrain, porous international

borders with neighbouring Niger Republic, and inadequate state presence have further strengthened the operational capabilities of these groups (International Crisis Group, 2020).

Causes and Dynamics of Armed Banditry

The persistence of armed banditry in Northwestern Nigeria cannot be attributed to a single factor; rather, it is the outcome of complex socioeconomic, political, environmental, institutional, and transnational dynamics. One of the most significant drivers is widespread poverty and youth unemployment (World Bank, 2022). Despite the region's enormous agricultural potential, limited economic opportunities, declining rural livelihoods, and inadequate social welfare programmes have left many young people vulnerable to recruitment by criminal networks. As World Bank (2022) reports indicated, persistent rural poverty continues to fuel social exclusion and increase the attractiveness of criminal enterprises among unemployed youths. Weak governance and limited state capacity have also contributed significantly to the proliferation of banditry. In many rural communities, the absence of effective policing, inadequate judicial institutions, corruption, and poor public service delivery have created governance vacuums that criminal groups readily exploit. Where citizens perceive state institutions as ineffective or inaccessible, public confidence declines, thereby weakening cooperation between communities and security agencies (Alemika, 2009).

Environmental factors equally play an important role in explaining the emergence of armed banditry. Desertification, climate change, deforestation, shrinking grazing reserves, and increasing competition over land and water resources have intensified conflicts between farmers and pastoralists across Northwestern Nigeria. While many of these disputes initially revolved around access to natural resources, prolonged violence, revenge attacks, and the proliferation of firearms have transformed several conflicts into organized criminal enterprises. Okoli and Lenshie (2018) observed that environmental insecurity has significantly contributed to rural violence by intensifying livelihood competition and weakening traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms. Another critical factor is the widespread proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. Nigeria's porous borders facilitate illegal arms trafficking from neighbouring countries experiencing political instability, thereby enabling criminal groups to acquire sophisticated weapons. These weapons have substantially enhanced the operational capacity of armed bandits, allowing them to confront security agencies directly, attack heavily populated communities, and resist military operations (UNODC, 2023). The commercialization of kidnapping has further transformed the dynamics of banditry. What initially emerged as localized criminal activities has evolved into a lucrative criminal economy in which ransom payments finance weapons procurement, recruitment, logistics, and territorial expansion. In several instances, attacks on educational institutions, highways, markets, and rural settlements are strategically planned to maximize financial returns through ransom negotiations. This criminal economy has strengthened the organizational resilience of bandit groups and complicated government efforts to suppress their activities.

Socioeconomic and Security Implications

The consequences of armed banditry have been devastating for individuals, communities, and the Nigerian state. The most immediate impact is the widespread loss of human life. Thousands of civilians, security personnel, and community leaders have been killed, while many others have sustained physical injuries and long-term psychological trauma. Kidnappings, sexual violence, forced displacement, and destruction of homes have created

one of the most severe humanitarian crises in contemporary Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2020). Agriculture, which constitutes the primary source of livelihood in Northwestern Nigeria, has been severely disrupted. Fear of attacks has forced many farmers to abandon their farmlands, leading to declining agricultural productivity, food shortages, and increasing food prices. In some communities, armed bandits impose illegal taxes on farmers before permitting access to their farmlands, thereby undermining rural livelihoods and worsening poverty (Ojo *et al.*, 2024).

The educational sector has also suffered enormous setbacks. Numerous schools have been closed following repeated attacks on students and teachers, while mass abductions from educational institutions have generated widespread fear among parents and disrupted children's access to education. The resulting increase in school dropouts threatens long-term human capital development and socioeconomic progress within the region. Economically, armed banditry has discouraged domestic and foreign investment, disrupted transportation networks, reduced commercial activities, and increased the cost of doing business. Frequent attacks on highways have impeded the movement of goods and services, thereby affecting regional and national economic growth. Rural markets, which serve as important centres of agricultural trade, have similarly experienced declining patronage due to persistent insecurity. Perhaps more significantly, the activities of armed bandits have weakened public confidence in government institutions and conventional security agencies. Communities that repeatedly experience attacks despite military deployments often develop feelings of abandonment and mistrust toward the state. This erosion of confidence has, in some instances, encouraged the emergence of self-help security arrangements, vigilante groups, and informal community defence mechanisms.

Curbing Armed Banditry through Community-Based Security Responses

The complexity of armed banditry demonstrates that military force alone cannot provide a sustainable solution to the crisis. While kinetic operations remain necessary for dismantling criminal networks, they must be complemented by preventive and community-based strategies that address the underlying drivers of insecurity. It is worthy of note that effective responses require collaboration among security agencies, traditional institutions, religious leaders, civil society organizations, and local communities to improve intelligence gathering, conflict prevention, and public trust (Baker, 2008). Within this context, community policing provides an important institutional framework for strengthening local participation in security governance. Residents possess valuable knowledge regarding their communities, including geographical terrain, suspicious movements, and emerging threats, making them indispensable partners in crime prevention. Similarly, Hisbah institutions, particularly within predominantly Muslim communities of Northwestern Nigeria, possess significant moral authority and grassroots legitimacy that can support public enlightenment, mediation, intelligence sharing, and conflict prevention. From an Islamic perspective, armed banditry represents a grave violation of the objectives of the Shari'ah (*Maqāsid al-Shari'ah*), particularly the preservation of life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), and human dignity. The glorious Qur'ān unequivocally condemns corruption and violence on earth, declaring, "Indeed, the recompense of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and strive to spread corruption in the land is that they be killed or crucified or have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides or be exiled from the land" (Qur'ān 5:33).

This verse underscores Islam's strong condemnation of organized violence, terror, and criminality that threaten public peace and security. Likewise, Allah commands believers,

"And do not cause corruption on the earth after it has been set in order" (Qur'ān 7:56). These divine injunctions establish the preservation of public order as a fundamental objective of Islamic governance and provide the ethical foundation for collaborative security initiatives. Consequently, integrating Hisbah with community policing offers a culturally responsive and morally grounded approach to combating armed banditry by promoting justice (*'adl*), consultation (*shūrā*), public trust (*amānah*), social solidarity (*takāful*), and collective responsibility. Such an integrated framework strengthens both preventive and responsive security measures while fostering sustainable peace and resilience in Northwestern Nigeria.

Role of Hisbah in Supporting Community Policing Against Banditry

One of the foremost roles of *Hisbah* is community sensitization and public enlightenment. Through sermons, public lectures, religious gatherings, and media engagements, Hisbah officials educate members of the public on the Islamic prohibition of murder, kidnapping, armed robbery, extortion, and all forms of violence. Such enlightenment programmes reinforce moral consciousness, discourage sympathy for criminal groups, and promote peaceful coexistence. This role aligns with the Qur'ānic injunction to "*cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression*" (Qur'ān 5:2), thereby strengthening community support for lawful security initiatives. Owing to their close interaction with local communities, Hisbah personnel often possess valuable knowledge of community dynamics, emerging tensions, suspicious movements, and potential security threats. Through structured collaboration with the Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies, such information can improve intelligence-led policing, facilitate timely intervention, and prevent attacks before they occur. This complements the philosophy of community policing, which relies heavily on community participation and local intelligence in preventing crime (Skogan, 2006). Many security challenges in Northwestern Nigeria originate from unresolved disputes involving farmers and herders, families, ethnic groups, or neighbouring communities. Hisbah institutions frequently engage in mediation and reconciliation using Islamic principles of justice (*'adl*), consultation (*shūrā*), and peaceful settlement of disputes. By resolving conflicts at their early stages, Hisbah reduces the likelihood of violence that criminal groups may later exploit for recruitment or expansion.

Hisbah further supports community policing through strengthening moral discipline and social responsibility. The institution promotes the values of honesty, accountability (*amānah*), mutual assistance (*takāful*), and collective responsibility, thereby encouraging citizens to reject criminality and cooperate with security agencies. The Prophet Muḥammad (SAW) stated: "Whoever among you sees an evil should change it with his hand; if he is unable, then with his tongue; and if he is unable, then with his heart" (Muslim, 2000). This Prophetic guidance reinforces the responsibility of every member of society to contribute to the prevention of crime within lawful limits. In addition, *Hisbah* serves as an important bridge between communities and security institutions. In many rural areas where public confidence in conventional security agencies has been weakened by fear, mistrust, or inadequate state presence, Hisbah can facilitate communication, encourage voluntary information sharing, and strengthen cooperation between citizens and law enforcement agencies. Its familiarity with local customs, religious values, and traditional leadership structures enhances its effectiveness in mobilizing communities against armed banditry. Hisbah also collaborates with traditional rulers, religious scholars, youth groups, women's associations, and civil society organizations in promoting peacebuilding and social cohesion. Such multi-stakeholder engagement strengthens community resilience against criminal

infiltration and supports the objectives of community policing through coordinated awareness campaigns, neighbourhood vigilance, and community conflict management. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of *Hisbah* in supporting community policing depends on clearly defined legal mandates, adequate institutional capacity, professional training, respect for constitutional provisions, and effective coordination with formal security agencies. *Hisbah* should function as a complementary institution rather than a substitute for statutory law enforcement. Its activities must therefore remain within the confines of the law while upholding the principles of justice, human rights, accountability, and the rule of law.

Challenges of Integrating Hisbah and Community Policing

- i. **Absence of clearly defined Legal and operational Framework:** One of the foremost challenges is the absence of a clearly defined legal and operational framework governing collaboration between *Hisbah* organizations and formal security agencies. While *Hisbah* Boards are established by State laws in some northern states, their mandates, powers, and operational procedures vary considerably. This lack of uniformity often creates jurisdictional ambiguities, overlapping responsibilities, and uncertainty regarding the extent of *Hisbah*'s involvement in security operations (Yusufari, 2020).
- ii. **Inter-agency Rivalry:** Another major challenge is inter-agency rivalry and inadequate institutional coordination. Differences in organizational culture, command structures, and operational priorities sometimes hinder effective cooperation between *Hisbah* personnel, the Nigeria Police Force, the military, civil defence, and other security agencies. Such institutional fragmentation weakens intelligence sharing, delays coordinated responses, and reduces the overall effectiveness of community-based security initiatives (Alemika, 2009).
- iii. **Inadequate funding and logistical support:** Inadequate funding and logistical support also constitute serious obstacles. Many *Hisbah* organizations operate with limited financial resources, insufficient personnel, inadequate training, poor mobility, and lack of modern communication equipment. These limitations reduce their capacity to conduct community sensitization, gather intelligence, monitor security developments, and effectively support conventional policing operations, particularly in remote rural communities. The challenge of public perception and religious diversity equally deserves attention. While *Hisbah* enjoys considerable legitimacy in predominantly Muslim communities, concerns may arise among non-Muslim populations regarding inclusiveness, neutrality, and the scope of its activities. Consequently, any collaborative security framework must operate within constitutional provisions, uphold the rights of all citizens, and ensure that security services remain impartial, professional, and free from religious discrimination. Another important limitation is the fear of reprisals from armed bandits, which discourages many community members from providing intelligence to either *Hisbah* or formal security agencies. Weak witness protection mechanisms, inadequate confidentiality, and previous incidents of information leakage have undermined public confidence and reduced voluntary community participation in security efforts (Tyler, 2006). Furthermore, political interference has occasionally affected the operations of both community policing initiatives and *Hisbah* institutions. The politicization of security structures, inconsistent government policies, and changes in political leadership often disrupt institutional continuity, weaken public trust, and compromise operational independence. The growing sophistication of armed bandit groups presents another significant challenge. Many bandit networks possess advanced

firearms, communication technologies, extensive financial resources, and transnational criminal connections that exceed the operational capacity of community-based institutions. Consequently, *Hisbah* and community policing alone cannot effectively confront heavily armed criminal organizations without the sustained support of conventional security agencies and intelligence services.

Prospects for an Integrated Security Framework

One major prospect lies in improved intelligence gathering and early warning systems. *Hisbah* personnel, traditional rulers, religious leaders, and community members possess intimate knowledge of local environments, social networks, and emerging security threats. Their collaboration with formal security agencies can facilitate timely information sharing, improve surveillance, and enable proactive responses to criminal activities before they escalate into violent attacks. Intelligence-led policing remains one of the most effective strategies for dismantling organized criminal networks and preventing armed banditry. Another important prospect is the strengthening of public trust and community participation. Community confidence in security institutions is essential for effective policing. Integrating *Hisbah* into community policing can bridge the gap between security agencies and local populations by utilizing the moral authority and grassroots legitimacy of religious and traditional institutions. This approach encourages voluntary cooperation, enhances public confidence, and promotes collective ownership of community security initiatives (Tyler, 2006). The integrated framework also provides opportunities for preventive security through public enlightenment and peacebuilding. *Hisbah* organizations, in collaboration with Islamic scholars and traditional leaders, can intensify awareness campaigns on the Islamic prohibition of violence, kidnapping, extortion, and other criminal activities while promoting values of justice (*'adl*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), consultation (*shūrā*), and social solidarity (*takāful*). These ethical values complement the objectives of community policing by fostering responsible citizenship and strengthening social cohesion.

Conclusion

Armed banditry remains one of the most formidable security challenges confronting Northwestern Nigeria, with devastating consequences on human lives, livelihoods, socioeconomic development, and public confidence in state institutions. This paper has demonstrated that while conventional security operations remain indispensable, they are insufficient on their own to address the complex and evolving nature of banditry. Sustainable security requires a complementary approach that combines professional law enforcement with active community participation, ethical leadership, and locally grounded security mechanisms. The study has shown that *Hisbah* and community policing share common objectives of crime prevention, intelligence gathering, conflict resolution, public accountability, and the protection of life and property. Rooted in the Islamic principles of *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*, justice (*'adl*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), consultation (*shūrā*), social solidarity (*takāful*), and the objectives of the *Sharī'ah* (*Maqāsid al-Sharī'ah*), *Hisbah* provides a strong ethical and community-based foundation that complements the participatory philosophy of community policing. Together, these institutions can strengthen intelligence-led policing, enhance public trust, promote community resilience, and support preventive security strategies against armed banditry. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of this complementary relationship depends on addressing existing challenges, including weak institutional coordination, inadequate funding, legal ambiguities, political interference, and limited public confidence. Consequently, integrating

Hisbah with community policing within a well-defined legal and operational framework offers a culturally responsive, ethically grounded, and sustainable model of security governance. Such an integrated approach not only contributes to the suppression of armed banditry but also advances the broader goals of peacebuilding, social cohesion, justice, and sustainable development in Northwestern Nigeria.

Recommendations

- i. **Federal and State Governments** should establish a clear legal and institutional framework that facilitates effective collaboration between Hisbah organizations, the Nigeria Police Force, other security agencies, and community stakeholders. Adequate funding, modern logistics, intelligence infrastructure, and continuous capacity building should also be provided to enhance the effectiveness of integrated community security initiatives.
- ii. **The Nigeria Police Force, Hisbah Boards, and Other Security Agencies** should strengthen inter-agency cooperation through regular intelligence sharing, joint community engagement programmes, coordinated patrols, and professional training. Such collaboration should be guided by constitutional provisions, respect for human rights, and clearly defined operational responsibilities to eliminate institutional rivalry and improve security outcomes.
- iii. **Traditional Rulers, Religious Leaders, and Hisbah Officials** should intensify community sensitization and public enlightenment on the Islamic prohibition of banditry, kidnapping, cattle rustling, and other violent crimes. They should continue to promote the values of justice (*ʿadl*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), consultation (*shūrā*), social solidarity (*takāful*), peaceful coexistence, and collective responsibility as essential foundations for sustainable peace and security.
- iv. **Community Members and Civil Society Organizations** should regard security as a shared responsibility by actively supporting lawful community policing initiatives, reporting suspicious activities through appropriate channels, rejecting all forms of collaboration with criminal groups, and participating in peacebuilding, neighbourhood vigilance, and conflict prevention programmes.
- v. **Governments, Development Partners, and Educational Institutions** should address the structural drivers of armed banditry through sustainable socioeconomic interventions, including youth employment, vocational skills acquisition, quality education, poverty reduction programmes, rural infrastructure development, and civic education. Tackling these underlying factors will reduce the vulnerability of young people to criminal recruitment and strengthen long-term community resilience against insecurity.

References

- Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Isma'il. *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Darussalam Publishers, 2001.
- Al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid. *Al-Mustasfa min 'Ilm al-Usul*. Edited by Muhammad Abd al-Salam Abd al-Shafi, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1997.
- Alemika, Etannibi E. O. "Police Practice and Police Research in Africa." *Police Practice and Research*, vol. 10, nos. 5–6, 2009, pp. 483–502.
- Al-Mawardi, Abu al-Hasan. *Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyyah: The Laws of Islamic Governance*. Translated by Wafaa H. Wahba, Garnet Publishing, 1996.
- Al-Shatibi, Abu Ishaq Ibrahim. *Al-Muwafaqat fi Usul al-Shari'ah*. Edited by Abd Allah Darrāz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1997.

- Al-Shayzari, Abd al-Rahman ibn Nasr. *Nihayat al-Rutbah fi Talab al-Hisbah*. Translated by Ronald P. Buckley, Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Baker, Bruce. *Multi-Choice Policing in Africa*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2008.
- Bayley, David H. *Police for the Future*. Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Cordner, Gary. "Community Policing." *The Oxford Handbook of Police and Policing*. Edited by Michael D. Reisig and Robert J. Kane, Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 148–171.
- Goldstein, Herman. *Problem-Oriented Policing*. McGraw-Hill, 1990.
- Ibn Khaldun, Abd al-Rahman. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Translated by Franz Rosenthal, 2nd ed., Princeton University Press, 1967.
- Ibn Taymiyyah, Ahmad ibn Abd al-Halim. *Public Duties in Islam: The Institution of the Hisba*. Translated by Muhtar Holland, Islamic Foundation, 1983.
- International Crisis Group. *Violence in Nigeria's North West: Rolling Back the Mayhem*. Africa Report No. 288, International Crisis Group, 2020.
- Islahi, Abdul Azim. *Economic Functions of the State in Islamic History*. Islamic Foundation, 1988.
- Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. *Shari'ah Law: An Introduction*. Oneworld Publications, 2008.
- Muslim, Abu al-Husayn Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj. *Sahih Muslim*. Translated by Abdul Hamid Siddiqui, Darussalam Publishers, 2000.
- Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). *Community Policing Defined*. U.S. Department of Justice, 2014.
- Ojo, John Sunday, Folahanmi Aina, and Samuel Oyewole, editors. *Armed Banditry in Nigeria: Evolution, Dynamics, and Trajectories*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2024.
- Okoli, Al Chukwuma, and Francis Okpaleke. "Banditry and Crisis of Public Safety in Nigeria: Issues in National Security Strategies." *European Scientific Journal*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2014, pp. 350–362.
- Okoli, Al Chukwuma, and N. E. Lenshie. "Nigeria: Nomadic Migrancy and Rural Violence in Nigeria." *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, no. 25, 2018, pp. 5–27.
- Skogan, Wesley G. *Police and Community in Chicago: A Tale of Three Cities*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Trojanowicz, Robert, and Bonnie Bucqueroux. *Community Policing: A Contemporary Perspective*. Anderson Publishing, 1990.
- Tyler, Tom R. *Why People Obey the Law*. 2nd ed., Princeton University Press, 2006.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *Global Study on Homicide 2023*. United Nations, 2023.
- World Bank. *Nigeria Development Update: The Continuing Urgency of Business Unusual*. World Bank, 2022.
- Yusufari, Ibrahim. "The Role of Hisbah in Peacebuilding and Community Development in Northern Nigeria." *FUDMA Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2020, pp. 121–136.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 12, 2026 Accepted: September 07, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Idri, Umar M. (2026). "Policy Paradigms and Political Leadership: Catalyzing Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 36-48.

Article

Open Access

POLICY PARADIGMS AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP: CATALYZING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Umar Mohammed Idris

Institute of Governance And Development Studies, College of Postgraduate Studies

Federal University Lokoja

Corresponding Email: idrium@yahoo.com

Abstract

Nigeria's economic trajectory since 1999 reveals considerable variability across successive administrations, with leadership quality emerging as the decisive factor that distinguished sustained growth from stagnation. This study examined the relationship between policy paradigms, political leadership quality, and sustainable economic development in Nigeria through empirical evidence and contemporary policy developments.. The study analyzed how successive administrations employed distinct approaches to address structural challenges, examined the evolution from state-led development toward contemporary frameworks synthesizing strategic state engagement with private sector dynamism. Particular attention went to fiscal-monetary coordination, institutional capacity for implementation, and sectoral development priorities reflecting resource constraints and strategic objectives. The investigation showed that policy framework design, while important, proves insufficient without corresponding implementation quality, institutional capacity, and governance systems supporting transparency and accountability Key findings emphasized that sustainable development requires institutional strengthening encompassing merit-based advancement, transparent financial management including digitalization, and genuine anti-corruption commitment backed by adequate prosecutorial resources and judicial capacity. The analysis revealed significant disconnects between macroeconomic stabilization and household welfare improvements, reflecting time requirements for growth benefits to reach citizens and the necessity of social protection during adjustment periods. The study therefore recommended that Nigeria's economic development trajectory can be significantly enhanced by institutionalizing policy coherence, strengthening civil service capacity, and

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

prioritizing evidence-based policy design. Additionally, managing distributional conflict and bolstering democratic accountability will establish a resilient foundation for sustained economic progress.

Keywords: Economic Development, Political Paradigms, Political Leadership, Sustainability, Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria's economic performance since 1999 demonstrates considerable variability across administrations, with marked differences in development outcomes (World Bank, 2025). Despite abundant resources positioning the nation as Africa's potential economic powerhouse, Nigeria grapples with persistent challenges affecting millions. The modern economic landscape faces a compounding crisis driven primarily by widespread poverty affecting substantial population proportions. The crisis is further exacerbated persistently high unemployment rate, which disproportionately affect the youth cohorts and stifle the potential of the next generation. Compounding these social challenges is an inadequate infrastructure limiting productive capacity. Ultimately, these systemic failures operate within a cycle of structural inequality, reinforcing deep seated development disparities. The fundamental question asks whether obstacles to sustainable development stem primarily from exogenous factors beyond national control or from domestic policy-leadership dynamics shaped by political decision-making. Leadership quality encompasses strategic vision, institutional coherence, and policy consistency. It significantly determines whether policy intentions translate into tangible outcomes. This study examines successive administrations' approaches, their implementation fidelity, and implications for sustainable growth.

Understanding Policy Paradigms

Policy paradigms represent coherent frameworks of ideas, institutions, and instruments through which governments address challenges and pursue development (Hall & Taylor, 1996). These frameworks embody worldviews about the appropriate relationship between state and market, the mechanisms generating economic growth, and the distribution of outcomes among social groups. In Nigeria, policy frameworks have evolved significantly, reflecting broader shifts in development thinking and responses to economic crises. The transition from commodity-dependent models toward diversified and inclusive frameworks represents a crucial shift (Anam & Antai, 2018). Earlier frameworks emphasized state-led development with substantial direct investment in productive sectors. These gave way to market-oriented models emphasizing privatization and liberalization following international financial institution prescriptions. Contemporary policy environments reflect synthesis rather than ideological adherence to either statism or neoliberalism. Recent formulations emphasize strategic state engagement within market frameworks, targeting specific growth constraints while preserving space for private sector dynamism (Anam & Antai, 2018). This represents recognition that sustainable development requires neither wholesale state withdrawal nor comprehensive state control, but rather strategic deployment to address market failures and coordinate investment in critical infrastructure and human capital. In this context, policy paradigms influence development outcomes by structuring incentive systems that shape behavior of economic actors, determining resource allocation priorities across sectors, establishing institutional frameworks for economic activity, and generating expectations about future policy trajectories that influence investment and consumption patterns.

Historical Policy Evolution in Nigeria

- i. **Post-independence Development Strategy:** Nigeria's post-independence trajectory reflects distinct periods, each characterized by particular paradigms responsive to prevailing conditions. The immediate post-independence period witnessed pursuit of import-substitution industrialization prevalent across African nations (Anyanwu, 2014). This framework prioritized domestic manufacturing through tariff protection and state investment, reflecting development orthodoxy.
- ii. **Oil Boom and Structural Adjustment Era:** Petroleum discovery fundamentally transformed Nigeria's economic structure, establishing export-dependency vulnerable to commodity fluctuations. The 1970s oil boom generated substantial revenues that funded ambitious programs but contributed to institutional distortions, particularly regarding fiscal discipline and revenue transparency. Subsequent price declines precipitated crisis, compelling IMF assistance and structural adjustment introducing liberalization, devaluation, and fiscal consolidation.
- iii. **Democratic Transition and Reform Phases:** The 1999 democratic transition presented opportunity for comprehensive policy recalibration. Successive administrations have since pursued varying approaches to economic management and structural reform.
- iv. **Obasanjo Administration (1999-2007):** The Obasanjo administration implemented policies designed to stabilize macroeconomic conditions and restore investor confidence (Obasanjo, 2007). Nigeria's GDP expanded from approximately \$59 billion to over \$278 billion, representing growth exceeding 369 percent (World Bank, 2025). Average annual growth reached 7.82 percent, among the highest in post-independence history (Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, 2021). The administration pursued petroleum sector reform, implemented debt relief agreements with external creditors, and initiated privatization of public enterprises, all generating substantial political opposition (Obasanjo, 2007). Yet the administration persisted with these reforms, drawing on narratives emphasizing their necessity for long-term development. This persistence resulted in macroeconomic improvements and restored international confidence.

The administration led by President Goodluck Jonathan from 2010 to 2015 witnessed reversion toward commodity-dependent growth patterns, reduced emphasis on structural transformation, and postponement of difficult policy decisions regarding subsidy reduction. This reflects political calculation that immediate popularity from maintaining subsidies outweighed longer-term development benefits.

- i. **Buhari Administration (2015-2023):** The Buhari administration inherited an economy characterized by narrow revenue bases, substantial infrastructure deficits, and elevated poverty. In response, comprehensive frameworks were formulated (Anam, 2024):
 - (a) Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017-2020)
 - (b) Economic Sustainability Plan (2020-2021)
 - (c) National Development Plan (2021-2025)

These represented attempts to transition Nigeria toward diversification, enhanced fiscal discipline, and structured poverty reduction. The formulation of comprehensive development plans represented recognition that sustainable development requires coherent frameworks extending beyond individual political cycles (Anam, 2024). The development plans emphasized agricultural modernization, energy sector transformation, human capital development, and export diversification. Implementation also proceeded unevenly.

Significant achievements included establishing the Treasury Single Account to reduce fund diversion opportunities, expanded social safety nets targeting vulnerable populations, and investment in agricultural extension services (Anam, 2024). However, implementation challenges emerged regarding infrastructure development, with project execution often falling short of ambitious timelines.

- ii. **Tinubu Administration (From 2023):** The Tinubu administration undertook bold reforms addressing structural vulnerabilities accumulated over decades. These included removing petroleum subsidies, unifying exchange rates, and committing to eliminate central bank deficit financing (Tinubu, 2025). While economically rational in addressing fundamental imbalances, these measures are generating substantial short-term hardship through accelerated inflation and elevated living costs. The willingness to proceed despite significant opposition reflects conviction regarding their long-term developmental necessity.

Macroeconomic Policy Framework

- i. **Fiscal Policy Dimensions:** Fiscal policy in Nigeria encompasses government spending patterns, revenue mobilization strategies, and public debt management. The structure of government expenditure profoundly influences economic development outcomes through mechanisms determining resource allocation across sectors and population groups (Titiloye & Ishola, 2020). Nigeria's revenue base remains disproportionately dependent on petroleum revenues, which accounted for approximately 90 percent of government income during periods of elevated prices (Olakojo *et al.*, 2021). This creates substantial macroeconomic vulnerability because oil price fluctuations translate directly into revenue volatility. Addressing this requires comprehensive tax administration reform and tax base expansion beyond petroleum through improved collection mechanisms and streamlined customs administration. Government spending patterns require recalibration toward greater emphasis on productive capital investment. Historical patterns show substantial allocation to recurrent expenditures like personnel costs and administrative expenses, while productive capital investment receives limited resources. Sustainable development necessitates reorientation toward greater investment in infrastructure, education, and healthcare. Contemporary frameworks increasingly emphasize this shift, though actual implementation continues reflecting path-dependent patterns favoring recurrent spending. Public debt management represents another critical dimension. Nigeria's external debt has expanded substantially, with debt servicing consuming increasing proportions of revenue. The sustainability of current trajectories depends on whether borrowed resources generate sufficient returns to service obligations while funding development initiatives. The risk that debt servicing crowds out productive spending represents a significant challenge, particularly given structural vulnerability to commodity price shocks.
- ii. **Monetary Policy and Fiscal-Monetary Coordination:** Monetary policy administered through the Central Bank operates through several channels to influence economic conditions. The monetary policy rate transmits through the banking system to influence lending rates and credit availability (Sule *et al.*, 2023). Money supply expansion influences both aggregate demand and price levels, creating trade-offs that monetary authorities must navigate carefully. Research revealed that money supply growth positively influences real GDP expansion, particularly over longer horizons (Sule *et al.*, 2023). However, the relationship exhibits asymmetry. Monetary expansion during

contraction generates limited growth stimulus, while money growth during expansionary phases contributes more substantially to output. This reflects the importance of complementary policy conditions in determining effectiveness. The transmission mechanism functions imperfectly due to structural features:

- (a) Limited credit availability in rural areas restricts agricultural finance
- (b) High intermediation spreads burden banking systems
- (c) Liquidity constraints affect smaller institutions

These impediments reduce central bank policy effectiveness in reaching substantial portions of the economy. Addressing these requires monetary policy adaptation and financial sector development extending credit access to underserved populations. Macroeconomic policy effectiveness depends substantially on coherence between fiscal and monetary authorities (Musa *et al.*, 2016). When fiscal expansions proceed without monetary accommodation, rising interest rates crowd out private investment. Conversely, when monetary expansion finances fiscal deficits, inflation emerges inevitably. Achieving appropriate coordination requires institutional mechanisms facilitating communication, agreement on medium-term objectives, and commitment to consistent implementation. Nigerian experience demonstrates coordination difficulties. During periods when central bank deficit financing became prevalent, particularly following the global financial crisis and 2014 oil shock, inflation accelerated substantially (Musa *et al.*, 2016). More recently, coordination has improved with explicit commitments to eliminate deficit financing and align fiscal consolidation with monetary tightening, suggesting institutional learning.

Political Leadership and Policy Implementation

Translating policy frameworks into actual outcomes depends critically on political leadership quality. Leadership quality encompasses strategic vision, commitment to policy consistency, institutional competence, and ethical governance. High-quality leaders can attract capable administrators, foster institutional coherence, and sustain policies through difficult adjustments. Conversely, leadership deficiency undermines even well-designed policies through inconsistent implementation, institutional capture, and prioritization of short-term political objectives over long-term development.

Leadership Styles and Economic Outcomes

Different leadership styles generate substantially different outcomes. Transformational leadership, characterized by forward-thinking vision, willingness to undertake difficult reforms, and capacity to mobilize public support, tends to achieve more successful implementation than transactional leadership focused on short-term political returns (Obasanjo, 2006). Transformational leaders create narrative frameworks explaining reform necessity and anticipated benefits, fostering public understanding even when short-term impacts prove negative. The Obasanjo administration demonstrated certain transformational characteristics regarding economic policy despite evident corruption challenges (Obasanjo, 2006). The willingness to absorb political costs for long-term benefit distinguishes this approach from purely electoral calculations. The Buhari administration (2015-2023) marked reorientation toward structural reform despite mixed implementation results. The disconnect between policy ambition and implementation capacity reflects broader institutional constraints affecting many developing countries. The Tinubu administration undertook bold macroeconomic reforms addressing structural vulnerabilities. The willingness to implement reforms despite significant political costs reflects conviction regarding their long-term necessity. The initial results proved mixed regarding inclusive

welfare impacts. The World Bank reported Nigeria's economy grew at its fastest rate in nearly a decade in 2024, with growth estimated at approximately 4.2 percent (World Bank, 2025). Central bank foreign exchange reserves expanded beyond \$38 billion, credit rating agencies upgraded Nigeria's debt ratings, and inflation began declining from peaks exceeding 30 percent (Cardoso, 2025). However, these macroeconomic improvements have not yet translated into widespread improvements in living conditions, particularly regarding food prices and employment (Matta, 2025). This reflects the inherent challenge that reforms improving long-term growth potential often generate substantial immediate hardship.

Institutional Dimensions of Economic Policy

- i. **Strong Versus Weak Institutions:** Policy framework effectiveness depends critically on institutional capacity for formulation, implementation, and monitoring. Institutions establish rules governing economic activity, provide enforcement mechanisms, and shape incentive structures. Weak institutions characterized by limited enforcement capacity, political interference susceptibility, and inadequate technical expertise fundamentally constrain policy effectiveness regardless of design quality. Nigeria's institutional environment exhibits notable constraints hampering implementation and development progress. Public administration systems often lack technical expertise necessary for sophisticated policy design and evaluation. Personnel systems based primarily on seniority rather than merit create organizational hierarchies where administrative capacity may prove inversely related to hierarchical position. Limited information systems impede monitoring and evaluation, complicating adaptive management.
- ii. **Corruption and Institutional Effectiveness:** Corruption represents a fundamental institutional pathology undermining policy effectiveness and squandering development resources. Recent assessments revealed that Nigerian public officials accepted bribes totaling approximately \$1.26 billion during a single year (Transparency International, 2024), an amount equal to substantial development spending. This understates total corruption, as it represents only reported bribes. The true magnitude reflects systemic challenges requiring comprehensive institutional reform rather than isolated campaigns. Corruption undermines development by distorting resource allocation toward projects with maximum diversion opportunities rather than highest development impact, inflating project costs through artificial contract prices, undermining institutional credibility and reducing citizen tax compliance, and deterring both domestic and foreign private investment through governance risks (Alabi & Matthew, 2017). The Buhari administration has emphasized anti-corruption priorities, implementing digital systems for financial management including the Treasury Single Account, establishing agency coordination mechanisms, and strengthening anti-corruption institutions (Alabi & Matthew, 2017). However, implementation encounters persistent challenges including political protection of corrupt actors, limited prosecutorial resources, and resistance from bureaucratic factions benefiting from existing arrangements. Sustained effectiveness requires institutional independence and political commitment extending beyond electoral cycles.
- iii. **Regulatory and Legal Framework:** Effective development requires regulatory frameworks establishing clear rules governing business operation, market entry, property rights protection, and contract enforcement. Nigeria's regulatory environment, while improving, remains characterized by complexity, inconsistency, and uncertainty that impedes business activity. Regulations frequently exist in principle but lack

consistent enforcement, creating an environment where compliance becomes optional for those with political connections (Cardoso, 2025). Recent reform initiatives have addressed certain constraints. The Electricity Act of 2023 decentralized power sector governance, enabling state governments to develop, generate, and distribute electricity independently, thereby attracting private investment. Similarly, telecommunications liberalization expanded access to communication infrastructure. However, regulation of financial markets, labor practices, and environmental protection remains characterized by inadequate enforcement capacity and inconsistent application. Strengthening frameworks requires not merely legal reform but substantial investment in agency capacity, regulatory personnel training, and commitment to consistent enforcement regardless of political affiliations.

Sectoral Policy Priorities and Strategic Choices

Effective economic policy requires not merely macroeconomic balance but also strategic sectoral choices reflecting development objectives and resource constraints. The selection of priority sectors shapes the trajectory of economic transformation and determines which population segments benefit from development initiatives.

- i. **Agricultural Development and Rural Transformation:** Agriculture employs approximately 30 percent of the Nigerian workforce and represents the primary livelihood for rural populations comprising over 40 percent of inhabitants (World Bank, 2023). Despite employing substantial portions of the population, the sector contributes relatively modest proportions of total economic value compared to petroleum. This disparity reflects very low productivity levels. Transitioning agriculture toward higher productivity and commercialization represents an essential component of inclusive development strategies. Recent frameworks have emphasized agricultural modernization through enhanced extension services, improved input supply systems, investment in agricultural infrastructure including rural roads and irrigation, and promotion of value addition through crop processing (World Bank, 2023). The National Development Plan targeted agricultural productivity improvements, emphasizing modernization of production techniques, expansion of mechanization, and development of commodity chains connecting smallholders to markets. Implementation has progressed unevenly. While certain initiatives including support for rice production have generated notable productivity improvements, broader extension service effectiveness remains constrained by personnel shortages and inadequate funding (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2023). Additionally, agricultural development confronts structural constraints including fragmented land holdings, insecure property rights deterring long-term investment, and inadequate rural infrastructure limiting market access. Addressing these requires interventions extending beyond technical support to encompass legal reforms regarding land tenure security, investment in rural infrastructure, and development of commodity chains.
- ii. **Energy Sector Reform and Infrastructure Development:** Energy constraints represent a fundamental obstacle to economic growth. Insufficient and unreliable electricity supply increases production costs, deters foreign investment, and limits livelihood opportunities. Despite possessing vast natural gas reserves and hydroelectric potential, Nigeria's generation capacity remains insufficient relative to demand. Rural electrification remains incomplete, with approximately 40 percent of the population lacking grid connection (Federal Ministry of Power, 2024). Policy responses have included substantial investment in generation capacity, rehabilitation of transmission

infrastructure, and decentralization of power sector governance through the Electricity Act. The National Integrated Electricity Policy articulates an ambitious roadmap incorporating \$122 billion in infrastructure investment, combining conventional generation expansion with renewable energy development (Federal Ministry of Power, 2024). Additionally, the government has promoted private sector participation through independent power producer programs and public-private partnership frameworks. Energy sector reforms encountered multiple challenges including inadequate tariff structures not reflecting true generation and distribution costs, substantial electricity theft through informal connections, and limited collection rates reducing realized revenues. These require complementary reforms including tariff rationalization, improvement of collection systems, and reduction of technical losses through infrastructure rehabilitation. The Tinubu administration has prioritized these measures, implementing tariff increases and strengthening revenue collection, though these actions generate political opposition and welfare impacts requiring offsetting social protection measures (World Bank, 2026).

- iii. **Human Capital Development:** Human capital quality fundamentally determines a nation's capacity for sustained economic growth. Nigeria's human development indicators lag substantially behind comparator nations at similar income levels, reflecting inadequate investment in education and healthcare (UNESCO, 2023). Specific deficiencies include primary school completion rates below acceptable levels, gender disparities in secondary education enrollment particularly regarding girls' participation, and higher education capacity insufficient relative to demographic growth. Healthcare system deficiencies including inadequate facility distribution, personnel shortages particularly in rural areas, and limited access to essential medicines result in elevated disease burden and reduced productive potential. Maternal and infant mortality rates substantially exceed levels in comparator nations. These deficits create constraints on economic potential, as education determines workforce productivity and health conditions affect productive capacity and longevity (World Bank, 2024). Policy responses have included increased public spending on education and healthcare, expansion of conditional cash transfer programs targeting school enrollment among disadvantaged populations, and expansion of primary healthcare facility distribution. The Buhari and Tinubu administrations prioritized human development investments (Federal Ministry of Finance, 2021). However, resource constraints limit the pace of expansion, necessitating prioritization and efficiency improvements. Sustainable human capital development requires not merely spending increases but also improvements in service delivery quality and geographic equity in facility distribution.

Implementing Challenges and Governance Reforms

- i. **Challenges to Sustainable Policy Implementation:** Despite reasoned policy frameworks and stated commitments to structural reform, numerous obstacles impede translation of policy into outcomes. Political cycles introduce temporal discontinuity through electoral pressures. Democratic leaders face incentives prioritizing actions generating visible benefits before elections, potentially at the expense of longer-term development priorities. This creates bias toward policies with immediate, visible impacts and away from necessary but difficult structural reforms generating short-term costs. Economic policy involves multiple authorities including federal and state governments, various line ministries, the Central Bank, regulatory agencies, and international development partners. Effective implementation requires coordination among these diverse actors, a

requirement frequently unmet in practice. Conflicts regarding policy priorities, competing institutional interests, and limited mechanisms for dispute resolution result in uncoordinated implementation that undermines effectiveness. Economic policy generates both winners and losers in distributional terms. Policies enhancing overall efficiency often concentrate costs on specific groups whose opposition becomes politically consequential. Managing distributional conflicts requires complementary social protection measures that provide support to negatively affected groups, maintaining their consent for reforms. However, scarce resources constrain the comprehensiveness of protection measures. Nigeria's economic policy operates within a global economic environment that constrains autonomous policy choice. Commodity price fluctuations in international markets determine Nigeria's export revenues and government fiscal capacity. Capital flows respond to global interest rates and risk perceptions regarding emerging market assets. These global constraints require acknowledgment of limited policy autonomy and design of policies that function effectively within these constraints.

- ii. **Governance Reforms and Institutional Strengthening:** Recognizing the critical importance of institutional foundations, successive administrations have undertaken governance reforms intended to enhance institutional quality and policy implementation capacity. The Treasury Single Account consolidates all government revenues into a single account, providing visibility regarding revenues and reducing opportunities for fund diversion (Federal Ministry of Finance, 2023). Early evidence indicates that the system enhanced government revenue tracking and reduced unaccounted fund disappearance. Digital financial management systems similarly enhance transparency through electronic recording of financial transactions, reducing possibilities for falsification and providing auditable transaction records. These technological improvements prove particularly valuable in environments where institutional capacity for manual oversight remains limited. Additionally, open budget processes that make government financial information publicly available reduce information asymmetries that traditionally enabled corrupt actors to operate without scrutiny (Elbahnasawy, 2014). Anti-corruption agencies including the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission represent institutional instruments through which corruption can be addressed. However, these agencies function effectively only when provided adequate resources, operational independence from political pressure, and support from judicial systems capable of prosecuting corruption cases and enforcing sanctions. Long-term effectiveness requires institutionalization through legal frameworks that constrain political discretion and establish clear enforcement procedures independent of electoral cycles. Nigeria's federal structure allocates powers between federal and state governments, with recent reforms expanding state authorities regarding economic sectors previously under federal control. The Electricity Act of 2023 exemplifies this decentralization, enabling states to develop independent electricity systems (Federal Ministry of Power, 2024). This reflects recognition that diverse Nigerian contexts require differentiated policy responses that uniform federal mandates cannot provide.

Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

Achieving sustainable economic development increasingly requires explicit attention to inclusivity, ensuring that growth benefits reach substantial portions of the population rather than concentrating among economic elites. This represents a shift from earlier frameworks

emphasizing growth maximization without corresponding attention to distribution. Contemporary development understanding recognizes that poverty reduction and inequality containment prove essential both for humanitarian reasons and for economic sustainability (Ostry *et al.*, 2014). Social protection systems encompassing cash transfers, healthcare provision, education support, and livelihood assistance represent mechanisms through which growth benefits can be distributed more inclusively. The Buhari administration's National Social Register attempted to identify vulnerable populations and target assistance toward those most in need. Subsequent programs including the Conditional Cash Transfer program provided direct income support to poor households conditional on investment in education and healthcare. These initiatives, while modest in scale relative to total government expenditure, represent acknowledgment that markets alone cannot ensure inclusive growth and that state intervention in redistribution remains necessary. However, implementation challenges including limited administrative capacity to identify beneficiaries and prevent benefit capture by non-poor populations constrain program effectiveness. Additionally, fiscal resources devoted to social protection remain limited relative to the magnitude of poverty requiring support.

Nigeria's regions exhibit substantial variation in development outcomes, with particular disadvantage concentrated in northern regions where poverty, limited infrastructure, and educational underinvestment predominate. Addressing these geographic disparities requires explicit policy attention and resource allocation toward less-developed regions. Policy responses have included geographic allocation formulas for development spending, special support for northern regions, and targeted investment in lagging-region infrastructure. However, these interventions remain insufficient relative to the magnitude of geographic disparities (World Bank, 2022). Youth unemployment constitutes one of Nigeria's most pressing development challenges, with millions unable to secure productive employment despite substantial education completion. The gap between education provision and labor market opportunities reflects both rapid youth population growth and insufficient labor demand expansion. Policy responses have emphasized youth entrepreneurship support through business development services and access to finance, technical and vocational training programs, and public employment schemes. The Tinubu administration's initiatives including the Presidential Conditional Grant Scheme for young entrepreneurs represent attempts to facilitate youth economic participation. However, these programs remain limited in scale relative to the magnitude of youth unemployment (Virk *et al.*, 2024).

Recommendations for Enhanced Policy Effectiveness

Based on examination of policy paradigms, leadership quality, and institutional factors influencing Nigeria's economic development trajectory, the following recommendations emerge for enhanced policy effectiveness and developmental impact.

- i. **Institutionalizing Policy Coherence:** Establishing formal mechanisms ensuring coherence between fiscal and monetary policies and coordinating sectoral policies around shared development objectives would enhance policy effectiveness substantially. This requires establishment of high-level policy coordination forums, clear protocols for interagency consultation, and dispute resolution mechanisms when policy conflicts emerge. Additionally, multiyear development frameworks requiring regular review and adaptation while maintaining strategic coherence would reduce policy discontinuity across electoral cycles. These institutional arrangements would constrain political discretion regarding short-term policy reversals that undermine longer-term

- development objectives. Regular coordination meetings with documented decisions and implementation timelines would increase accountability.
- ii. **Strengthening Institutional Capacity:** Systematic investment in public administration capacity remains essential. This includes personnel development through merit-based advancement, information system modernization enabling policy monitoring and evaluation, and organizational restructuring toward performance accountability. While this investment requires substantial resources and sustained commitment over many years, the development returns from institutional strengthening remain very high, as improved implementation capacity multiplies the impact of every unit of development spending. Priority should be given to tax administration, agricultural extension, and regulatory agency capacity. Targeted capacity-building programs should emphasize skills development in policy analysis, project management, and monitoring and evaluation.
 - iii. **Prioritizing Evidence-Based Policy:** Establishment of policy research capacity within government and commitment to evidence-based policy decisions would improve policy quality substantially. This requires development of think tank capacity, expansion of policy analysis capabilities within government, and mechanisms ensuring that research findings influence decision-making. Additionally, systematic policy evaluation examining whether programs achieve intended objectives at reasonable cost provides feedback enabling adaptation and learning. Government should establish formal processes for policy evaluation and evidence review before major policy decisions. Regular evaluation reports should inform policy adjustments and resource reallocation based on demonstrated effectiveness.
 - iv. **Managing Distributional Conflict Through Dialogue:** Inclusive policy dialogue involving stakeholders that bear costs of reform policies alongside those benefiting would enhance policy sustainability. Structured stakeholder engagement during policy design enables identification of concerns and incorporation of mitigation measures. Additionally, transparent communication regarding reform rationale and anticipated costs builds constituencies understanding reform necessity. While dialogue does not eliminate distributional conflict, it can render conflicts manageable through enhanced understanding and negotiated compromise. Social protection measures complementing reform policies should be designed through inclusive consultation with affected populations and implementation agencies.
 - v. **Strengthening Democratic Accountability:** Democratic institutions including parliament, civil society organizations, and media that hold government accountable for policy implementation promote better governance. Strengthening these accountability mechanisms requires protection of institutional independence and support for capacity development. Additionally, decentralized governance enabling subnational oversight of government activities provides complementary accountability pathways. Independent media and robust civil society engagement enhance policy effectiveness through transparency and accountability pressure. Regular public reporting on policy implementation and development outcomes maintains accountability and enables course corrections.

Conclusion

The relationship between policy paradigms, political leadership, and sustainable economic development in Nigeria remains complex and multifaceted, reflecting the intricate interplay of economic structures, institutional arrangements, political dynamics, and individual leadership quality (World Bank, 2025). Nigeria's economic trajectory since the restoration of

democratic governance demonstrates that policy framework quality alone proves insufficient to ensure developmental progress. Rather, effective policy implementation requires quality leadership capable of maintaining strategic coherence despite political pressures, institutional capacity adequate to convert policy intentions into outcomes, and governance systems supporting transparency and accountability. The contemporary policy environment in Nigeria reflects evolution toward more sophisticated frameworks acknowledging the necessity of both macroeconomic stability and structural transformation. Recent administrations have undertaken bold reforms addressing fundamental economic imbalances, though the distributional costs of these reforms have generated substantial citizen hardship that threatens political sustainability. The initial results of recent reforms prove encouraging regarding macroeconomic indicators, though improvements in ordinary citizens' living conditions remain limited, reflecting the time required for macroeconomic improvements to flow through to microeconomic impacts.

Going forward, sustaining reform momentum requires complementary policies protecting vulnerable populations and demonstrating that reforms produce broadly-shared welfare improvements. The fundamental challenge confronting Nigerian leadership remains translating macroeconomic stabilization into inclusive development and household welfare improvements. This divergence reflects the inherent challenge of adjustment economics, whereby reforms improving long-term growth potential often generate substantial immediate hardship, particularly for vulnerable populations dependent on government transfer programs or engaged in non-tradable sectors. Ultimately, Nigeria's economic development trajectory depends on sustained commitment to evidence-based policy, quality institutional governance capable of implementing complex policies effectively, and political leadership demonstrating commitment to long-term development objectives despite short-term political challenges. The nation possesses substantial human and natural resource endowments positioning it as a potential continental economic powerhouse. Whether these potential endowments translate into actual development outcomes depends fundamentally on the decisions and actions of current and future leaders. The stakes involved in these leadership choices extend beyond Nigeria itself, affecting the developmental trajectories of the entire West African region and continental economic integration efforts

References

- Alabi, M. O., & Matthew, O. (2017). Corruption and governance in Nigeria. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*, 11(3), 123–145.
- Anam, B. E. (2024). Economic recovery and growth plan, economic sustainability plan and national development plan in Nigeria. *Cogent Economics & Finance*, 12(1), 2289–2600.
- Anam, B. E., & Antai, E. E. (2018). Economic recovery and growth plan, economic sustainability plan and national development plan: An analysis of Nigeria's experience. *Cogent Economics & Finance*, 12(1), 2289–2600.
- Anyanwu, J. C. (2014). Does intra-African trade reduce youth unemployment in Africa? *African Development Review*, 24(4), 378–393.
- Cardoso, O. (2025). *Central Bank of Nigeria monetary policy review*. Central Bank of Nigeria.
- Elbahnasawy, N. G. (2014). E-government, internet adoption, and corruption: An empirical investigation. *World Development*, 57, 114–126. doi.org
- Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning. (2021). *National Development Plan 2021-2025: Producing our common good*. Federal Ministry of Finance.
- Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning. (2023). *Treasury Single Account implementation report*. Government of Nigeria.

- Federal Ministry of Power. (2024). *National Integrated Electricity Policy: Implementation progress report*. Ministry of Power.
- Hall, P. A., & Taylor, R. C. (1996). Political science and the three new institutionalisms. *Political Studies*, 44(5), 936–957. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1996.tb00343.x>
- International Fund for Agricultural Development. (2023). *Rural development in Nigeria: Challenges and opportunities*. IFAD Publications.
- Klarin, T. (2018). The concept of sustainable development: From its beginning to the contemporary issues. *Zagreb International Review of Economics and Business*, 21(1), 67–94. <https://doi.org/10.2478/zireb-2018-0005>
- Matta, S. (2025). *Nigeria's economic reform: Progress and remaining challenges*. World Bank Economic Analysis.
- Musa, A. A., Adeniyi, O., & Bamidele, T. (2016). Effects of monetary and fiscal policies interaction on price and output growth in Nigeria. *Central Bank of Nigeria Economic and Financial Review*, 54(2), 45–68.
- Obasanjo, O. (2006). *My watch: A memoir*. Bookcraft Publishers.
- Obasanjo, O. (2007). *Nigeria's journey to democracy and economic recovery*. Government Press.
- Olakojo, S. A., Okorie, G. C., & Aminu, S. (2021). Monetary policy, fiscal policy and economic growth in Nigeria. *Journal of Economics and Financial Analysis*, 5(2), 34–57.
- Ostry, J. D., Berg, A., & Tsangarides, C. G. (2014). Redistribution, inequality, and growth. *IMF Staff Discussion Notes*, 14(2), 1-30. imf.org
- Sule, M. I., Ifelunini, I. A., & Okechukwu, O. B. (2023). The dynamics of monetary and fiscal policy interaction on economic growth in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics and Finance*, 15(3), 78–94.
- Tinubu, B. A. (2025). *Speech to former national assembly colleagues*. State House, Abuja.
- Titiloye, V. O., & Ishola, A. A. (2020). The effects of monetary and fiscal policy on the economy of Nigeria. *Journal of Accounting and Financial Management*, 6(2), 45–68.
- Transparency International. (2024). *Nigeria's corruption index and systemic challenges*. Corruption and Governance Report.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2023). *Education in Nigeria: Status and challenges*. UNESCO Publications.
- Virk, A., Nelson, E., & Dele-Adediji, I. (2024). The challenge of youth unemployment in Nigeria. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 40(1), 45–61.
- World Bank. (2022). *Nigeria Development Update (June 2022): The Challenge of Regional Convergence and Spatial Disparities*. World Bank Group. World Bank Documents
- World Bank. (2023). *Nigeria's agricultural transformation: Toward productivity and sustainability*. World Bank Publications.
- World Bank. (2024). *Nigeria Human Capital Review: Investing in the Future of Nigeria*. World Bank Group. World Bank Documents
- World Bank. (2025). *Nigeria development update, May 2025: Building momentum for inclusive growth*. World Bank. <https://hdl.handle.net/10986/43315>
- World Bank. (2026). *Beyond Reform Announcements: The Role of Institutional Enforcement in Nigeria's Power Sector*. World Bank Group. World Bank Open Knowledge



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 19, 2026 Accepted: September 12, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Shehu, Enoch A.; Ari Ogah M. & Jibrin, Abdullahi D. (2026). "Electoral Violence in Nigeria and Lessons for Future General Elections." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 49-59.

Article

Open Access

ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA AND LESSONS FOR FUTURE GENERAL ELECTIONS

Enoch Amila Shehu¹, Ogah Musa Ari² & Abdullahi Dan'Asabe Jibrin³

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University of Lafia,
Nasarawa State, Nigeria^{1, 2 & 3}

Corresponding Email: shehuenochamila@gmail.com¹

Abstract

Since 1951, violence has consistently marred Nigerian elections. From colonial to 2023 general elections historical perspective of electoral violence is lacking in existing literature. This study examined the incident of electoral violence in Nigeria from a historical perspective and drew lessons for future elections. The study was anchored on securitisation theory, and data were sourced from secondary and observation sources. Data analysis indicated that electoral violence in Nigeria has conferred undue political advantage to regions, political parties and individuals. In 1965 and 1983, electoral violence contributed to the military takeover. Among others, the study found that electoral violence is a threat to Nigeria's state and democracy. The research concluded that electoral violence should be securitised in Nigeria. In order to ensure the survival of Nigeria's state and its democracy the study recommended among others that the federal government should declared electoral violence as state emergency with capital punishment for the perpetrators; and politicians and electorates should priorities Nigeria survival than myopic interest.

Keywords: Democracy, Election, Violence, General Election, Securitisation.

Introduction

Electoral violence has become a normalised abnormal attribute of elections in Nigeria. Political actors deployed electoral violence as a strategy to gain electoral advantage (Daxecker, 2020). Those who adopt this model to win elections recognise the dynamics of political competition within a specific context, as well as the inevitability of violence. Achieving electoral victory through violence hinges on the timing, methods, and locations where such violence can be effectively employed. The art and science of electoral violence

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

have gained scholars' attention. Some are generic introductions (Birch *et al.*, 2020; Ani & Uwizeyimana, 2022), while others are on new or emerging democracies (Omotola, 2011; Daxecker, 2020). Nigeria as a developing democracy is not immune from electoral violence. Since contact with Europe and subsequent integration into liberal democracy under the elective principles enshrined in the 1922 constitution and the third wave of democratisation, electoral violence has remained resilient. Frequencies of violence during elections have made electoral epoch volatile in Nigeria. Electoral violence halted the Nigerian democratic experiment in 1965 and 1983 (Kurfi, 2005; Yoroms, n.d.). It also denied credible aspirants contesting in an election, caused political apathy and conferred undue electoral advantage to unpopular candidates (Arinze *et al.*, 2021). Scholarship on Nigerian electoral violence can be categorised into single election case studies, republic, comparative and historical perspectives. Nwolise (2007) and Arinze *et al.* (2021) contributions fall under the single election case study of Nigeria's electoral violence. Agah (2017) and Alao (2021) studies focus on Nigeria's fourth republic incident of electoral violence, and Genyi (2019) added a comparative view. These studies, along with others, lack a comprehensive historical perspective. Anyika and Ani (2022) historical standpoint excluded the colonial epoch and 2023 general elections. This exclusion marked the point of departure for this study. This study examines the incident of electoral violence in Nigeria with focus on evolution of electoral violence from the colonial era to 2023 general elections and lessons for future general elections. The rest of the paper is divided into a theoretical framework, methodology, conceptual and historical analysis of electoral violence, lessons for the future elections and conclusion.

Theoretical Framework: Securitisation Theory (ST)

The study adopted securitisation theory. Securitisation theory synthesises the constructivist and classical realist approaches to security. It was postulated by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver of the Copenhagen School (Otukoya, 2024). They view security as a construct, and it requires the state's utmost attention. Just as classical realism commits resources to curbing security threats, any matter that is securitised receives proportionate attention and resources. According to securitisation theorists, security is dynamic, contested and multifaceted process which challenges narrow conceptions of security in the light of threats involving the military from other states (Kayotis *et al.* 2025). Securitisation commences with a speech act whereby decision-makers frame and seek to persuade an audience that a specific issue constitutes a security threat. When the audience acknowledges and agrees with this perception of threat, extraordinary measures may be implemented. Thus, a framed issue becomes a securitised and legitimised action. However, securitisation can fail if the audience does not accept the characterisation of the issue as a security threat. As a post-Cold War postulation, securitisation theory aids in understanding decision-makers' perceptions and responses to issues. In this sense, matters termed 'security threats' are given utmost attention. Despite a huge budgetary allocation for the election, electoral violence marred the principles of democratic elections. Electoral violence resilience in Nigeria implies that Nigerian leaders are yet to frame it as a national security threat or Nigerians is yet to accept it.

Methodology

The research adopted historical descriptive design. The study is limited to Nigeria. Nigeria is a pluralistic independent country with distinct political system and culture. Understanding the logic of electoral violence in Nigeria is essential for comprehending its origins. Primary

and secondary sources of data were employed. The primary was generated through observation of elections in Nigeria's fourth republic. Secondary sources were sourced from journal articles, textbooks, organisations and election observer reports. The primary focus of the study is general elections (presidential in the second and fourth republics), which are the elections that are conducted nationwide, and it has an impact on all elections.

Conceptualisation

- i. **Election:** Elections may be delineated from a community and an academic standpoint. The former denotes the choice of a person for a post. Viewed intellectually, an election is a mechanism through which competent members of a group or organisation choose their officials or representatives. The latter bestows legitimacy upon the leader and government when they are elected democratically in a democratic society (Nwolise, 2007). From either standpoint, one can conclude that elections are a part of state and national affairs. From either standpoint, it can be concluded that elections are a significant aspect of state and national affairs. Aligning with Nwolise (2007), Genyi (2019) asserted that in a democracy, elections are the only mechanism by which governance power is conferred upon representatives of the populace. The electoral process is a defining characteristic of democracy and a mechanism for voters to wield their sovereignty. Thus, the maintenance of democracy must hinge on the standard of electoral processes. According to Erameh *et al.* (2021), elections are essential to the democratisation process of a nation, allowing citizens to select their desired candidate or disapprove of one they view as unsuited to achieve the expected outcomes of democracy. Saha (2022) contended that elections represent a vital facet of democracy, serving as a conduit for the exchange of power. Elections resist the notion of hereditary succession and violence while fostering engagement between political leaders and the general public. The author further indicated that, unfortunately, even in a democratic regime, elections may incite violence, causing a decline in democratic governance and the potential emergence of authoritarianism.
- ii. **Violence:** The concept of violence is one of the most contested concepts in humanity. Several scholars have attempted elaborating on the concept. Among them is Bufacchi (2005), who emphasises the importance of etymology in a discourse community. Bufacchi argued that 'violence' is derived from the Latin word '*violentia*', which means 'vehemence', a passionate and uncontrolled force. The author further observed that no one is immune from political violence. On what violence is, the author acknowledged two views: the comprehensive and minimalist conceptions of violence. Violence can be understood from a force lens as the exercise of physical force to inflict injury on or cause damage to a person or property, which is the perpetrator's perspective or minimalist conception of violence. Violence from a violation perspective is defined as infringing, transgressing or exceeding some limit or norm. This is from victims' conceptions of violence or comprehensive conceptions of violence. The lacuna associated with this view is lacks of scientific criteria and a spectator view which could harmonise the two was not provided. Onyinye *et al.* (2022) affirmed the etymology of 'violence' as argued by Bufacchi (2005) from the Latin word '*violentia*'. Violence connotes illegitimacy and unauthorisedness, a passionate and uncontrolled force, and the use of physical force that injures, damages, violates, or destroys people or things purposely to effect decisions against the will or desires of other people in the society. From Onyinye *et al.*'s perspective, they suggest that any act of violence committed by the authority is not violence. Another deficiency in their perspective is the reduction of violence to only

physical acts. Galtung (1969) conceived violence through the lens of influence. Thus, violence is the gap between what could have been and what is. Galtung further differentiates between physical and psychological violence. The former entails hurting to the point of killing, while the latter includes lies, brainwashing, indoctrination of various kinds, threats, etc. that serve to decrease mental potentialities. To this end, violence can be said to occur when people are influenced in a way that their actual mental realisations fall short of their potential realisation. Galtung's conception captured the dominance dimension of violence, including both physical and psychological aspects, which scholars such as Onyinye *et al.* (2022) did not address. Furthermore, Galtung's elements of psychology are essential in understanding political competition.

- iii. **Electoral Violence:** Nwolise (2007) defined electoral violence as physical violence to rig elections or against the theft of elections. The author further cited Albert (2007), who defined electoral violence as 'all forms of organised acts or threats: physical, psychological, and structural, aimed at intimidating, harming, or blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during, and after an election with a view to determining, delaying, or otherwise influencing an electoral process'. Electoral violence hinders democratic elections, the process of democratisation, the consolidation of democracy, the growth of democratic culture, and the internalisation of the best democratic practices in any country. In another sense, electoral violence limits people's participation in the electoral process and enables the imposition of candidates, programmes and policies, which, in turn, engenders violent reactions from losers and the electorates. Electoral violence produces a legitimacy crisis. According to Birch *et al.* (2020), literature on conflict and political violence, on the one hand, and electoral misconduct and on the other hand gave birth to the study of electoral violence in political science. Electoral violence is a subtype of political violence which takes place during the campaign period, on polling day or in the aftermath of voting. The authors identified the goal as influencing election outcomes whereby the perpetrator wins the election. They further opine that such candidates can be incumbent or opposition candidates, in either way are often unpopular. Some scholars, such as Daxecker (2020), consider election violence as a campaign strategy to influence the electoral process through the coercion of candidates or voters with threats and violence. As a long-time plan, she observed that 'malapportionment' refers to the discrepancy between the shares of legislative seats and the shares of the population in electoral districts. Electoral apportionment can produce over-represented, equally apportioned, or under-represented results. It's an incentive for electoral violence. While in short time, she concluded that electoral violence seeks to reduce voters' turnout among opponents' strongholds. It takes various forms, including partisan clashes, communal violence, and armed groups. From a democratic principle, Genyi (2019) observed that competitive, regular, free and fair elections underscore the will of the people in choosing representatives, whereas electoral violence is the direct attack in favour of a few. It's a form of political violence that seeks to manipulate election results. Election violence is essentially motivated by influencing elections. He attributed the causes of electoral violence to institutional factors, including the desire to win elections, as well as structural elements related to social and political characteristics of societies, such as ethnicity, religion, and class differences. Electoral violence occurred before, during, and after the election, affecting not only voters but also candidates. From 1959 to 2019, electoral violence has been a

prevalent issue in Nigerian electoral history, with power acquisition and resource allocation serving as incentives for aspirants and voters, respectively. He concluded that the situation has worsened in Nigeria's fourth republic, as seen in the increase of physical assault, murders, assassinations, bombings, shootings and destruction of properties belonging to individuals, political parties and public facilities.

Historical Overview of Electoral Violence in Nigeria

Elections can occur without democracy, but in a democratic context, they are meant to change administrations or establish representatives of the people. In contemporary, Nigeria election is a legacy of colonialism. One of the early steps of the colonial master toward political freedom, or so-called independence of Nigeria, was the opportunity that the 1922 constitution gave Nigerians to be elected into the legislative council (Nwolise, 2007; Genyi, 2019). Elections conducted for the legislative council then were nonviolent. The conduct of elections and the manifestation of electoral violence in the light of Nigerian nationhood began during 1951 elections. Kurfi (2005) observed the absence of a uniform national election management body and policy. He further argued that in the north it was indirect election, in the Eastern part it took universal suffrage, while in the Western region voting was limited to natives and residents who have paid tax for twelve months and are twenty years and above. According to Taft and Haken (2018), during the Nigerian colonial epoch, there were incidents of electoral violence. A notable crisis in the era was the Kano riot of 1953. In May 1953, the Action Group (AG) launched a campaign for Nigeria's independence. In May 1953, violent attacks greeted the AG campaign for Nigeria's independence in Kano (Nwankwo, 1992). The attack was reprisal following mob mockery of Sardauna of Sokoto in Lagos when the northerners opposed the motion for the independence of Nigeria. The omen was the killing and destruction of properties in Kano, mostly of southerners, especially in Sabon Gari (Nwankwo, 1992; Edafenene & Peter, 2022).

In 1954, the House of Representatives was raised to 182 members, and the sharing formula between the northern and southern regions of Nigeria was 50-50. According to Kurfi (2005), this sharing formula gave the Northern People Congress (NPC) a great advantage in the House of Representatives. The election was carried out through an electoral college which made manipulation minimal but there were instances of systematic electoral violence including the exclusion of suitably qualified candidates like Malam Aminu Kano in Kano (Kurfi, 2005). One of the significant efforts to address the national electoral lacuna was the idea of a federal election management body that was decided during the 1957/1958 constitutional conference. The mandate of the commission was general supervision of the preparation for voter registration and the conduct of the 1959 election (Kurfi, 2005). The 1959 election brought the colonial administration's favouritism of the north to the limelight when Sir Abubakar Tafawa Belewa, under the NPC, was directed to form a government by Sir James Robertson, the then governor-general, while vote counting was ongoing (Nwolise, 2007). There was electoral violence, such as organising an AG campaign on the market day by believed supporters who deceived the party leadership, absent Abuja native authority and the emir, and throwing stones at Chief Obafemi Awolowo of AG; women in the northern region were not registered on religious grounds, and the phenomenon of voter buying and selling, as well as women pregnant with ballot papers, emerged (Kurfi, 2005). However, there was no protest because the major goal of the nationalists was independence (Nwolise, 2007; Genyi, 2019). Nigeria gained independence in the quest for national unity, a pursuit shaped by the nature of colonial rule. Taft and Haken (2018) argued that British indirect rule fostered identity-based politics, resulting in divisions among Nigerians along ethnic, religious,

and regional lines. These ethnic groups coexist with an underlying atmosphere of suspicion and conspiracy (Yoroms, n.d.). Consequently, the political landscape of early independent Nigeria was significantly influenced by major ethnic affiliations, with the NPC representing the Hausa/Fulani, the AG associated with the Yoruba, and the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) aligned with the Igbo (Anyika & Ani, 2022).

Political consolidation is an inherent nature of man as a political animal. The 1964 election was conceived by the NPC to consolidate her domination of Nigerian politics at the federal level (Omotola, 2011). The political tension midwife alliances, which in turn made the election bitter and violent (Kurfi, 2005), and consonance with ethnic rivalries, the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) partial boycott prevented 51 constituencies in the Eastern Region from opening polling places, and in Lagos, Kano and Jos, there was a partial boycott (Kurfi, 2005; Taft & Haken, 2018). Strategy of election official hiding themselves to avoid collecting opposition candidates' nominations and denial of campaign venues were recorded (Kurfi, 2005). The overall political atmosphere were characterised by assassination, hired thugs, disrupt campaign rallies, disruption of voting in opponents strongholds, arson, kidnapping, snatch ballot boxes, burning houses and ballot papers inter alia resulting in loss of lives and properties (Kurfi, 2005; Nwolise, 2007; Taft & Haken, 2018; Genyi, 2019; Anyika & Ani, 2022). The alliances and political upheaval of 1964 at the federal level significantly influenced the 1965 election in the Western region. The 1965 election in the Western region mirrored the alliances and political upheaval of 1964 at the federal level. In the 1965 election in the Western region, Chief S. L. Akintola's collaboration with the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) enabled him to consolidate power in the Western region, vehemently opposing Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). In accordance with this strategy, electoral officials concealed themselves to obstruct UPGA members from submitting their documents to them (Nwankwo, 1992). During the vote- counting process, sixteen NNDP candidates were declared re-elected unopposed. Violent protests from October 1965 to January 15, 1966, were perceived as an indication of purported electoral manipulation.

The political crises of 1964/1965 ended with military intervention. In 1979, the military transferred authority to the duly elected president, Alhaji Shehu Shagari. The 1979 election was tranquil owing to the military's retention of power, which instilled fear (Genyi, 2019; Omotola, 2011; Kurfi, 2005). Kurfi (2005) contended that in Lagos, non-Yoruba individuals were assigned polling stations distant from their residences; more than 300 candidates were disqualified due to non-payment of taxes, incarceration, and dishonesty. Kurfi further noted that Colonel Ojukwu's candidacy for the Nnewi House of Representatives under the Great Nigeria People's Party was disqualified due to his dismissal from the army, lacking substantiation. The political parties that participated in the presidential election won by Shehu Shagari include the Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigerian People's Party (NPP), People Redemption Party (PRP), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), and Nigeria Advance Party (NAP). The candidacy of Shehu Shagari for the NPN was scrutinised regarding the stipulation that the party's candidate for the 1983 election should originate from southern Nigeria (Taft & Haken, 2018). In the 1983 elections, the NPN aimed to consolidate national power through incumbency while also expanding its influence in other states, resulting in the UPN losing two states to the NPN (Kurfi, 2005 Omotola, 2011; Anyika & Aki, 2022). Opposition parties were obstructed from accessing media outlets, including the Nigeria Television Authority, Radio and newspapers such as daily times. Incidents of vote buying and intimidation occurred, and the FEDECO and police offices were

set ablaze in Akure, Ondo State. Some voters were denied ballot papers. Litigations were lost on technical ground and time factor, used of security agencies and election management body and thugs were recorded during the election period (Kurfi, 2005; Nwolise, 2007; Omotola, 2011; Genyi, 2019). First-time voters were summoned by politicians to defend their votes (Yoroms, n.d).

The electoral violence of 1983 precipitated a subsequent military regime, which maintained authority from December 1983 until May 1999. Despite attempts in June 1993 to hold elections for the unsuccessful third republic, the elections were marred by violence. In contrast, the 1998/1999 elections experienced a reduction in violence. Retired General Olusegun Obasanjo, who had previously transferred authority to a civilian government in 1979, secured the presidential election as a candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). President Olusegun Obasanjo's initial four-year term ended in 2003. The 2003 presidential elections have two former heads of state contesting the presidential seat: the incumbent president under PDP and late Muhammadu Buhari, the coup leader of the December 1983 military intervention, as major opposition candidates under the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP). Prior to the 2003 elections, poverty and youth unemployment were on the rise (Genyi, 2019), and there was a proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) (Genyi, 2019; Taft & Haken, 2018; Alao, 2021). The former made the youth vulnerable, and the latter intensified the violence before and during the election. Another consequence of the SALW was the creation of criminal gangs. Politicians employed thugs during the 2003 elections. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and security agencies were used by the incumbent as instruments to secure victory in the election (Nwolise, 2007; Taft & Haken, 2018). Furthermore, state media exhibited partiality in their coverage, favouring the incumbent PDP. There were clashes between supporters of the different parties, intimidation, and disruption of the voting process, resulting in the deaths of 105 individuals (Alao, 2021; Anyika & Ani, 2022). Prior to the 2007 general election, President Olusegun Obasanjo unsuccessfully attempted to amend the 1999 Nigerian constitution to contest for a third term. The zero-sum game of Nigerian politics had metamorphosed into a do-or-die affair. The People's Democratic Party had psychologically secured victory in the presidential election even before it took place. This is encapsulated in the former president Olusegun Obasanjo famous statement that 2007 election will be a do or die affair (Omotola, 2011; Nwolise, 2007). Similar threats were evident at the state level. For instance, in Oyo State, Alhaji Lamido Adedibu declared that only those who were aligned with him would win, while in Kwara State, Dr Olusola Saraki stated that the vacancy in the state was reserved for his son, Dr Bukola Saraki (Omotola, 2011).

The political climate of 2007 deterred several reputable candidates from running (Yoroms, n.d.). The use of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) has manifested as structural violence, complementing the established deployment of security agencies and the INEC (Omotola, 2011; Genyi, 2019). The phenomenon of political godfatherism became more pronounced in the 2007 elections (Nwolise, 2007; Omotola, 2011). During the election, there were instances of ballot stuffing, delayed arrival and non-distribution of electoral materials, disenfranchisement, and result falsification (Genyi, 2019; Alao, 2021; Anyika & Ani, 2022), leading to a decline in voter turnout (Taft & Haken, 2018) and the deaths of 300 individuals, in addition to property destroyed (Genyi, 2019). The states of Ekiti, Ondo, and Oyo exhibited greater volatility (Omotola, 2011). Former President Yar'Adua acknowledged that he benefited from the manipulation of the 2007 presidential election. After his abrupt demise, Goodluck Jonathan completed the

remaining term and ran in the 2011 presidential election as a candidate for the PDP. The candidacy of President Goodluck Jonathan reinvigorated the colonial legacy of the South-North and Christian-Muslim dichotomy, as well as the 1983 power rotation between Nigeria's northern and southern regions (Taft & Haken, 2018). There were four major political parties - ANPP, PDP, Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), and Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) - among 63 that contested. Structural violence included the denial of venue and access to media, while physical violence manifested in clashes between party and candidate supporters. Late former president Muhammadu Buhari, the CPC candidate, urged voters to defend their votes, reminiscent of Adegunle Ajasin's actions in 1983. The repercussions of Buhari's call led to destructive violence following the announcement of former president Goodluck Jonathan as the winner of the 2011 presidential election by INEC in northern Nigeria (Alao, 2021; Genyi, 2019). There were bomb blasts at INEC offices in Bauchi and Borno states. Before the situation was brought under control, both private and public properties were destroyed, approximately 800 people were killed, and 65,000 were displaced (Alao, 2021; Anyika & Ani, 2022). Physical electoral violence during the election period increased from 2003, reaching its peak in the 2011 general election.

The resultant effect of the 2011 electoral atmosphere, combined with U.S. predictions that Nigeria would be dismantled in 2015 and the ongoing insurgency, rendered the 2015 general elections alarming (EU-EOM, 2015; Yoroms, n.d.). The presidential race was competitive, featuring incumbent the then president Goodluck Jonathan and the late former Muhammadu Buhari as the main opposition candidate. Government media outlets were biased in favour of the incumbent party. All political parties engaged in hate speech. The requirement for voting in the election was possession of a Permanent Voter Card (PVC), which was unequally distributed among geopolitical zones. Yoroms (n.d.) asserts that the Southern regions expressed their displeasure regarding the distribution of PVCs, feeling that the north was favoured. The European Union Election Observers Mission (2015) noted that 100,000 PVCs were not produced a day before the election on 28 March 2015, despite the postponement from 14 February. During the 2015 elections, there was arbitrary rejection of aspirants during the screening process (EU-EOM, 2015), which was a modification of practices from 1964 and 1965 designed to evade the collection of nomination forms. The change of the election date from 14 February to 28 March was viewed by the opposition as a tactic employed by the incumbent to gain an advantage (Yoroms, n.d.). The European Union Election Observers Mission (2015) reported that, in addition to 160 deaths resulting from incidents of election violence, there were 41 instances of physical violence on 28 March, leading to the deaths of 19 individuals. Complaints regarding underage voting, ballot snatching, and the stuffing of ballot boxes on election day, were recorded. Former president Jonathan accepted defeat, contributing to post-election peace, despite the complaints made by the PDP.

The 2019 presidential election was characterised by incumbency and the presence of a single strong opposition candidate. The All Progressives Congress nominated the late president Muhammadu Buhari as its candidate, while former vice president Atiku Abubakar represented the PDP. Leading political parties faced criticism for failing to rein in their supporters, which contributed to violence and intimidation resulting in the deaths of 150 individuals (EU-EOM, 2019). The European Union Election Observers Mission (2019) further noted that INEC staff and facilities were targets of violence and there were cases of sexual assault. The phenomenon of government media being used as a tool by the incumbent political party recurred during the 2019 elections. The use of political thugs was prevalent

throughout the 2019 election cycle. Voters find it difficult to identify logo of the party of their choice (Sule, *et al.* 2020). The European Union Election Observers Mission (2019) reported that the majority of polling units opened extremely late, and approximately 2.8 million votes were cancelled without sufficient justification. The mission warned that such actions could adversely affect future political participation.

The 2023 presidential election race was unique. Unlike the traditional two-party system of the fourth republic, the 2023 election featured third and even fourth contenders. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the former governor of Lagos, was the APC flag bearer; former vice president Atiku Abubakar emerged as the PDP flag bearer; Peter Obi, the former governor of Anambra State, represented the Labour Party; and the New Nigeria People Party (NNPP) had Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso, the former governor of Kano State, as its flag bearer (Madueke & Enyiazu, 2025; Owonikoko & Ashindorbe, 2025; Ojukwu *et al.*, 2023). The seven general elections conducted by INEC have also manifested the established Nigerian electoral norm. The European Union Election Observer Mission (2023) reported 21 incidents of attacks on INEC's staff and facilities in the year preceding the election date. Political thugs were deployed against opponents' rallies. During the campaign period, there were 101 incidents of violence and 74 fatalities (EU-EOM, 2023) with an increase in assassination attempts as election day drew near. Incumbency factor continued to influence the 2023 general election, as seen in previous elections. Cases of vote buying were prevalent, serving as an alternative to ballot snatching (Ogunbanjo, 2024). The use of partisan community vigilantes, under the guise of electoral security, was observed by the EU-EOM (EU-EOM, 2023).

Lesson for Future Elections

Electoral violence is an inherent aspect of the Nigerian political culture (Anyika & Ani, 2022). In the fourth republic, despite being the longest in Nigeria's democratic history so far, elections are characterised by electoral violence. Electoral violence mitigation is critical for Nigeria to consolidate her democracy. This will boost her regional and continental leadership. Nigerian leaders have securitised banditry and kidnapping, among other insurgencies. Electoral violence is threatening Nigerian state, democracy and fundamental right is not securitised. Undemocratic politicking was a significant factor for military coup in 1965 and 1983 (Genyi, 2019; Omotola, 2011; Kurfi, 2005). The resurgence of a coup in the Sahel and the alleged attempt in Nigeria called for political elites to look inward in order to deter a coup. Another effect of election-related violence is the loss of lives and properties. In the fourth republic, incidents of election-related violence increased from the 2003 to 2011 general elections (Taft & Haken, 2018; Genyi, 2019). The loss of lives and properties has negatively impacts economic stability, interpersonal relationships, and national integration. Nigerians political elite should emulate the political disposition of former President Goodluck Jonathan, who prioritised Nigerian lives over his political ambitions (Ogunbanjo, 2024).

Fear of death during elections accounts for low political participation. From 1999 to 2023, there has been an increase in the number of voters' registrations (EU-EOM, 2023). The increase in voter registrations has not led to sustained voter turnout; instead, a decrease in turnout has become the norm (Owonikoko & Ashindorbe, 2025). Electoral security, which involves the safety of voters and their votes, ought to be the top priority of INEC and formal security agencies. Lack of a unified and neutral electoral body has conferred undue advantage to political parties and individuals (Kurfi, 2005; Nwankwo, 1992). INEC is, in principle and legally, independent, while in practice the status quo is questionable. INEC has undergone numerous reforms and innovations capable of improving the administration of elections and curbing election-related violence (EU-EOM 2023). INEC should be independent,

transparent, neutral and fair to all political parties from their registration and electoral processes.

Conclusion

The political evolution of Nigeria is deeply rooted in electoral violence. The art of violence associated with elections has been master by the government, institutions, political parties, and individuals. The state and its citizens have been significantly affected by this violence in all respects. The will of the citizens is necessary for authority to mitigate electoral violence. Nigeria is obligated to promptly address electoral violence.

Recommendations

Survival of Nigeria and its democracy called reorientation in addition to the following recommendations:

- i. The federal government should declared electoral violence as state emergency with capital punishment for the perpetrators.
- ii. The federal government should ensure INEC constitutional independent.
- iii. INEC in collaboration with security agencies should ensure electoral security.
- iv. Politicians and electorates should priorities Nigeria survival than myopic interest.

References

- Agah, B. E. (2017). *Electoral violence and democracy in Nigeria's fourth republic: A study of Delta and Oyo states*. (Unpublished doctoral Thesis). Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. <https://www.delsu.edu.ng/clt/ELECTORAL%20VIOLENCE%20AND%20DEMOCRACY%20IN%20NIGERIA%E2%80%99S%20FOURTH%20REPUBLIC%20A%20STUDY%20OF%20DELTA%20AND%20OYO%20STATES.pdf>
- Alao, A. A. (2021). Electoral violence in Nigeria's fourth Republic: Implication for democratic development. *Journal of Administrative Science*, 18(2), 320-344.
- Ani, K. J., & Uwizeyimana, D. E. (2022). Introducing elections and electoral violence in Africa. In J. A. Kelechi, & O. Victor, *Elections and electoral violence in Nigeria* (pp. 1-10). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Anyika, V. O., & Ani, K. J. (2022). Historical review of electoral violence in Nigeria. In J. A. Kelechi, & O. Victor, *Elections and electoral violence in Nigeria* (pp. 21-34). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Arinze, A. I., Obum, A. S., & Obasi, T. N. (2021). Election violence in Nigeria and the way forward: 2019 general elections in perspective. *South East Journal of Political Science (SEJPS)*, 7(1), 120-131.
- Birch, S., Daxecker, U., & Hoglund, K. (2020). Electoral violence: An introduction. *Journal of Peace Research*, 57(1), 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343319889657>
- Bufacchi, V. (2005). Two concepts of violence. *Political Studies Review*, 3, 193-204.
- Daxecker, U. (2020). Unequal votes, unequal violence: Mal-apportionment and election violence in India. *Journal of Peace Research*, 57(1), 156-170. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343319884985>
- Edafenene, O. R., & Peter, E. (2022). Elections and electoral violence in Africa: Causes and implications. In J. A. Kelechi, & O. Victor, *Elections and electoral violence in Nigeria* (pp. 11-20). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Erameh, N. I., Oni, E. O., & Ojkorotu, V. (2021). International Election Observation and the democratization process in Nigeria. *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, 17(2), 125-147.
- European Union Election Observation Mission Nigeria, (2015). Final report. European Union observation mission.
- European Union Election Observation Mission Nigeria, (2019). Final report. European Union observation mission.
- European Union Election Observation Mission Nigeria, (2023). Final report. European Union observation mission.
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace and peace research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3), 167-191.

- Genyi, G. A. (2019). Electoral violence and Nigeria's democracy: a comparative analysis of trends in the fourth republic elections. In Mohammed I. Kida & George A. Genyi (Ed), *Delivering democratic promises in Nigeria: Prospects and challenges: a festschrift in honour of Senator Umaru Tanko Al-Makura*. Makurdi, Gwatex Publishers.
- Kayotis, G., Paterson, I., & Judge, A. (2025). Understanding securitisation success: A new analytical framework. *International studies Review*, 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viaf006>
- Kurfi, A. (2005). *Nigerian general elections 1951-2003 (My roles and reminiscences)*. Ibadan Spectrum books limited.
- Madueke, O. & Enyiazu, C. (2025). Electoral integrity and election management in Nigeria: The case of the 2023 General Election. *World Affairs*.
- Nwankwo, B. C. (1992). *Authority in government: Nigeria and world politics in focus*. Almond publishers.
- Nwolise, O. B. C. (2007). Electoral violence and Nigeria's 2007 elections. *Journal of African Elections*, 6(2), 155-179.
- Ogunbanjo, B. (2024). A critical review of democracy and the aftermath of the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. *Integral Research*, 1(7), 137-177.
- Ojukwu, U. G., Umeifekwem, U. T. & Okeke, V. O. S. (2023). Democracy and 2023 general elections in Nigeria: Retrospect and prospects. *Direct Research Journal of Social Science and Educational Studies*, 11(4), 54-66.
- Omotola, S. (2011). Explaining electoral violence in Africa's 'new' democracies. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 51-73.
- Onyinye, A., Ani, K. J., & Ugbudian, L. I. (2022). Political violence in Isuokoma clan 2007–2019. In J. A. Kelechi, & O. Victor, *Elections and electoral violence in Nigeria* (pp. 241-262). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Otukoya, T. A. (2024). The securitisation theory. *International Journal of Science and Research Archive*, 11(1), 1747-1755. <https://doi.org/10.30574/ijrsra.2024.11.1.0225>
- Owonikoko, S. B. & Ashindorbe, K. (2025). Trend analysis of voter turnout in Nigeria's general elections, 1999–2023. *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs and Policy Studies*, 114(1), 18-33. DOI: 10.1080/00358533.2025.2469078
- Saha, K. K., (2022). Election Violence. In Kurtz, L. R. (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict*, (vol. 2, Press, pp. 357–366). Elsevier. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-820195-4.00298-3>
- Sule, B. Adamu, U. & Sambo, U. (2020). The 2019 general election in Nigeria: Examining the issues, challenges, successes and lesson for future general elections. *International Journal of Social Sciences Perspective*, 6(2), 100-113. Doi:10.33094/7..2017.2020.52.100.113
- Taft, P., & Haken, N. (2018). Beyond hashtags: Leveraging networks for the prevention of election violence in Nigeria. Fund for peace.
- Yoroms, G. J. (n.d). Electoral violence, arms proliferations and electoral security in Nigeria: lessons from the twenty-five elections for emerging democracies.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 20, 2026 Accepted: September 13, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Mustafa, Musa I. (2026). "Historical Analysis of Community Resilience Against the Boko Haram Insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 60-70.

Article

Open Access

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AGAINST THE BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

Musa Ibrahim Mustafa

Center for Peace and Security Studies, Modibbo Adama University, Yola, Nigeria

Corresponding Email: ibrahimmusdafam@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined the development of community resilience in response to the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria. It explored how local communities developed adaptive strategies to cope with prolonged insecurity, particularly during periods when state institutions experienced operational limitations. The study adopted a historical research design using a qualitative approach based on secondary sources, including scholarly works, official reports, and relevant documentary materials. Data were analyzed through historical and thematic methods to assess the evolution and significance of community resilience mechanisms. The findings revealed that community resilience in Borno State was strengthened by indigenous structures such as traditional institutions, religious organizations, family networks, and community-based groups that promoted cooperation, social support, and conflict management. The insurgency further transformed these mechanisms, resulting in the emergence of organized responses involving the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), youth groups, women's associations, and local volunteers. These actors contributed to community protection, humanitarian support, livelihood restoration, and social recovery. However, resilience efforts have been constrained by persistent insecurity, displacement, economic challenges, weakened institutions, and inadequate resources. The study concluded that community resilience has played a crucial role in helping communities survive, adapt, and recover from insurgent violence. It recommended strengthening indigenous institutions, supporting livelihood recovery programmes, and incorporating community-based resilience approaches into broader security, peacebuilding, and post-conflict recovery strategies among other recommendations.

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

Keywords: Community Resilience, Boko Haram Insurgency, Borno State, Indigenous Institutions, Conflict Recovery, Peacebuilding.

Introduction

Boko Haram insurgency has become one of the most devastating security challenges in contemporary Africa. It is profoundly reshaping the political, socio-economic, and humanitarian landscape of northeastern Nigeria. Since the group's violent uprising in 2009, the conflict has evolved from localized extremist violence into a prolonged humanitarian crisis with implications extending across the Lake Chad Basin region. Although sustained counterinsurgency operations by the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) have weakened Boko Haram and its splinter faction, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), both groups continue to launch attacks on civilian communities, security formations, schools, and public infrastructure (Obi & Rustad, 2019). Consequently, Borno State has remained the epicenter of insurgency related violence, experiencing widespread destruction of settlements, disruption of agricultural livelihoods, collapse of local markets, displacement of millions of residents, and weakening of traditional governance structures. Recent studies argued that while military operations have reduced insurgent territorial control, they have not eliminated the structural conditions that sustain violent extremism, including poverty, weak governance, social exclusion, youth unemployment, and institutional fragility (World Bank, 2017; International Crisis Group, 2020; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2021). This underscores the need to examine the historical evolution of community resilience beyond conventional military perspectives. The prolonged insurgency has produced severe socio-economic and humanitarian consequences that extend beyond physical destruction to undermine livelihoods, social cohesion, and community institutions. The destruction of homes, schools, healthcare facilities, markets, religious centres, and agricultural infrastructure has displaced millions of people while exposing vulnerable groups to food insecurity, interrupted education, livelihood loss, and psychological trauma (Manyena, 2006). Despite these challenges, many communities have demonstrated remarkable resilience through indigenous coping mechanisms, collective action, and locally driven recovery initiatives. Contemporary resilience scholarship views community resilience as the capacity of communities not only to withstand shocks but also to reorganize institutions, mobilize local resources, preserve social cohesion, and transform adversity into opportunities for recovery and sustainable peace (Thurston, 2018; Aldrich & Meyer, 2015; Norris *et al.*, 2008). This perspective shifts attention from portraying conflict affected populations solely as victims to recognizing them as active agents in peacebuilding and recovery.

Historical evidence indicated that resilience in Borno State predates the emergence of Boko Haram and is deeply rooted in indigenous governance systems, traditional institutions, kinship networks, religious organizations, women's associations, and communal support structures. Before the insurgency, these institutions played critical roles in conflict mediation, resource sharing, and community development. Thurston, (2018) noted that as the conflict escalated, these structures became vital channels for sharing security intelligence, coordinating humanitarian support, assisting internally displaced populations, and sustaining social cohesion in the face of limited state capacity. Community members increasingly relied on informal social networks to provide food, shelter, psychosocial support, and livelihood opportunities, thereby complementing formal government interventions. Studies have shown that these indigenous institutions significantly strengthened local ownership of peacebuilding efforts and enhanced communities' capacity to withstand

prolonged insecurity (Obi & Rustad, 2019).; International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2022). This demonstrates that resilience is a historically embedded process shaped by indigenous knowledge, collective memory, and evolving community institutions. The evolution of resilience strategies also reflects the changing dynamics of the insurgency. During the early years (2009–2014) of insurgency, community responses focused largely on survival through displacement, extended family support systems, informal vigilante groups, and self-help initiatives. Following the recapture of many communities from 2015 onwards, resilience gradually shifted towards reconstruction through the rehabilitation of schools and markets, restoration of agricultural livelihoods, psychosocial support, and reintegration of displaced populations. Aldrich, (2012) noted that more recently, communities have confronted new challenges associated with reintegrating former insurgents, rebuilding trust, addressing youth unemployment, adapting to climate-related pressures, and responding to recurring attacks by Boko Haram and ISWAP. Consequently, resilience has evolved into a multidimensional process involving security, social cohesion, institutional rebuilding, livelihood recovery, and sustainable peacebuilding. Scholars increasingly argued that durable stabilization requires strengthening local governance, rebuilding community trust, promoting economic recovery, and encouraging community participation in post-conflict reconstruction rather than relying solely on military responses (Mercy Corps, 2019; UNDP, 2021).

Although extensive literature exists on Boko Haram insurgency, much of the literature concentrates on terrorism, counterinsurgency, humanitarian crises, violent extremism, internally displaced persons, and regional security. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to the historical evolution of community resilience and the indigenous mechanisms through which local populations have adapted and sustained themselves throughout different phases of the conflict. Existing studies tend to examine resilience as a contemporary development intervention without adequately tracing its historical foundations or explaining how traditional institutions, social capital, communal solidarity, and indigenous coping mechanisms have evolved to sustain communities (Obi & Rustad, 2019; Mercy Corps, 2019; UNDP, 2021). Addressing this gap is essential because a historical understanding of resilience provides deeper insight into the continuity and transformation of local adaptive capacities, thereby informing context-specific strategies for post-conflict reconstruction, peacebuilding, and sustainable development. It is against this backdrop that this study undertakes a historical analysis of community resilience against Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria, with a view to examining the evolution, drivers, and significance of indigenous resilience mechanisms in mitigating the long-term impacts of violent extremism.

Statement of the Problem

The Boko Haram insurgency has remained one of Nigeria's most devastating security challenges, with Borno State bearing the greatest burden of violence, displacement, destruction of livelihoods, and institutional collapse. Despite sustained military operations and humanitarian interventions, attacks by Boko Haram and ISWAP continue to hinder community recovery, social cohesion, and sustainable development (ICG, 2020; UNDP, 2021). Existing literatures have largely focused on terrorism, counterinsurgency, humanitarian crises, internally displaced persons, and post-conflict reconstruction (Aldrich, D. P. 2012; UNDP, 2021). However, limited attention has been given to the historical evolution of community resilience and the indigenous mechanisms through which local communities have adapted to and recovered from the insurgency. In particular, there is insufficient

historical evidence on the roles of traditional institutions, religious leaders, community organizations, and informal support networks in sustaining social cohesion, rebuilding livelihoods, and complementing formal interventions. This gap underscored the need for a historical analysis of community resilience against Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State. Accordingly, this study examines the evolution, drivers, and significance of indigenous resilience mechanisms to generate historical evidence that can inform community-based peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, and sustainable development in conflict-affected areas of Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study was to undertake a historical analysis of community resilience against the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Examine the historical evolution of community resilience against the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State.
- ii. Identify the indigenous community resilience mechanisms employed by communities in Borno State to cope with the effects of the Boko Haram insurgency.
- iii. Identify the challenges confronting community resilience initiatives in mitigating the long-term effects of the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State.

Research Questions

The following research questions are generated to guide the study:

- i. How has community resilience against the Boko Haram insurgency evolved historically in Borno State, Nigeria?
- ii. What indigenous community resilience mechanisms have been employed by communities in Borno State to cope with the effects of the Boko Haram insurgency?
- iii. What challenges confront community resilience initiatives in mitigating the long-term effects of the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State?

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Social Resilience Theory. The theory was propounded by Neil Adger (2000) and later developed by Norris *et al.*, (2008) and Aldrich and Meyer (2015), explains that communities can withstand, adapt to, and recover from crises through social capital, collective action, indigenous knowledge, and strong local institutions. The theory views resilience as a continuous process of adaptation and transformation rather than simply returning to pre-conflict conditions. The theory is supported by Norris *et al.*, (2008), who argue that adaptive capacities such as social capital, economic resources, information systems, and effective institutions enhance community resilience. Aldrich and Meyer (2015) also maintain that communities with strong social networks and trust recover more rapidly from disasters and violent conflicts. However, critics such as Cannon and Müller-Mahn (2010) and Joseph (2013) argue that the theory gives insufficient attention to structural inequalities, governance failures, and state responsibilities, while placing excessive emphasis on the capacity of communities to recover independently. The theory is relevant to this study because it explains how communities in Borno State utilized indigenous institutions, social networks, and collective action to withstand, adapt to, and recover from the Boko Haram insurgency. It therefore provides an appropriate framework for examining the historical

evolution of community resilience, indigenous coping mechanisms, and the challenges affecting resilience initiatives in mitigating the long-term effects of the insurgency.

Conceptual Clarifications

- i. **Community Resilience:** Community resilience refers to the collective capacity of a community to anticipate, withstand, adapt to, and recover from crises while maintaining its essential social, economic, and institutional functions. Norris *et al.*, (2008) describe it as the interaction of adaptive capacities such as social capital, economic resources, effective communication, and community competence, whereas Patel *et al.*, (2017) emphasize social cohesion, collective action, and local leadership as key determinants. In Borno State, community resilience is reflected in the use of traditional institutions, religious organizations, family networks, and community-based security groups such as the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) to cope with the impacts of the Boko Haram insurgency. For this study, community resilience refers to the ability of communities in Borno State to mobilize indigenous resources and institutions to resist, adapt to, and recover from insurgency-related challenges.
- ii. **Boko Haram Insurgency:** The Boko Haram insurgency refers to the violent conflict initiated in 2009 by the extremist group *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad* (Boko Haram) against the Nigerian state. The insurgency has been characterized by terrorist attacks, kidnappings, destruction of infrastructure, mass displacement, and humanitarian crises, particularly in northeastern Nigeria. It has also evolved into different factions, including the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). In this study, the Boko Haram insurgency denotes the prolonged armed conflict that has profoundly affected the security, livelihoods, and social stability of communities in Borno State (Obi & Rustad, 2019).
- iii. **Historical Evolution of the Boko Haram Insurgency:** The Boko Haram insurgency originated in the early 2000s in Maiduguri, Borno State, under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf as a religious movement that opposed corruption, poor governance, and socio-economic inequality. Following Yusuf's death in police custody in 2009, the group transformed into a violent insurgency under Abubakar Shekau, employing tactics such as bombings, kidnappings, and attacks on civilians and government institutions (Onuoha, 2014; Obi & Rustad, 2019). Between 2010 and 2015, Boko Haram expanded across northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin region, causing widespread destruction, mass displacement, and severe humanitarian crises. The group's pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State in 2015 led to the emergence of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), resulting in a split within the movement. Scholars attribute the rise and persistence of the insurgency to factors such as poverty, youth unemployment, weak governance, corruption, and political marginalization (UNDP, 2021; Mercy Corps, 2019). The insurgency significantly disrupted the social and economic fabric of Borno State but also prompted the emergence of community resilience mechanisms. Traditional institutions, religious organizations, the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), women's groups, and other local actors emerged to provide important roles in community protection, humanitarian support, and recovery. However, existing literature has focused largely on the military and humanitarian dimensions of the conflict, with limited attention to the historical evolution of these community resilience mechanisms. This study addresses that gap by examining how local communities in Borno State developed and sustained resilience throughout the different phases of the Boko Haram insurgency.

- iv. **Historical Evolution of Community Resilience in Borno State:** Community resilience in Borno State has its roots in longstanding indigenous institutions, including the Borno Emirate, traditional rulers, religious leaders, and extended family networks, which historically promoted social cohesion, conflict resolution, and mutual support. These structures enabled communities to respond collectively to social and economic challenges before the emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency (Berkes & Ross, 2013). The outbreak of the insurgency in 2009 transformed these traditional resilience mechanisms. As state institutions became overstretched, communities increasingly relied on local initiatives for protection and survival. Traditional rulers coordinated community responses, religious leaders promoted peace and social solidarity, while the establishment of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in 2013 strengthened local security through intelligence gathering and collaboration with the Nigerian military (International Crisis Group, 2020). Beyond security, women's groups, youth associations, faith-based organizations, and community networks supported internally displaced persons (IDPs), restored livelihoods, and promoted reconciliation through communal labour and indigenous conflict-resolution practices. Although existing studies recognize these contributions, limited attention has been given to their historical evolution. This study therefore examines how community resilience mechanisms developed and adapted over time to strengthen resistance and recovery against the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State.
- v. **Community-Based Resilience Mechanisms:** Community-based resilience mechanisms are locally developed strategies and institutions that enable communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from crises using indigenous knowledge, social networks, and collective action. According to Norris *et al.*, (2008) and Berkes and Ross (2013), resilience is strengthened through social capital, effective leadership, trust, and active community participation. In Borno State, the Boko Haram insurgency weakened formal governance and public services, prompting communities to rely on traditional rulers, religious leaders, the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), women's groups, youth associations, and local volunteers for security, intelligence gathering, humanitarian assistance, and support for internally displaced persons (IDPs). These community-led initiatives also promoted post-conflict recovery through livelihood restoration, reconciliation, and social cohesion. Although existing studies acknowledge the importance of community participation, they largely focus on humanitarian and security interventions, with limited attention to the historical development of indigenous resilience mechanisms (Mercy Corps, 2019; UNDP, 2021). This study addresses this gap by examining the evolution of community-based resilience against the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State.
- vi. **Challenges Confronting Community Resilience in Borno State:** Despite demonstrating remarkable resilience during the Boko Haram insurgency, communities in Borno State continue to face significant challenges that hinder sustainable recovery. Persistent insecurity, particularly from ISWAP attacks, continues to disrupt livelihoods, education, and humanitarian activities, thereby weakening community resilience (International Crisis Group, 2020). Prolonged displacement has fractured family structures and traditional support networks while placing enormous pressure on host communities and essential social services (IOM, 2021). Economic hardship remains a major constraint as the destruction of agriculture, markets, and local businesses has increased poverty and unemployment, leaving many households dependent on humanitarian assistance

(World Bank, 2017). Traditional leadership and indigenous governance structures have also been weakened through displacement and the loss of community leaders, reducing their capacity to mediate conflicts and coordinate recovery efforts. In addition, inadequate funding and limited institutional support restrict the ability of local organizations and community groups to sustain resilience and livelihood programmes, with many initiatives relying heavily on external donor assistance (UNDP, 2021). The long-term psychological effects of violence, displacement, and loss have further undermined social cohesion and reconciliation within communities. Overall, sustaining community resilience in Borno State requires coordinated efforts by government institutions, traditional authorities, humanitarian organizations, and local communities to address insecurity, strengthen livelihoods, rebuild governance structures, and promote lasting peace and recovery.

Methodology

This study adopted a historical research design using a qualitative approach to examine the evolution of community resilience against the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State. The study relied exclusively on secondary data obtained from books, peer-reviewed journal articles, government publications, archival materials, policy documents, newspapers, and reports from reputable organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Bank, and International Crisis Group. Data were collected through documentary research and analyzed using historical and thematic content analysis to identify patterns, trends, and changes in community resilience mechanisms before, during, and after the insurgency. To ensure the credibility of the findings, information from multiple sources was critically examined and cross-checked through source triangulation. Since the study was based solely on documentary evidence, no human participants were involved. Ethical standards were maintained through proper citation of sources, objective interpretation of evidence, and adherence to academic integrity. Although the study relied on secondary sources that may contain varying perspectives, the use of diverse and credible materials enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings.

Results

Historical Evolution of Community Resilience Against the Boko Haram Insurgency in Borno State: The study found that community resilience in Borno State evolved in response to the changing dynamics of the Boko Haram insurgency. Initially, communities relied on indigenous structures such as traditional institutions, family networks, and religious organizations to provide support, maintain social order, and cope with insecurity. As the insurgency intensified, resilience strategies became more organized through the emergence of community security initiatives, including the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), youth groups, and local volunteers. Communities also adapted through mutual assistance, livelihood strategies, and collaboration with humanitarian organizations to address displacement and economic challenges. However, these resilience mechanisms became weakened by persistent insecurity, resource limitations, economic hardship, and the erosion of traditional institutions. Overall, the findings show that community resilience in Borno State transformed from informal coping practices into more structured collective responses that enabled communities to survive and recover from prolonged insurgent violence.

Indigenous Community Resilience Mechanisms Employed by Communities in Borno State to Cope with the Effects of The Boko Haram Insurgency

The study found that communities in Borno State relied on indigenous resilience mechanisms to cope with the effects of the Boko Haram insurgency. Traditional institutions, family networks, religious bodies, and community associations played important roles in maintaining social order, providing support, resolving conflicts, and assisting vulnerable groups. The emergence of community security initiatives such as the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), youth groups, and local volunteers also contributed to community protection and information sharing. Additionally, women's groups and local organizations supported humanitarian assistance and livelihood recovery efforts. Communities adopted adaptive strategies such as resource sharing, informal economic activities, and modified farming practices to sustain survival. Overall, indigenous resilience mechanisms were essential in enabling communities to endure and recover from insurgency-related challenges, although their effectiveness was limited by insecurity, displacement, and inadequate resources.

The Challenges Confronting Community Resilience Initiatives in Mitigating the Long-Term Effects of the Boko Haram Insurgency in Borno State

The study found that community resilience initiatives in Borno State face significant challenges in mitigating the long-term effects of the Boko Haram insurgency. Persistent insecurity, especially from insurgent attacks, continues to disrupt livelihoods, movement, and recovery efforts. Prolonged displacement has weakened family networks, traditional support systems, and placed pressure on host communities. The study also revealed that economic hardship caused by the destruction of agriculture, markets, and businesses has increased poverty and unemployment, limiting communities' ability to achieve sustainable recovery. Additionally, weakened traditional institutions, inadequate funding, and dependence on external humanitarian support have reduced the effectiveness and sustainability of local resilience initiatives. The psychological consequences of prolonged violence, including trauma and loss of social trust, have further affected reconciliation and social cohesion. Overall, the findings show that while communities in Borno State have developed strong coping mechanisms, their resilience remains constrained by insecurity, displacement, economic challenges, institutional weaknesses, and limited resources. Strengthening local institutions, livelihood opportunities, and peacebuilding efforts is essential for sustainable recovery.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that community resilience was central to helping communities in Borno State withstand and recover from the Boko Haram insurgency. The study found that resilience was rooted in longstanding indigenous institutions, including traditional rulers, religious leaders, kinship networks, and community associations, which promoted social cohesion, collective action, and mutual support before and during the conflict. This finding is consistent with Berkes and Ross (2013), Aldrich (2012), and Putnam (2000), who emphasized that social capital and strong local institutions enhance communities' capacity to cope with crises. The study also found that the insurgency transformed traditional resilience mechanisms into more organized community responses. The emergence of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), together with the active participation of women's groups, youth associations, religious organizations, and local volunteers, strengthened intelligence gathering, community security, humanitarian assistance, and support for internally displaced persons (IDPs). These findings support Norris *et al.*, (2008), Magis (2010), and Patel *et al.*,

(2017), who argued that resilience depends on adaptive leadership, community participation, and institutional flexibility.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that community resilience extended beyond security to include livelihood restoration, communal labour, psychosocial support, reconciliation, and post-conflict recovery. Traditional institutions and community organizations complemented government and humanitarian interventions by rebuilding livelihoods and strengthening social cohesion. This supports the views of Ungar (2018) and Folke (2016), who regard resilience as a continuous process of adaptation, learning, and transformation. However, the study identified persistent insecurity, displacement, poverty, weakened traditional institutions, inadequate resources, and psychological trauma as major constraints to sustainable community resilience. These findings are consistent with reports by the IOM, (2022), the World Bank (2017). and the ICG (2024), which identified socio-economic deprivation, weak governance, and continued insecurity as significant barriers to recovery in northeastern Nigeria. Finally, the study demonstrated that community resilience in Borno State evolved from traditional systems of mutual support into organized community-based responses throughout the Boko Haram insurgency. It also fills an important gap in the literature by showing that indigenous institutions and local initiatives are fundamental to conflict mitigation, recovery, and peacebuilding. The findings therefore underscore the need to strengthen traditional institutions and integrate community-based organizations into formal security, humanitarian, and post-conflict recovery strategies.

Conclusion

This study concluded that community resilience played a significant role in enabling communities in Borno State to survive, adapt to, and recover from the Boko Haram insurgency. Indigenous institutions, traditional leaders, religious organizations, kinship networks, and community-based groups provide essential support through security initiatives, humanitarian assistance, livelihood recovery, and peacebuilding efforts. Although these resilience mechanisms contributed greatly to conflict management and recovery, their effectiveness is limited by persistent insecurity, internal displacement, poverty, weakened institutions, and inadequate resources. The study therefore emphasized the need to strengthen local institutions and integrate community-based resilience strategies into security, humanitarian, and post-conflict recovery programmes to promote sustainable peace and development in Borno State.

Recommendations

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

- i. **Strengthening Indigenous Institutions and Community-Based Resilience Mechanisms:** The study found that traditional institutions, religious organizations, community associations, and local groups played significant roles in supporting communities during the Boko Haram insurgency. Therefore, government and development partners should strengthen these local structures through capacity building, institutional support, and greater inclusion in peacebuilding and recovery programmes. Their indigenous knowledge, legitimacy, and community acceptance should be integrated into formal security and development strategies.
- ii. **Enhancing Economic Recovery and Social Support Systems:** The findings revealed that poverty, internal displacement, livelihood destruction, and unemployment weakened community resilience in Borno State. Consequently, government agencies and humanitarian organizations should prioritize sustainable livelihood programmes,

including agricultural support, vocational training, entrepreneurship opportunities, and employment initiatives. Special attention should also be given to women, youths, and internally displaced persons through psychosocial support, education, and reintegration programmes to promote long-term recovery.

- iii. **Improving Security Coordination and Sustainable Peacebuilding:** The study established that persistent insecurity, weakened institutions, and inadequate resources continue to limit community resilience. Therefore, there is the need for stronger collaboration among security agencies, government institutions, traditional leaders, and community actors. Local intelligence networks, early warning mechanisms, and indigenous conflict-resolution practices should be incorporated into security and peacebuilding frameworks to enhance sustainable peace and resilience in Borno State.

References

- Adger, N. W. (2000). *Progress in Human Geography*, 24(3), 347–364.
- Aldrich, D. P. (2012). *Building Resilience: Social Capital in Post-Disaster Recovery*. University of Chicago Press.
- Aldrich, D. P., & Meyer, M. A. (2015). *Social capital and community resilience*. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 59(2), 254–269.
- Béné, C., Mehta, L., McGranahan, G., et al. (2018). Resilience as a policy narrative. *Global Environmental Change*, 50, 127–137.
- Berkes, F., & Ross, H. (2013). Community resilience: Toward an integrated approach. *Society & Natural Resources*, 26(1), 5–20.
- Cannon, T., & Müller-Mahn, D. (2010). *Global Environmental Change*, 20(4), 621–624.
- Folke, C. (2016). Resilience. *Ecology and Society*, 21(4), 44.
- International Crisis Group. (2016). *Boko Haram on the Back Foot? Africa Report No. 242*. Brussels: International Crisis Group.
- International Crisis Group. (2023). *After Boko Haram: Security and Governance Challenges in Northeast Nigeria*.
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2022). *Displacement Tracking Matrix: North-East Nigeria Emergency Tracking*.
- Joseph, J. (2013). *Resilience as embedded neoliberalism: A governmentality approach*. *Resilience*, 1(1), 38–52.
- Magis, K. (2010). Community resilience: An indicator of social sustainability. *Society & Natural Resources*, 23(5), 401–416.
- Maiangwa, B., Uzodike, U. O., & Agbiboa, D. (2012). Baptism by fire: Boko Haram and the Nigerian insurgency. *African Security Review*, 21(3), 41–55.
- Manyena, S. B. (2006). The concept of resilience revisited. *Disasters*, 30(4), 433–450.
- McMillan, D. W., & Chavis, D. M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14(1), 6–23.
- Mercy Corps. (2019). *Conflict and Resilience in Northeast Nigeria: Community-Based Approaches to Peacebuilding*.
- Norris, F. H., Stevens, S. P., Pfefferbaum, B., et al. (2008). Community resilience as a metaphor, theory, set of capacities, and strategy for disaster readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41(1–2), 127–150.
- Norris, F. H., Stevens, S. P., Pfefferbaum, B., Wyche, K. F., & Pfefferbaum, R. L. (2008). Community resilience as a metaphor, theory, set of capacities, and strategy for disaster readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41(1–2), 127–150.

- Norris, F. H., Stevens, S. P., Pfefferbaum, B., Wyche, K. F., & Pfefferbaum, R. L. (2008). Community resilience as a metaphor, theory, set of capacities, and strategy for disaster readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41(1–2), 127–150.
- International Crisis Group. (2020). *Facing the Challenge of the Islamic State in West Africa Province*. Africa Report No. 273.
- Obi, C. A., & Rustad, S. A. (2019). *Rethinking Conflict and Peacebuilding in Africa: The Boko Haram Insurgency and Community Responses in Nigeria*.
- Onuoha, F. C. (2014). Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi jihadist threat in Nigeria. *African Security Review*, 23(2), 87–100.
- Patel, S. S., Rogers, M. B., Amlôt, R., & Rubin, G. J. (2017). What do we mean by community resilience? A systematic literature review. *PLoS Currents Disasters*.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon & Schuster.
- Thurston, A. (2018). *Boko Haram: The History of an African Jihadist Movement*. Princeton University Press.
- Tosh, J. (2021). *The Pursuit of History* (7th ed.). Routledge.
- Ungar, M. (2018). Systemic resilience: Principles and processes for a science of change in contexts of adversity. *Ecology and Society*, 23(4).
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2021). *Nigeria Regional Stabilization Facility Annual Report*.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2023). *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Pathways to Recruitment and Disengagement*.
- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). (2017). *Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*.
- World Bank. (2017). *North East Nigeria: Recovery and Peace Building Assessment*. Washington, DC: World Bank.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Immanuel, Joshbriliem J. (2026). "Ethics and Morals of Igbo Apprenticeship System: Foundational Factors of Entrepreneurial Formation." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 71-84.

Article

Open Access

ETHICS AND MORALS OF IGBO APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM: FOUNDATIONAL FACTORS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL FORMATION

Joshbriliem J. Immanuel

Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos

Abstract

The *Igbo* Apprenticeship System (IAS), popularly expressed through practices such as *Igba-Boyi* and *Imu-Ahia*, represents an indigenous institution for entrepreneurial learning, occupational training, socialization and intergenerational wealth creation among the Igbo of old southeastern Nigeria. Beyond its economic function, the system historically operated through an ethical framework that regulated relationships between masters, apprentices, families, customers and communities. However, contemporary transformations, including urbanization, commercialization, individualism, weak contractual safeguards and changing social values, increasingly challenged the moral foundations upon which the system depends. This study examines the ethical and moral principles underlying the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System, with particular attention on factors such as integrity, hard work, loyalty, reciprocity and respect that underpins the system. The main aim is to demonstrate how these virtues function not merely as personal qualities but as institutional mechanisms for trust, knowledge transmission, business continuity, social mobility and communal development. The study adopted a qualitative, interpretive and historical-textual methodology based on critical examination of relevant literature on Igbo society, African philosophy, ethics, apprenticeship and entrepreneurial learning. Findings indicated that integrity creates trust; hard work cultivates discipline and entrepreneurial competence; loyalty sustains reciprocal obligations; and respect facilitates mentorship, knowledge transmission and social harmony. The study recommended ethical reorientation, written apprenticeship agreements, reciprocal accountability, protection of apprentices' rights, preservation of indigenous values, and formal recognition of apprenticeship training and integration of ethical education into contemporary IAS practice. It concluded that the sustainability of IAS depends not only on

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

economic capital but also on the preservation and constructive modernization of its moral capital.

Keywords: Igbo Apprenticeship System, Ethics, Morality, Integrity and Hard Work, Loyalty and Respect, Entrepreneurship, Igbo, Southeastern Nigeria.

Background of the Study

The Igbo Apprenticeship System (IAS) is one of the most significant indigenous institutions for entrepreneurial learning, occupational training and wealth distribution in southeastern Nigeria. Commonly associated with expressions such as *Igba-Boyi*, *Imu-Ahia* and *Imu-Oru*, the system involves the placement of a young person under the guidance of an experienced entrepreneur or craftsman for a defined period of practical learning. The apprentice acquires technical competence, business knowledge, and interpersonal skills and, ideally, the moral dispositions required for independent economic life. The significance of IAS extends beyond the acquisition of occupational skills. Contemporary studies (Afigbo, 1981) & (Cole, 1969) described it as an important mechanism of entrepreneurial development, human-capital formation and socioeconomic empowerment. Research (Agama, & Ohajonu, 2021) on entrepreneurial learning within IAS, for example, emphasizes learning through observation, participation and imitation rather than through classroom instruction alone. Similarly, recent empirical research (Basden, 1966) has found a relationship between apprenticeship incubation, business ethics and entrepreneurship development in old southeastern Nigeria. The moral dimension of the institution, however, deserves greater scholarly attention. An apprenticeship arrangement cannot function effectively through technical competence alone. The master must trust the apprentice with customers, money, business information and sometimes considerable responsibility. The apprentice, on the other hand, depends upon the master for instruction, protection, experience and eventual economic independence. The relationship therefore requires ethical norms capable of regulating conduct where formal contracts and institutional enforcement may be limited.

Historically, this moral structure was expressed through values such as *ezi omume* (good conduct), *ezi aha* (good name), honesty, diligence, loyalty, respect, reciprocity, justice and communal responsibility. These values correspond with broader African philosophical understandings of personhood and community (Menkiti, 1984), for example, argues that African personhood is substantially constituted through participation in communal life and the acquisition of moral qualities. His famous discussion places the communal world before the isolated individual, emphasizing that identity is formed through social relationships (p. 171). The ethical structure of IAS can therefore be understood as a form of moral capital. Financial capital enables a business to operate, but trust, reputation, loyalty and integrity make sustained cooperation possible. Where these moral resources deteriorate, apprenticeship can become vulnerable to exploitation, betrayal, conflict and premature termination. This concern is particularly important in the contemporary period. Recent research identifies the absence of written agreements and adequate legal safeguards as significant ethical vulnerabilities within IAS, exposing both apprentices and masters to possible exploitation. More recent studies posit that the contemporary relevance of IAS requires greater transparency, accountability, equitable compensation, community engagement and state involvement or political will. (Ekennia, 2000 p. 154). The central argument of this paper is therefore that the historical strength of IAS cannot be explained solely by its economic organization. Its durability is also connected to an ethical system that

seeks to transform the apprentice from a learner into a responsible entrepreneur and member of society.

Statement of the Problem

The Igbo Apprenticeship System has received considerable attention as an indigenous model of entrepreneurship and economic empowerment. Yet much of the discussion has concentrated on its economic outcomes business creation, employment, wealth generation and entrepreneurial development while comparatively less attention has been given to the ethical architecture that makes the system function. The contemporary transformation of IAS raises several questions. What happens when the trust upon which an apprenticeship agreement depends is weakened? What happens when masters fail to fulfill settlement promises? What happens when apprentices abuse confidential business information, steal from their masters or abandon agreements prematurely? Can the system survive when its traditional moral principles become disconnected from its economic practices? Recent scholarship confirms that these are not merely theoretical questions. Studies have identified exploitation, inadequate contractual protection, unfair treatment and other ethical difficulties within contemporary apprenticeship practices. The problem, therefore, is not simply whether IAS produces entrepreneurs, but what kind of entrepreneurs it produces and what moral framework sustains their relationships with others.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to examine the ethical and moral foundations of the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System and demonstrate their relevance to the sustainability of indigenous entrepreneurship. The specific objectives include:

- i. Examine integrity as a moral foundation of IAS.
- ii. Analyze hard work as an ethical obligation and entrepreneurial virtue in IAS.
- iii. Examine loyalty as a reciprocal principle governing master–apprentice relationships in IAS.
- iv. Analyze respect as a moral principle underlying mentorship and knowledge transmission in IAS.
- v. Identify the relevance of these values to contemporary IAS; and propose measures for preserving the ethical strengths of IAS while addressing contemporary abuses.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative interpretive and historical-textual methodology. It relies principally on critical examination of published works in African philosophy, *Igbo* studies, anthropology, ethics, entrepreneurship and apprenticeship studies. Relevant contemporary studies on the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System are also examined to connect traditional ethical principles with present-day challenges. The study is therefore conceptual rather than quantitative. It does not claim to provide statistical measurement of the frequency of particular ethical behaviors among apprentices or masters. Rather, it interprets the moral concepts that have historically shaped relationships within IAS and examines their continuing relevance. (Achebe, 1958). This approach is appropriate because several of the concepts under consideration such as *ezi omume*, *ezi aha*, *loyalty*, respect, communal responsibility and *Ofor na Ogu* are embedded in cultural and philosophical meanings that require contextual interpretation rather than numerical measurement.

Ethical and Moral Foundations of the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System

- i. **Integrity as Moral Capital:** Integrity constitutes one of the most important ethical foundations of IAS. In the *Igbo* moral vocabulary, related ideas include *ezi omume* (good conduct), *ikwu ọtọ* (uprightness), *ezi aha* (good name) and fidelity to accepted norms. Integrity in this context goes beyond simply telling the truth. It involves consistency between one's words, actions, obligations and relationships. A master who promises to train and settle an apprentice is expected to honor that commitment. Similarly, an apprentice who enters an apprenticeship agreement is expected to protect the master's business interests and fulfill the agreed terms. Uchendu's study of *Igbo* social organization demonstrates the importance of social relationships, economic activity, and division of labor, property and systems of status within *Igbo* society. His work provides an important anthropological basis for understanding why trust and reputation matter within indigenous economic relationships. (Uchendu, 1965). Integrity can therefore be described as moral capital because it creates confidence between individuals. A master can entrust an apprentice with money because he believes the apprentice will act honestly. A customer can patronize a business because the proprietor has established a good reputation. A family can entrust a child to a master because the master is considered trustworthy. This produces a chain: Integrity → Trust → Cooperation → Business Continuity → Communal Development. The opposite is equally true: Dishonesty → Loss of Trust → Conflict → Broken Relationships → Institutional Weakening.
- ii. **Integrity and *Ezi Omume*:** *Ezi omume* refers broadly to good or morally acceptable conduct. In the context of apprenticeship, it requires the apprentice to demonstrate honesty, diligence, self-control and responsibility. Menkiti's theory of personhood provides a useful philosophical framework here. His argument that personhood is developed through participation in communal moral life means that apprenticeship can be understood as more than occupational education: it is also a process of character formation (Menkiti, 1984, p. 171). The apprentice therefore becomes an entrepreneur not simply by learning how to buy and sell, but by learning how to conduct oneself within a network of relationships.
- iii. **Integrity and *Ezi Aha*:** Another important dimension is *ezi aha*, meaning a good name or reputation. In a relationship-based economy, reputation functions as an informal institution. A person may possess financial wealth but still lack social legitimacy if the wealth is believed to have been acquired dishonestly. Conversely, a person with a reputation for honesty can gain access to relationships, credit, partnerships and opportunities. This principle is particularly important for IAS because the system traditionally relies substantially on interpersonal trust. Where formal documentation is weak, reputation becomes a mechanism of informal accountability.
- iv. **Integrity and *Ofor na Ogu*:** The moral significance of *Ofor na Ogu* can also be used to interpret integrity in *Igbo* thought. *Ofor* is associated with legitimate authority, truth and moral order, while *Ogu* is commonly associated with innocence, moral justification and the condition of having acted rightly. Within this worldview, morality is not merely a private matter. Wrongdoing can disturb relationships among individuals and the wider community. Consequently, integrity becomes relational: the morally upright person is expected to contribute to social equilibrium. This interpretation should nevertheless be treated as a philosophical reconstruction rather than as evidence that every *Igbo* community historically understood *Ofor* and *Ogu* in precisely the same manner.

- v. **What is *Ikenga*?** *Ikenga* in traditional *Igbo* society is a profound philosophical symbol representing inner strength, or dynamic force that portrays the power of the will and kinetic energy, bravery, and individual achievement, especially in entrepreneurship and personal accomplishment. It is a wooden carving given to a young man during his transition to adulthood, or upon graduation from apprenticeship system embodying his destiny and guardian spirit referred to as his *chi*. This definition leads us to what is *Chi*? In *Igbo* philosophical thought, *Chi* is a fundamental metaphysical concept referring to the personal spiritual principle or divine life-force associated with an individual. It is commonly understood as the person's spiritual companion, source of vital power, and mediator between the individual and the Supreme Being, (Chukwu Okike Abiama) at birth to enable him or her fulfill his or her purpose in life. Therefore *Chi* is closely connected with questions of destiny, personality, agency, success, and human existence. A useful way of understanding *Chi* is that it expresses the *Igbo* conviction that human life involves an interaction between divine/spiritual influence and human effort. This is captured in the well-known *Igbo* maxim "*Onye kwe, Chi ya ekwe*"—"when a person agrees/commits himself, his or her *Chi* agrees." The maxim does not necessarily mean that human beings can achieve everything through effort alone; rather, it emphasizes the complementary relationship between personal determination and spiritual destiny. (Okoro, 2008, pp. 61–63).
- vi. **Relationship between *Chi* and *Ikenga*?** *Chi* is an individual spiritual guardian and destiny guide from the Creator (Chukwu Okike Abiam), while *Ikenga* is the physical and spiritual symbol of your personal strength, hard work, and power to achieve success. In *Igbo* tradition, both concepts work together to shape a person's life, but they serve very different purposes.

Theory of Hard Work and *Ikenga* in IAS: The Theory of Hard Work in *Igbo* Cosmology can be understood as the philosophical principle that human beings are expected to actively participate in the realization of their existence through labor, determination, courage, enterprise and responsible action. In traditional *Igbo* thought, the human person is not conceived simply as a passive recipient of destiny. Rather, the individual possesses agency and is expected to act upon the possibilities available to him or her. (Simon Ottenberg, 1968). As a result, hard work occupies a significant place in *Igbo* cosmology because it expresses the human capacity for agency, self-realization, and achievement. In *Igbo* thought, the individual is not expected to remain passive before destiny but is encouraged to exercise initiative, perseverance, courage, intelligence, and enterprise. Thus, the relationship between *Chi* and human action may be understood as a dynamic interaction between metaphysical possibility and practical effort: human will → effort → perseverance → achievement, with *Chi* providing the metaphysical context within which human life unfolds. Scholarship on *Igbo* thought similarly identifies a close relationship between *Chi* and *Ikenga*, presenting them as dimensions that connect the immaterial and material aspects of human existence and emphasize individual achievement within an egalitarian social order. The *Igbo* maxim "*Onye kwe, Chi ya ekwe*" ("if a person agrees/is willing, his or her *Chi* agrees") provides an important philosophical basis for understanding the place of effort in *Igbo* cosmology.

The maxim suggests that human beings possess the capacity to participate actively in determining the direction of their lives. As the author observes, the expression is associated with the conception of the individual as capable of influencing his or her fortune through personal initiative. Nevertheless, the maxim should not be interpreted simplistically as meaning that hard work automatically guarantees material success. *Igbo* cosmology also

recognizes destiny, fortune, limitations, and circumstances beyond individual control. Consequently, the principle expresses a balance between human agency and metaphysical contingency. The individual is obliged to act, but the outcome of action cannot always be completely controlled. This understanding becomes clearer in relation to *Chi* and destiny. *Uchendu* (1965) presented economic activity, labor, social organization, and worldview as interconnected dimensions of *Igbo* life. The importance attached to productive activity demonstrates that human beings are expected to actualize their capacities through participation in economic and social life. *Ekennia's* interpretation further connects *Chi* with human self-realization, arguing that *Chi* provides possibilities through which individuals can realize themselves, while the principle of *Onye kwe, Chi ya ekwe* emphasizes the importance of activating those possibilities through personal action. Destiny, therefore, is not necessarily an excuse for inactivity; rather, human potential requires practical effort for its realization. It is within this framework that *Ikenga* becomes particularly important. *Ikenga* symbolizes personal strength, achievement, enterprise, accomplishment, and the capacity to overcome obstacles. Its significance demonstrates that aspirations must be translated into action. While *Chi* may be understood as representing an individual's metaphysical potential or destiny, *Ikenga* symbolizes the strength and determination through which that potential is pursued. Hard work, consequently, becomes the practical expression of *Ikenga*. The relationship may therefore be conceptualized as: *Chi* → potential and destiny; *Ikenga* → strength, will and achievement; hard work → practical exercise of will; success → personal and communal advancement (Green, 1964).

Hard work in this context extends beyond physical labor. It encompasses discipline, perseverance, creativity, courage, entrepreneurship, and responsible application of one's abilities. These qualities are evident in traditional occupations such as farming, trading, craftsmanship and, particularly, apprenticeship. The *Igbo* Apprenticeship System exemplifies this philosophy because the apprentice is expected to learn through observation, participation, discipline, persistence, and practical engagement. Through sustained effort, the apprentice transforms acquired knowledge and skills into economic independence and social usefulness. Therefore, the *Igbo* conception of hard work is both metaphysical and ethical. It reflects the belief that human beings possess capacities that ought to be actualized rather than neglected. *Ikenga* gives symbolic expression to the will to accomplish, while hard work constitutes the practical discipline through which accomplishment becomes possible. The theory does not promise that every effort will produce identical outcomes; rather, it insists that meaningful achievement requires active participation in one's own becoming. In this sense, hard work is an ethical manifestation of *Ikenga* and a practical mechanism through which human potential, personal achievement and communal development are pursued.

Hard Work as an IAS Philosophical Model: The Theory of Hard Work in *Igbo* Cosmology can be understood as a philosophical model which holds that the realization of human potential requires active personal agency expressed through labor, perseverance, courage, enterprise, and moral responsibility. Within *Igbo* thought, human effort operates in relationship with *Chi*, understood as the individual's spiritual principle or personal agency, while achievement is symbolically associated with *Ikenga*, representing strength, accomplishment, enterprise, and the actualization of human capacity. Thus, success is not conceived merely as the passive fulfillment of destiny; rather, destiny becomes meaningful through purposeful human action. Applied to the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System (IAS), the philosophy of hard work becomes institutionalized as a practical process of human, moral, and economic formation. The

apprentice acquires knowledge primarily through observation, participation, practice, discipline, and sustained engagement with the master. The process may therefore be represented as observation → participation → practice → discipline → mastery → independence → mentorship. Through this progression, the apprentice develops not only occupational competence but also patience, perseverance, commercial discipline, customer relations, market knowledge, financial prudence, loyalty, respect, and the capacity to endure temporary hardship for future economic independence. (Isichei,1969).

The theory may be explained through four interconnected dimensions. Metaphysically, hard work is situated within the relationship between *Chi*, destiny, and human agency. Personally, it emphasizes will, courage, perseverance, and disciplined action. Economically, it manifests through productive labor, entrepreneurship, skill acquisition, and business mastery. Communally, it extends individual success into social responsibility through settlement, mentorship, wealth circulation, and the training of subsequent generations. Accordingly, the philosophical model can be represented as: *Chi* (Destiny) → Human Will → Hard Work and Perseverance → Skill Acquisition → *Ikenga*/Achievement → Economic Independence → Mentorship and Wealth Circulation → Community Development → National Development. The significance of this model for IAS lies in its understanding of apprenticeship as more than vocational training. It is a mechanism for transforming individual effort into productive capacity and subsequently converting personal achievement into communal benefit. The apprentice is ideally not trained to remain permanently dependent on the master but to attain sufficient competence to establish an independent livelihood and, eventually, become a mentor to others. In this sense, the system reproduces both economic opportunity and social responsibility across generations. (Nwoye, 2011,pp1-20). The central proposition, therefore, is that hard work constitutes the motivating principle, apprenticeship provides the institutional mechanism, entrepreneurship represents the immediate outcome, and communal development constitutes the broader social purpose. The theory consequently links Igbo metaphysical ideas of human agency with the practical operation of IAS, demonstrating how labor, discipline, skill, achievement, and reciprocal responsibility can function as interconnected principles of economic and social development.

Hard Work and Character Formation: Hard work occupies a central position in the ethical foundation of the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System (IAS), where labor is understood not merely as a means of earning a livelihood but also as a process of forming character. Through apprenticeship, the learner is expected to cultivate punctuality, endurance, discipline, patience, perseverance, responsibility, and willingness to learn. These virtues enable the apprentice to develop the personal qualities necessary for economic independence and responsible participation in society. The significance of hard work has both economic and moral dimensions. Economically, it produces skills, competence, productivity, and entrepreneurial capacity. Morally, it demonstrates discipline, commitment, and responsibility. Socially, it prepares the individual to contribute meaningfully to family and community. This understanding can also be related to the symbolism of *Ikenga*, which is associated with personal endeavor, strength, achievement, and accomplishment. *Uchendu's* (1965) discussion of Igbo social organization similarly highlights the importance of labor and economic activity within Igbo society.

Hard work within IAS also develops the virtue of delayed gratification. The apprentice may undergo years of learning, service, and discipline before attaining economic independence through settlement. This process teaches the individual to sacrifice immediate comfort for long-term competence and success. Such training is particularly relevant to

entrepreneurship, which ordinarily requires persistence, continuous learning, adaptation, discipline, and the ability to overcome failure. (Uchendu, (1965). Hard work is also connected to the moral legitimacy of wealth. In the ethical understanding underlying IAS, wealth acquires greater social value when it is obtained through productive and legitimate means rather than fraud, theft, exploitation, or deception. Consequently, economic success cannot be separated completely from the character of the person who achieves it. An entrepreneur may accumulate wealth and still fail morally if that wealth is acquired through harmful or dishonest practices. The ethical conception of hard work therefore incorporates values such as *ezi omume* (good conduct), *ezi aha* (good name or reputation), honesty, courage, discipline, responsibility, generosity, and respect for communal norms. The ultimate ideal is not simply the accumulation of wealth but the formation of a person who is productive, morally upright, socially responsible, and worthy of respect. Thus, within IAS, hard work functions simultaneously as a means of economic advancement and an instrument of character formation, linking entrepreneurship with integrity and communal responsibility.

Hard Work and Community/National Development: Hard work in Igbo thought is not merely an individual means of acquiring wealth; it is embedded within family, kinship, trade, and community life. Uchendu (1965, p. 22) shows the close relationship between labor, economic activity, division of labor, and Igbo social organization, while Green (1964) demonstrated how productive and social activities were integrated within Igbo village life. Thus, economic achievement carries a communal rather than purely individual significance. Within the Igbo Apprenticeship System (IAS), the fruits of hard work are expected to extend beyond personal prosperity. A successful apprentice is ideally expected to establish an independent livelihood and subsequently create opportunities through employment, sponsorship of apprentices, assistance to relatives, philanthropy, and community development. Consequently, hard work contributes to self-reliance, entrepreneurship, skills development, employment creation, wealth circulation, and ultimately national development. However, *Igbo* philosophy does not reduce success to a simple equation of hard work equals success. Human agency operates alongside destiny and the metaphysical influence of *Chi*. The principle *Onye kwe, Chi ya ekwe* emphasizes human willingness and initiative, while acknowledging the wider metaphysical order within which human striving occurs (Okeke et al., 2017). Hard work therefore represents the individual's responsibility to act and persevere, while the final outcome remains subject to broader metaphysical realities. Thus, the theory connects hard work, self-reliance, communal responsibility, and national development, transforming individual effort into productive capacity and, ultimately, collective prosperity.

Hard Work, Ideal Wealth and Social Capital in IAS: In *Igbo* cosmology, human beings are generally understood as active participants in the realization of their potential rather than passive recipients of destiny. Although *Chi* provides a metaphysical framework for human existence, individual effort remains essential. Hard work therefore represents the exercise of human agency through perseverance, skill development, courage, and purposeful action. The relationship may be expressed as *Chi* + human agency + perseverance → realization of potential. This does not imply that hard work guarantees wealth in every circumstance; rather, it emphasizes that potential requires corresponding effort for its actualization. (Cole, 1969). The concept of *Onye*, or the human person, further reinforces this active orientation. Individual worth is partly demonstrated through contribution to family and community. Consequently, qualities such as responsibility, self-discipline, independence,

usefulness, courage, and the ability to provide for dependents are associated with productive living, while persistent idleness may attract social disapproval. Within the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System (IAS), these values are cultivated through discipline, practical learning, endurance, and participation in the master's enterprise. The *Igbo* conception of ideal wealth also extends beyond private accumulation. Wealth acquired through legitimate enterprise may enhance social status, but its broader value lies in the responsibilities it enables the successful person to undertake. These include supporting relatives, assisting younger people, sponsoring apprentices, fulfilling communal obligations, and contributing to community development. The apprentice therefore learns not simply how to make money but how to work, save, negotiate, build relationships, endure difficulties, and eventually establish an independent enterprise. In this respect, wealth becomes a means of social responsibility and wealth circulation rather than merely personal consumption. (Jones,1963).

Hard work also functions as a pathway to social mobility. Through apprenticeship, individuals with limited initial access to formal capital or elite educational opportunities can acquire human capital, commercial knowledge, social networks, and eventually financial capital. IAS consequently transforms labor and mentorship into mechanisms for economic advancement. Historically, such processes were particularly significant in *Igbo* economic reconstruction following the Nigerian Civil War, when entrepreneurial activity and apprenticeship contributed to the rebuilding of livelihoods and businesses. The concept of social capital is especially important to this process. Relationships between masters, apprentices, customers, families, and wider business networks provide access to knowledge, trust, opportunities, markets, and resources. Thus, apprenticeship does not merely transfer technical skills; it transmits relationships and networks that can support future enterprise. Nevertheless, the theory should not romanticize hard work or treat it as the sole explanation of entrepreneurial success. Contemporary IAS operates within conditions shaped by capital availability, infrastructure, education, government policy, technology, markets, regulation, insecurity, and social networks. Its philosophical significance therefore lies in understanding hard work as a fundamental expression of active self-making: the individual strives to develop personal potential, attain legitimate prosperity, build social relationships, and convert achievement into opportunities for others. The theoretical sequence can therefore be expressed as: *Ikenga* → Human Agency → Hard Work and Perseverance → Skill Acquisition → Economic Independence → Social Capital and Mentorship → Wealth Circulation → Community Development → National Development. Thus, within IAS, hard work is the engine of personal development, ideal wealth is wealth acquired and used responsibly, and social capital is the network of relationships through which knowledge, opportunities, and prosperity are reproduced across generations.

Principles of Loyalty (*Nkwanye Obi*) and Faithfulness in the IAS: Loyalty (*Nkwanye Obi*) is a significant ethical principle underlying the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System (IAS), particularly in regulating the relationship between the master, apprentice, families, and the wider community. It may be understood as faithfulness, trust, commitment, and adherence to legitimate obligations rather than blind obedience. The *Igbo* maxim *Onye aghana nwanne ya*, commonly interpreted as "Let no one abandon his or her brother," expresses an ethic of solidarity, mutual assistance, and social responsibility that is relevant to the relational character of apprenticeship. Within IAS, loyalty is fundamentally reciprocal. The apprentice is expected to demonstrate honesty, commitment, confidentiality, respect, responsible performance, and dedication to learning. The apprentice should honor legitimate agreements, protect business information, avoid theft and fraud, respect customers, obey

reasonable instructions, and protect the reputation of the master and the enterprise. These obligations help establish the trust necessary for the transmission of commercial knowledge and responsibility. (Afunugo, et al.,2024). The master, however, is not merely the beneficiary of the apprentice's loyalty. The master also carries corresponding obligations. Genuine apprenticeship requires the provision of occupational training, mentorship, fair treatment, reasonable welfare, protection from abuse, and respect for agreed conditions. Where settlement or economic empowerment has been legitimately agreed upon, the master is expected to honor that obligation. An apprenticeship relationship becomes ethically defective when loyalty is demanded exclusively from the apprentice while the master treats the apprentice merely as a source of cheap labor.

This reciprocal character reveals the hidden ethical dimension of loyalty in IAS. Loyalty should be understood as a form of covenantal relationship founded upon mutual trust and accountability. It does not justify exploitation, humiliation, or unconditional submission. Rather, it creates a moral bond in which both parties are expected to fulfill legitimate responsibilities. Contemporary discussions of IAS have identified problems such as inadequate contractual safeguards, exploitation, unequal treatment, and insufficient accountability. Consequently, strengthening loyalty in contemporary apprenticeship requires protecting the rights and dignity of both the master and apprentice rather than simply demanding greater obedience from the apprentice. Loyalty also has an important relationship with business continuity and social capital. When an apprentice successfully completes training and establishes an independent enterprise, the relationship with the former master may continue through cooperation, referrals, business partnerships, mentorship, and other forms of networking. In this way, loyalty extends beyond the period of apprenticeship and can create durable commercial relationships across generations. Trust developed during apprenticeship therefore becomes an economic resource that facilitates business succession, knowledge transfer, and the expansion of entrepreneurial networks. (Magesa, (1997). The principle can consequently be represented as: Loyalty → Trust → Mentorship → Business Continuity → Net-working → Wealth Circulation → Community Development. The ethical significance of loyalty in IAS is therefore broader than personal allegiance. It provides a moral foundation for the transmission of knowledge, preservation of business relationships, protection of reputation, and continuity of entrepreneurial institutions. The apprentice's faithfulness creates confidence in the master, while the master's integrity gives the apprentice reason to remain committed to the relationship. Both parties thereby participate in a system of reciprocal obligation.

From this perspective, *Nkwanye Obi* is best understood as an ethic of reciprocal faithfulness rather than unilateral obedience. Its proper application requires honesty, confidentiality, commitment, fairness, protection, mentorship, and accountability from both parties. When these obligations are respected, loyalty strengthens the master–apprentice relationship and contributes to the reproduction of entrepreneurial knowledge, trust, opportunities, and communal prosperity. When loyalty is demanded without reciprocity, however, the moral foundation of apprenticeship is weakened. Thus, loyalty in IAS can be regarded as both an ethical virtue and a social-economic mechanism. It binds individuals to legitimate obligations, builds trust, facilitates mentorship and business succession, and sustains networks through which knowledge and economic opportunities are transferred from one generation to another. (Basden,1966).

Respect (Nsopurū/Ùgwù) as a Moral Principle in IAS: Respect, expressed in *Igbo* thought through the concepts of *nsopurū* and *ùgwù*, is one of the central moral principles that

regulate relationships within the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System (IAS). Apprenticeship is not merely a process of acquiring business skills; it is also a system of moral education through which individuals learn discipline, responsibility, cooperation and ethical conduct. Respect therefore provides the framework within which teaching, learning and entrepreneurial formation occur. (Asouzu,2007). In IAS, respect involves recognizing the dignity, experience, authority and legitimate rights of others. It is expressed through humility, good conduct, attentive listening, discipline and responsible participation. However, respect should not be mistaken for servility or unquestioning obedience. A contemporary understanding of IAS must distinguish legitimate authority from exploitation. The master's authority is valuable when it promotes learning and character formation, but it becomes morally problematic when it encourages abuse or oppression. Respect within IAS should therefore be understood as reciprocal recognition rather than blind submission. Kwame Gyekye argued that African moral life is rooted in communal relationships and mutual obligations. This perspective is relevant to IAS because apprenticeship traditionally connects the apprentice, master, family and community within a network of shared responsibilities. Respect therefore contributes not only to personal conduct but also to social harmony. (Kwame Gyekye,1997. pp. 115–143). In consonant to the above lines of reasoning, respect (Nsọpuru/Ùgwù) remains one of the most important ethical principles sustaining the *Igbo* Apprenticeship System. It promotes social order, moral formation, knowledge transmission and entrepreneurial development. Most importantly, respect should be understood as reciprocal rather than merely hierarchical. Apprentices owe respect to masters because of their experience, while masters owe respect to apprentices because they possess dignity, rights and future aspirations. The renewal of IAS therefore depends on preserving its moral strengths while correcting practices that undermine justice, equality and human dignity. In this way, respect can continue to serve as a foundation for trust, learning, character formation and sustainable entrepreneurship.

Theoretical Foundations of Respect: Respect performs several important functions within IAS.

- i. **Respect as Social Order:** Respect creates behavioral expectations between master and apprentice, thereby establishing an environment where teaching and learning can occur effectively.
- ii. **Respect as Moral Formation:** Through interaction with experienced adults, apprentices learn virtues such as humility, patience, self-control, responsibility and perseverance.
- iii. **Respect as Reciprocal Recognition:** Respect operates in both directions. Apprentices acknowledge the master's experience, while masters recognize the dignity and aspirations of apprentices. Honneth's theory of recognition (1995) supports this view by emphasizing the importance of mutual recognition in healthy human relationships. Honneth, A. (1995).
- iv. **Respect as Communal Responsibility:** The behavior of an apprentice affects not only personal reputation but also the reputation of the family, master and community
- v. **Respect as Metaphysical Responsibility:** In traditional *Igbo* thought, morality is linked to wider spiritual realities involving *Chi*, *Ala*, ancestors and *Ofor*, (Mbiti, 1969) was explained the interconnectedness of religion, morality and social life in African societies.
- vi. **Respect as Knowledge Transmission:** Respect creates trust, openness and cooperation, all of which are essential for the transfer of knowledge. Much of the knowledge transmitted through apprenticeship is tacit and practical rather than written. Wenger's

theory of communities of practice explains that learning occurs through participation in shared activities. (Wenger,1998).

This process may be summarized as: Respect → Trust → Openness → Knowledge Transfer → Competence → Entrepreneurship.

Categories of Respect in IAS: Respect within IAS extends beyond the relationship between master and apprentice. It includes:

- i. Respect for *Chukwu/Chineke* as the supreme source of existence. Within traditional Igbo cosmology, Chukwu/Chineke is understood as the supreme source of existence. Religious respect may be expressed through moral conduct, prayer, thanksgiving and avoidance of sacrilege.
- ii. Respect for the master and legitimate authority.
- iii. Respect for elders as custodians of knowledge.
- iv. Respect for ancestors and inherited values.
- v. Respect for oneself through disciplined conduct.
- vi. Respect for fellow apprentices through cooperation.
- vii. Respect for customers through honesty and fairness.
- viii. Respect for family and community through good reputation.
- ix. Respect for nature and the environment.
- x. Respect for tradition and moral law, while critically rejecting practices that undermine human dignity.

Respect and Entrepreneurial Formation: IAS is fundamentally a learning institution that transmits both explicit and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge includes information such as prices, accounting methods and product identification. Tacit knowledge involves practical abilities such as negotiation, customer relations, market judgment and problem-solving. Such knowledge is acquired through participation rather than classroom instruction. Apprentices learn by observing, assisting, asking questions, making mistakes and gradually assuming greater responsibilities. Respect therefore plays an essential role because it encourages attentiveness, trust and openness between master and apprentice. (Afunugo, et al.,2024). When apprentices respect masters, they become more willing to learn. When masters respect apprentices, they become more willing to teach and mentor. Respect therefore contributes directly to entrepreneurial competence and business continuity.

Ethical Reciprocity and Contemporary Challenges: A defining characteristic of IAS is reciprocity. The master provides training, mentorship, experience and business exposure, while the apprentice contributes labor, loyalty, commitment and service. However, reciprocity must not become a justification for exploitation. Apprentices deserve humane treatment and genuine training, while apprentices also have obligations of honesty and responsibility. Contemporary challenges affecting the moral foundations of IAS include: weak contractual agreements, exploitation of apprentices, and failure of settlement obligations, apprentice misconduct, excessive individualism, gender exclusion, family disputes and limited participation. These challenges suggest the need for reforms that preserve the strengths of IAS while eliminating exploitative practices.

Integration of Hard Work, Loyalty, and Respect: These virtues function together rather than independently. Traditionally in Igbo philosophical heritage, ethical Principle, moral function, entrepreneurial outcome, hard work, discipline and productivity, business competence, loyalty, trustworthiness, sustainable partnerships, respect, social harmony and strong

commercial reputation are inter connected within the IAS operational system. Together, these virtues produce entrepreneurs who are both economically capable and morally accountable. IAS prioritizes moral development before financial success and delayed gratification. Apprentices endure years of service before receiving settlement, cultivating patience and long-term thinking. This is viewed as moral legitimacy of wealth. Wealth is considered honorable only when acquired through honest labor. Ethics of gratitude means that successful apprentices are expected to assist younger apprentices, creating a cycle of generosity. Communal accountability: Ethical failures affect not only individuals but also families and communities. Spiritual accountability: Many *Igbo* traditions regard dishonesty and betrayal as offences against the moral order upheld by ancestors and the earth deity.

Findings

The ultimate finding of the study is that IAS is sustained not by economic exchange alone but by a moral architecture of integrity, hard work, loyalty and respect. These virtues convert apprenticeship from mere labor into a process of character formation, entrepreneurial competence, social mobility and intergenerational wealth circulation.

Conclusion

The *Igbo* Apprenticeship System (IAS) is a key indigenous institution for entrepreneurial learning and economic empowerment in southeastern Nigeria. Its resilience lies in both economic value and an ethical framework that builds trust, transmits values, and links individual success with communal responsibility. This study highlights four core virtues: integrity, hard work, loyalty, and respect. Integrity fosters trust and reputation; hard work builds competence and discipline; loyalty ensures reciprocity and business continuity; while respect underpins mentorship, knowledge transfer, and social harmony. Despite its strengths, IAS faces challenges such as exploitation, weak contracts, unpaid settlements, misconduct, and exclusion. These issues require ethical reform rather than abandonment, through written agreements, accountability systems, welfare safeguards, dispute resolution, certification, and ethical education. Ultimately, IAS shows that entrepreneurship is not only about wealth creation but also moral formation, and its future depends on preserving its moral capital while adapting to contemporary realities.

Recommendation

The study recommends that the most appropriate reform strategy suitable for IAS is ethical reconstruction rather than wholesale replacement. That is preserving the indigenous moral principles of IAS while introducing written agreements, reciprocal accountability, rights protection, ethical education and institutional recognition. (*Afigbo, 1981*).

References

- Achebe, C. (1958). *Things fall apart*. Heinemann.
- Afigbo, A. E. (1981). *Ropes of sand: Studies in Igbo history and culture*. University Press in association with Oxford University Press.
- Afunugo, K. N., & Molokwu, G. C. (2024). The Igbo apprenticeship system and socio-economic development of contemporary Igbo youths: An ethical reconsideration. *Interdisciplinary Journal of African & Asian Studies*, 10(2).
- Agama, A. M., & Ohajionu, U. C. (2021). X-raying the bounds of the Igbo apprenticeship system (IAS): Implications for entrepreneurship education and job creation in emerging economies. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 25(2), 1042–1063. <https://doi.org/10.61841/1sfpvg80>

- Asouzu, I. I. (2007). *Ibuanyidanda: New complementary ontology: Beyond world-immanentism, ethnocentric reduction and impositions*. LIT Verlag.
- Basden, G. T. (1966). *Niger Ibos*. Frank Cass.
- Cole, H. M. (1969). *Mbari: Art and life among the Owerri Igbo*. Indiana University Press.
- Ekennia, C. C. (2000). *African existence and spirituality: A study of Igbo ontology*. Spiritan Publications.
- Green, M. M. (1964). *Ibo village affairs*. Praeger.
- Gyekye, K. (1997). *Tradition and modernity: Philosophical reflections on the African experience*. Oxford University Press.
- Honneth, A. (1995). *The struggle for recognition: The moral grammar of social conflicts*. Polity Press.
- Isichei, E. (1976). *A history of the Igbo people*. Macmillan.
- Jones, G. I. (1963). *The trading systems of the Oil Rivers*. Oxford University Press.
- Magesa, L. (1997). *African religion: The moral traditions of abundant life*. Orbis Books.
- Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African religions and philosophy*. Heinemann.
- Menkiti, I. A. (1984). Person and community in African traditional thought. In R. A. Wright (Ed.), *African philosophy: An introduction* (pp. 171–181). University Press of America.
- Nwabughuogu, A. I. (2011). The Isusu: An institution for capital formation among the Ngwa Igbo; its origin and development to 1951. *Africa*, 51(1), 1–18.
- Nwoye, C. M. A. (2011). Igbo cultural and religious worldview: An insider's perspective. *Journal of Religion and Spirituality*, 1(1), 1–20.
- Okeke, C. O., Ibenwa, C. N., & Okeke, G. T. (2017). Conflicts between African traditional religion and Christianity in Eastern Nigeria: The Igbo example. *SAGE Open*, 7(2), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017709322>
- Onyeike, B. C., Chigbo, Q. U., Nzeagwu, E. C., Okafor, V. C., & Ereforokuma, B. N. (2025). Ethical business practices and gender inclusion in Igbo apprenticeship system. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(8), 7092–7100. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.908000587>
- Ottenberg, S. (1968). *Double Descent in an African Society: The Afikpo Village Group*. University of Washington Press.
- Uchendu, V. C. (1965). *The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge University Press.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 22, 2026 Accepted: September 16, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Akpakpan, Monday & Ukpe, Uyouko E. (2026). "Work-Life Balance and Employee Productivity in the Public Sector: A Study of Selected Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Stations in Southern Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 85-96.

Article

Open Access

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A STUDY OF SELECTED NIGERIAN TELEVISION AUTHORITY (NTA STATIONS IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA)

Monday Akpakpan¹ & Uyouko Effiong Ukpe²

Department of Public Administration, University of Uyo, Nigeria^{1&2}

Corresponding Email: mondayakpakpan@gmail.com¹

Abstract

This study investigated the effect of work-life balance on employee's productivity in four selected Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) stations in Southern Nigeria, namely; NTA Uyo, NTA, Enugu, NTA Aba and NTA Calabar. It sought to address concerns that demanding work conditions, limited flexibility, inadequate leave utilisation, work-related stress and work-life conflict may undermine employee productivity at the Nigerian Television Authority. The study was anchored on the Job-Demand Resource Theory. To address the research problem, a descriptive and survey design was adopted and primary data was collected from 263 employees from the four selected Nigerian Television Authority Stations, using a structured questionnaire titled "The Work-life Balance Scale (WLBS)". The collected data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)—descriptive statistics tools such as simple percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse and answer the research questions while the Spearman's rho analysis was used in testing the research hypotheses. The findings revealed a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between regular leave-taking and employee concentration ($p = .428$, $p < .001$). Flexible working hours recorded a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with employee productivity ($p = .431$, $p < .001$). Work-related stress also showed a moderate positive relationship with absenteeism ($p = .387$, $p < .001$) which indicate that higher stress was associated with increased absenteeism. Conversely, work-life conflict recorded a moderate negative and statistically significant relationship when tested against employee engagement ($p = -.376$, $p < .001$). The study concludes that to maintain employee's well-being and organisation's performance, it is critical to balance job demands with available work resources. Based on the findings, the study recommends that organisations should

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

adopt flexible work arrangements, provide regular off work leaves, implement stress coping strategies and reduce work-life conflict.

Keywords: Work-life Balance, Employee Productivity, Leave-taking, Flexible Working Hours, Work-related Stress.

Introduction

The pursuit of efficiency and productivity has become a major concern for Nigeria's public sector due to increased public expectations, budgetary restrictions, and the need for efficient delivery of services. In this case, organizations have to ensure maximum utilization of the human resource without affecting their effectiveness. The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), being a public service broadcaster, is entrusted with the responsibility of educating, informing, and entertaining Nigerians. Motivational approaches based on classical management and psychology were traditionally used by organisations aiming to enhance productivity. Although motivation plays a critical role, modern studies have revealed that there are other variables affecting dedication and productivity of employees. In particular, Nwinye (2025) states that wellbeing of employees plays an important role in productivity, whereas the hierarchy of needs proposed by Maslow (1943) suggests that satisfaction of basic needs helps to motivate employees and make them dedicated.

Work-life balance as the state of harmony between professional responsibilities and personal life has been studied by researchers within work-family conflict approach and work-life perspective. The latter encompasses various aspects of the life of employees including their adaptability, autonomy, and organisational support which are necessary for well-being and productivity (Clark, 2000; Udin *et al.*, 2023). Studies demonstrate that organisations encouraging work-life balance are characterized by better productivity, engagement, and lower level of stress (Kerksieck *et al.*, 2024). On the other hand, boundaryless situations, increasing connectivity of people through technologies, and growing pressures are sources of stress and conflicts in work-life balance (Czakert and Berger, 2024). Promoting a healthy work-life balance among workers is particularly challenging in Nigeria's public sector where the staff members experience heavy workloads, bureaucracy, under-staffing, resource constraints and rigidity (Ihwughwavwe and Shewakramani, 2024; Okolie *et al.*, 2023). These conditions undermine satisfaction and productivity. Against this backdrop, the present study investigates the influence of work-life balance on employee productivity at NTA, Uyo. Specifically, it examines flexible working hours, leave policies, work-related stress and work-life conflict, aiming to provide empirical insights that inform policies promoting employee well-being, commitment and productivity in the public service.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian public sector has long been marked by rigid structures, bureaucratic procedures and demanding work conditions that makes it difficult for employees to maintain a healthy balance between their work and personal life. When employees have limited capacity to effectively manage family responsibilities and work arrangements, the consequences may extend beyond their personal well-being to affecting the level of commitment they have towards organisational efficiency and productivity. This issue is particularly relevant in the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) where employees have to meet tight deadlines on continuous news delivery, and entertainment under especially, under demanding conditions. Limited flexibility often makes it difficult to meet family responsibilities alongside organisational expectations, leaving employees physically and psychologically drained. Leave utilisation presents another concern. Although intended for

rest, employees may avoid taking leave due to workload and unfinished tasks, returning without adequate recovery. Repeated fatigue reduces concentration and productivity. Similarly, persistent work-related stress from heavy workloads and tight schedules undermines well-being and increases absenteeism. Absence, however, shifts responsibilities to colleagues, creating a cycle of stress and reduced efficiency.

Work-life conflict further complicates the situation as employees juggle family, social and personal obligations that often clash with work demands, leading to frustration, emotional exhaustion and declining enthusiasm. Without organisational support, employees may glide towards imbalance silently which may result in normalising exhaustion and weakening their overall productivity. For NTA, this is critical as effective broadcasting depends on employees who are available, focused and committed. Exhaustion, stress and unresolved personal demands reduce performance, making work-life balance not just a welfare issue but an organisational necessity. Despite its importance, little empirical evidence exists on how specific work-life balance factors such as regular leave-taking, flexible hours, work-stress and work-life conflict affect productivity at NTA. Without such evidence, interventions risk being assumption-driven rather than grounded in employee realities. This study therefore investigates the influence of work-life balance on employee productivity at NTA, focusing on leave-taking, flexible hours, stress and conflict. It seeks to establish whether improvements in these areas enhance concentration, commitment and effectiveness, thereby strengthening organisational productivity and service delivery.

Research Objectives

- i. To investigate how employees' perception of regular leave-taking as an aspect of work-life balance relate to their concentration upon return to work
- ii. To examine how flexible working hours as perceived by employees as an aspect of work-life balance affects employee productivity.
- iii. To investigate the relationship between work-related stress, as identified by NTA employees, and absenteeism.
- iv. To ascertain the impact of work-life conflict on employee engagement at the Nigerian Television Authority.

Research Questions

- i. How does employees' perception of regular leave-taking as an aspect of work-life balance relate to their concentration upon return to work?
- ii. How does flexible working hours, as perceived by employees as an aspect of work-life balance, affect employee productivity?
- iii. What is the relationship between work-related stress, as identified by NTA employees, and absenteeism?
- iv. How does work-life conflict impact employee engagement at the Nigerian Television Authority?

Research Hypotheses

- H₀₁:** Regular leave-taking by employees does not significantly improve their concentration levels upon return to work.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant effect between flexible working hours and employee productivity at the Nigerian Television Authority.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant relationship between work-related stress and absenteeism among employees at the Nigerian Television Authority.

H₀₄: Work-life conflict has no significant impact on employee engagement at the Nigerian Television Authority.

Literature Review

The Concept of Work-Life Balance: Work-life balance is a central focus of organisational behaviour, human resource management, occupational health psychology and public administration due to its impact on both the employee's wellbeing and organisational performance. Today's organisations recognise that individuals lead multifaceted lives outside work and facilitating balance between the two helps foster happiness, increase productivity and improve organisational effectiveness. In essence, work-life balance denotes an individual's capacity to meet the demands and enjoy the roles in life domains without any role being excessively dominant over the other. It represents equal commitment and satisfaction in work and non-work roles, which is an improvement over previous studies of work-family conflict, and now it is concerned about the successful integration of roles to enhance not only wellbeing but also efficiency (Pattusamy and Jacob, 2017). In recent decades, work-life balance has been studied intensely and bibliometric studies show that it is of interest among authors spanning many disciplines, including psychology, sociology, economics and public administration (Zaitouni *et al.*, 2024; Rashmi and Kataria, 2022). A significant aspect of this research centres on flexible work practices, organisational culture, HR policies, employee engagement and performance. Within this paper, work-life balance is conceptualised through JD-R theory which identifies both job demands (workload, deadlines, work emotional demands) and job resources (support, autonomy, flexibility) within a workplace. Having enough resources within a workplace (supervisory support, flexible working schedules, and leave facilities) allows employees to cope with demands without experiencing ill effects such as burnout; when job demands are high without commensurate job resources, it is often associated with increased stress, impaired health and work-life imbalance.

Job flexibility, which is arguably the most discussed job resource that contributes to work-life balance, includes different working arrangements such as working from home, compressed working days, and flexible working schedules that give employees increased control over when, where and how they work. Flexible work practices have been found in meta-analyses to yield improvements in work-life balance, job satisfaction, employee retention and performance (Rashmi and Kataria, 2022). Leaning on this knowledge, this paper also assumes taking leave as a resource within the workplace which serves as a recovery mechanism to regain depleted energy, motivation and cognitive functioning while interrupting occupational strain and work impairment that may later culminate in burnout (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). The two resources that are most consistently highlighted as organisational support for positive work-life balance are flexibility and leave (Thilagavathy and Geetha, 2021). The provision of adequate work-life balance provisions results in the benefits of increased work satisfaction, higher commitment and improved wellbeing for the employee and increased performance and efficiency from the organisation's perspective, and a low level of work-life balance on the other hand may produce various outcomes such as stress, work impairment/absenteeism/presenteeism, burnout and turnover intentions (Zaitouni *et al.*, 2024; Thilagavathy and Geetha, 2021). Organisations that put emphasis on their supported work-life balance programmes and flexible work practices often score high on levels of motivation among their employees and retain them longer. In Nigeria, where employees, in the public sector in particular, are burdened with work and subjected to lack

of adequate working resources and bureaucracy, it is essential to integrate work–life balance. Work–life balance within the JD-R framework is treated as a mediating mechanism allowing resources such as flexibility and leave utilisation to positively affect work–life balance which in turn reduces and/or mitigates various demands, thus increasing productivity at NTA.

Employee Productivity in Organisations

Productivity of the workforce is fundamental to the success of an organisation and signifies how well human resources are used to produce the desired services. Literature provides many factors which impact productivity: Saks (2019) describes how employee efforts are the basis of organisational success, while Davidescu *et al.* (2020) highlight how workplace factors, flexibility and support from superiors influence organisational wellbeing. Gragnano *et al.* (2020) note that the work–family relationship is often under tension, as greater involvement in work can lead to burnout, whereas satisfaction in personal life helps maintain enthusiasm and commitment. Conversely, dissatisfaction or excessive demands diminish productivity and contribute to turnover. Thus, work–life balance is critical. When imbalance occurs, fatigue, burnout and absenteeism follow. Gragnano (2018) stresses the need for boundaries between work and personal life, warning that energy depletion and excessive workload breed physical and psychological strain, including anxiety and depression, alongside reduced productivity. Both Gragnano and Shikusinde (2025) emphasise the organisational need to support employees with flexible arrangements, wellness programmes and resources, while employees themselves must adopt self-care and boundary management strategies.

This can be explained through the AMO Framework (Obeidat *et al.*, 2020), which views productivity as a function of ability, motivation and opportunity: ability being skills and expertise, motivation being psychological drive and dedication, and opportunity being organisational resources and supportive context. Productivity is about working smarter, not longer, with appropriate resources, flexibility and support. This framework underscores the importance of integrated work–life balance systems in preventing burnout. Other scholars, such as Choudhury *et al.* (2021), focus on measurement through concrete results within prescribed timeframes. Task performance is defined as the degree to which employees accomplish work-related tasks specified by the organisation (Harter *et al.*, 2020). Productivity is therefore a core indicator of success, directly tied to organisational strategy and competitive advantage. To maintain effectiveness and efficiency, managers must develop and manage their human capital.

Work-Related Stress and Absenteeism

Work-stress has been extensively investigated in organisational research, especially in the field of organisational psychology because of its influence on employee health and organisational effectiveness. The relationship between demanding pressures and absenteeism, poor job satisfaction and impaired health has been identified (Adias *et al.*, 2025; Al-Kassem *et al.*, 2025). Occupational stress negatively influences employees both physically and psychologically, causing exhaustion, burnout, anxiety, and depression, which impairs their work ability and increases absenteeism (Hildenbrand *et al.*, 2024). The combination of a heavy workload, insufficient support, and role ambiguity diminishes physical and psychological resources, decreasing the ability to cope with stress and reducing the level of organisational commitment. Workers who suffer from stress in the workplace usually feel dissatisfaction, withdrawal and cognitive strain, which increase the likelihood of absenteeism (Makinde and Idowu, 2025; Kerksieck *et al.*, 2024).

Various research studies emphasize mediating variables like organisational support, work-life balance and resilience programs. Organisational support creates confidence and lowers the level of stress whereas work-life balance and family-friendly policies assist in dealing with conflicting issues for employees (Shirmohammadi *et al.*, 2022). Resilience programs develop coping skills which help employees in recovering from stressful circumstances and avoid getting burnt out (Udin *et al.*, 2023; Opoku *et al.*, 2023). Thus, workplace stress is considered to be an important predictor of absenteeism due to its impact on health status, satisfaction and organizational commitment. The organizations that make efforts to create supportive environment and implement resilience programs and work-life balance policies have a chance to keep away from absenteeism (Al-Kassem *et al.*, 2025; Udin *et al.*, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

This study explores the relationship between work-life balance and employee productivity at NTA, using the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory as its foundation. This theory was developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) and gives an explanation of the interaction of job demands (e.g., workload, time pressure, emotional demands) and job resources (autonomy, support, flexibility, leave) which affect the wellbeing and productivity of employees. Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory is built on several basic concepts, including: (i) Job Demands—conditions which require considerable effort and can create stress and fatigue; (ii) Job Resources—conditions which either mitigate demands or stimulate personal development; (iii) Interaction—balance between demands and resources results in either engagement or burnout; (iv) Work Engagement—a state characterised by energy and dedication; and (v) Burnout—an energy depletion due to unmet demands.

When used in the context of the present research, the JD-R Theory sheds light on how leave-taking and flexible working serve as personal resources which enable the workers to recuperate, manage their loads, and create appropriate boundaries. Such resources motivate the employees, increase their resilience, and decrease the negative effects of over-demanding situations. Alternatively, when the employees at NTA encounter a very demanding schedule, deadline pressures, and lack of organisational resources, stress and work-life conflict arise, leading to a decrease in efficiency. Thus, Job-Demand Resource Theory provide the theoretical foundation to establish the connection between independent variables (leave-taking, flexible work, stress, conflict) and the dependent variable (employee productivity). It describes how organisational resources help prevent health deterioration and promote motivation.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to examine the impact of work-life balance on employee productivity at NTA. Structured questionnaires titled “Work-Life Balance Scale (WLBS)” provided quantitative data on employees’ experiences, while secondary sources (journals, textbooks, government publications) offered qualitative insights. The population comprised all 263 employees across the four stations, spanning administration, engineering, news, programmes, marketing and finance. This diversity ensured comprehensive representation of workforce experiences. A census sampling technique was adopted, including all employees rather than a subset. This was feasible given the manageable population size and ensured inclusiveness across departments, minimised bias and strengthened comparative analysis across stations. Data for the study were collected through structured titled. Work-Life Balance Scale (WLBS) which was administered to

employees of NTA stations in Aba, Calabar, Enugu and Uyo, using Likert-scale items to measure satisfaction, conflict and organisational support, complemented by secondary sources such as literature and reports. The Work-Life Balance Scale (WLBS), which included demographic items and measures of leave-taking, flexible hours and work-life conflict, rated on a four-point Likert scale and analysed statistically. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS v29, with descriptive statistics (frequencies) used to summarise demographics and responses, and hypotheses tested using Spearman's Rho at the 0.01 significance level, where $p < 0.01$ indicated significant relationships between variables.

Data Presentation

A total number of 263 questionnaires were distributed to employees in the four NTA stations in Nigeria, and all were successfully returned giving a 100% response rate. However, out of the 263 copies returned 6 questionnaires were void so a total of 257 questionnaires were considered valid which represented 97.7% response rate. These respondents were predominantly male (147, 57.2%) and female (110, 42.8%), making up a rather equally distributed gender representation. Also, the majority of respondents (36.6%) fell within the age bracket of 35-44, followed by 27.2% who were in the 25-34 age bracket, 20.2% of whom were between the ages of 45-54, and 7.0% of whom were under the age of 25. Regarding the marital status of respondents, 152 (59.1%) were married, 74 (28.8%) single, 16 (6.2%) divorced, and 15 (5.8%) widowed. In regard to educational qualifications, 135 (52.5%) were holders of bachelor's degree, 84 (32.7%) masters' degrees, 21 (8.2%) high school certificate holders, 9 (3.5%) diploma /HND, and 8 (3.1%) had their doctorate degree. In relation to years of service, 90 (35.0%) had 6-10 years of experience, 82 (31.9%) had 1-5 years.

Table 4.6: Summary of Responses to Research Questions

Research Question	Research Variable	No. of Items	Weighted Mean	Std. Dev. Range	Interpretation
RQ1	Regular leave-taking and employee concentration	4	3.17	0.86–0.91	Agree
RQ2	Flexible working hours and employee productivity	4	3.04	0.89–0.93	Agree
RQ3	Work-related stress and absenteeism	4	2.88	0.98–1.04	Agree
RQ4	Work-life conflict and employee engagement	4	3.01	0.96–0.98	Agree

The results presented in Table 4.6 provide answers to the four research questions. Respondents agreed with the statements relating to regular leave-taking and employee concentration (WM = 3.17), flexible working hours and employee productivity (WM = 3.04), work-related stress and absenteeism (WM = 2.88), and work-life conflict and employee engagement (WM = 3.01).

Table: 4.7: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient between Regular Leave-Taking and Employee Concentration Correlations

		Regular Leave-Taking	Employee Concentration
Regular-Leave-Taking	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.428**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	257	257
Employee Concentration	Correlation coefficient	.428**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

N	257	257
---	-----	-----

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

Source: IBM Corp. (2022). *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29)*. IBM Corp.

The Spearman's Rho test signified a positive, moderate and significant correlation between frequent leave and concentration of employee ($p = .428$, $p < .001$). The frequent leave employees come back sharper and more focused. The significance of the correlation also indicated the significance of leave in cognitive recuperation justifying the theory of exhaustion recovery. The value of .000 for p-value proved the correlation. Hence null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 4.8: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient between Flexible Work Hours and Employee Productivity Correlations

		Flexible Work Hours	Employee Productivity
Flexible Work Hours	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.431**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	257	257
Employee Productivity	Correlation coefficient	.431**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	257	257

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

Source: IBM Corp. (2022). *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29)*. IBM Corp.

We can see from Spearman's rho correlation analysis that there exists a moderate positive statistically significant correlation between flexible working hours and productivity of employees ($p = .431$, $p < .001$). The result reveals that there is a positive relation between the productivity and flexible working hours of employees; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4.9: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient between Work Stress and Absenteeism Correlations

		Work Stress	Absenteeism
Work Stress	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.387**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	257	257
Absenteeism	Correlation coefficient	.387**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	257	257

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

Source: IBM Corp. (2022). *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29)*. IBM Corp.

From Table 4.9, the results of the correlation analysis based on Spearman's rho show that a positive but moderate significant correlation exists between work related stress and employee absenteeism ($p = .387$, $p < .001$). This therefore suggest that workers reporting higher levels of work related stress also reported high levels of absenteeism. The correlation coefficient of 0.387 was positive showing a positive correlation between work related stress and employee absenteeism while the significant value of .000 shows that the correlation is significant. Hence the null hypothesis of no significant relationship existing between work related stress and absenteeism among employees of the Nigerian Television Authority is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Table 4.10: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient between Work-Life Conflict and Employee Engagement Correlations

		Work-Life Conflict	Employee Engagement
Work-Life Conflict	Correlation coefficient	1.000	-.376**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	257	257
Employee Engagement	Correlation coefficient	-.376**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	257	257

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

Source: IBM Corp. (2022). *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29)*. IBM Corp.

The Spearman's Rho test indicated there is a high, statistically negative, significant correlation to between work-life conflict and employee engagement at NTA ($p = -.376$, $p < .001$). As expected, work-life conflict has an inverse effect on engagement, motivation and job satisfaction. The extremely small p value ($p = .000$) indicated it is an unlikely probability and therefore this correlation is unlikely to have happened by chance and the null hypothesis was rejected with the alternative accepted. In this case, work-life conflict was found to have a significant effect on employee engagement. This result indicates that both short and long-term interventions are necessary by organisations at NTA, including flexible working, workload minimisation and supportive practices in order to reduce work-life conflict while maximising employee satisfaction.

Findings

The first hypothesis tested whether regular leave-taking improves employee concentration. The Spearman's rho analysis revealed a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between the two variables ($p = 0.428$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that regular leave-taking is significantly associated with higher concentration levels among employees upon returning to work. The second hypothesis examined flexible work hours and productivity. The results from the analysis revealed that there is a moderate positive correlation ($p = 0.431$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that flexible schedules improves productivity. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The third hypothesis assessed work stress and absenteeism. The analysis showed a significant positive correlation ($p = 0.387$, $p = 0.000$) which suggest that work-stress has a significant effect on absenteeism. Given this, the null hypothesis was rejected, stressing the need for stress management strategies. The fourth hypothesis tested the effect of work-life conflict on engagement. Findings from the Spearman Rho analysis indicated a moderate negative correlation ($p = -0.376$, $p = 0.000$), showing that conflict reduces motivation and commitment. The null hypothesis was rejected which points to the importance of work-life balance interventions.

Discussion of Findings

This study assessed how regular leave-taking, flexible work hours, work stress, and work-life conflict influence employee outcomes at NTA. The result from the test of the first hypothesis showed that regular leave-taking significantly improves concentration ($p = 0.428$, $p < 0.01$) which confirms the fact that recovery periods when allowed by organisations restore focus and mental clarity. This findings aligns with prior studies Taşdelen-Karçay and Bakalim, 2017; Marecki, 2023; Heras *et al.*, 2017; Shirmohammadi *et al.*, 2022 who highlighted in their work, the importance of structured rest in reducing burnout and

sustaining attentiveness. The findings on the test of the second hypothesis further revealed that flexible work hours enhance productivity ($p = .431$, $p < 0.01$). This result shows that employees who enjoy flexible schedules reported higher efficiency and engagement. The findings is consistent with earlier evidence on flexibility and productivity such those reported by Marecki, 2023; Opoku *et al.*, 2023; Heras *et al.*, 2017) who all showed that flexibility reduces work–family conflict and boosts organisational commitment.

The study further reported that work stress increases absenteeism ($p = 0.387$, $p < 0.01$). It established the fact that stress is linked to unscheduled leave and reduced job satisfaction, echoing Ngwenya and Utete (2023), Shirmohammadi *et al.* (2022), and Carvalho *et al.* (2024), who found that supportive policies within an organisation lower absenteeism rates. Finally, the study revealed that work-life conflict negatively affects engagement ($p = -0.376$, $p < 0.01$). This findings is evident the fact that employees who face conflicts between work and personal life reported lower motivation and commitment. The result aligns with that of Carvalho *et al.* (2024), Shirmohammadi *et al.* (2022), and Marecki (2023), who associated unresolved conflict with burnout and withdrawal. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that leave-taking and flexible hours positively influence concentration and productivity, while stress and work-life conflict undermine engagement and attendance.

Conclusion

It study concludes that work-life balance is a key factor that determines the productivity and results of an organisation. The empirical analysis revealed that taking leave regularly helps in enhancing concentration, while flexible working hours increase productivity. It shows that rest, autonomy, and flexibility are very important factors in keeping the productivity of employees. On the other hand, work stress is linked to increased absenteeism while and work-life conflict decreases engagement. Thus, the results clearly reveal that work-life balance is not just about the welfare of the employees, but it is also a strategic issue which organisation should pay more attention to in order to boast their productivity level and efficiency.

Recommendations

- i. Management of NTA should enforce regular leave-taking by removing administrative barriers, ensuring staff access their entitled rest. This will improve concentration, reduce fatigue, and enhance performance.
- ii. NTA should adopt flexible work-hour arrangements such as staggered shifts or adjusted reporting times. This will help employees balance personal and professional responsibilities, boosting productivity and satisfaction.
- iii. Structured stress management strategies should be implemented, including fair workload distribution, counselling services, and periodic assessments, to minimise absenteeism and stabilise workforce performance.
- iv. Policies to reduce work–life conflict should be prioritised, such as realistic scheduling, supportive supervision, and respect for off-duty time. This will strengthen engagement, loyalty, and organisational efficiency.

References

- Adias, L. T., Raimi, A. G., and Raimi, M. O. (2025). From stress to strategy: Scalable HRM for mental health reform in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(14), 1576–1601.

- Al-Kassem, A. H., Momani, H. R., Assad, N. F., and Alzghoul, A. M. (2025). Work-life balance and its impact on employee performance: HR strategies for success. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Scientific Studies*, 8(1), 112–125.
- Bakker, A. B., and Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328.
- Bakker, A. B., and Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328.
- Bakker, A. B., and Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands-resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(3), 273–285.
- Carvalho, C., Mónico, L., Pinto, A., Oliveira, S., and Leite, E. (2024). Effects of work-family conflict and facilitation profiles on work engagement. *Societies*, 14(7), 110.
- Choudhury, P., Foroughi, C., and Larson, B. (2021). Work-from-anywhere: The productivity effects of geographic flexibility. *Strategic Management Journal*, 42(4), 655–683.
- Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747–770.
- Czakert, J., and Berger, R. (2024). Work-life balance and organisational resilience: A systems perspective. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 39(2), 215–229.
- Davidescu, A. A. M., Apostu, S. A., Paul, A., and Casuneanu, I. (2020). Work flexibility, job satisfaction, and job performance among Romanian employees—Implications for sustainable human resource management. *Sustainability*, 12(15), 1–24.
- Gagnano, A. (2018). [Reference details need to be confirmed from the exact source cited in your manuscript.]
- Gagnano, A., Negrini, A., Miglioretti, M., and Corbière, M. (2018). Common psychosocial factors predicting return to work after common mental disorders, cardiovascular diseases, and cancers: A review of reviews supporting a cross-disease approach. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 28(2), 215–231.
- Gagnano, A., Simbula, S., and Miglioretti, M. (2020). Work-life balance: The importance of work–family and work–health balance. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(3), 907.
- Greenhaus, J. H., and Allen, T. D. (2011). Work–family balance. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology: Vol. 3. Maintaining, expanding, and contracting the organization* (pp. 165–183). American Psychological Association.
- Harter, J. K., Agrawal, S., Blue, J., Sorenson, C., and Conchie, B. (2020). *The relationship between engagement at work and organizational outcomes: 2020 Q12 meta-analysis* (10th ed.). Gallup Press.
- Hildenbrand, K., Losch, S., and Schmid, B. (2024). Work-life balance and employee wellbeing: A multidimensional perspective. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 33(1), 45–62.
- Ihwughwavwe, O., and Shewakramani, R. (2024). Bureaucratic constraints and employee productivity in Nigeria's public sector. *African Journal of Public Administration*, 12(3), 88–104.
- Kerksieck, P., Bauer, G. F., and Rigotti, T. (2024). Work-life balance and employee engagement: Evidence from organisational case studies. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 29(1), 12–27.
- Makinde, W. A., and Idowu, M. T. (2025). Influence of work life balance practices on health related outcomes and exit intentions: A study among Nigerian polytechnic employees. *Journal of Organizational and Human Resource Development Strategies*, 2(1), 12–27.
- Marecki, Ł. (2023). Impact of work-life balance on employee productivity and well-being. *Journal of Management and Financial Sciences*, 16(50), 165–178. <https://doi.org/10.33119/JMFS.2023.50.9>
- Marecki, Ł. (2023). Work–life balance and employee productivity and well-being: Results from an organisational-level analysis. *Journal of Management and Financial Sciences*, 49(3), 25–45.

- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396.
- Ngwenya, B. N., and Utete, R. (2023). The impact of work-life balance on employee absenteeism: An empirical study. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 12(9), 439–451.
- Ngwenya, B. N., and Utete, R. (2023). The impact of work-life balance on employee absenteeism: An empirical study. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 12(9), 439–451.
- Nwinye, M. (2025). Unlocking the potentials of work life balance in government parastatals in Nigeria. *American Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 35(1), 46–50.
- Obeidat, S. M., Al-Sarayrah, S., and Mitchell, R. (2020). The relationship between high performance work systems and organisational performance: The mediating role of resource flexibility. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 26(4), 461–481.
- Okolie, U. C., Egbon, T. N., and Uche, A. (2023). Flexible work arrangements and productivity in Nigeria's public sector. *Bima Journal of Business, Management and Accounting*, 6(2), 1563–1578.
- Opoku, F. K., Kwao, I. T., and Johnson, A.-P. (2023). Human resource policies and work-life balance in higher education: Employee engagement as mediator. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21, 1–13.
- Pattusamy, M., and Jacob, J. (2017). A test of Greenhaus and Allen (2011) model on work-family balance. *Current Psychology*, 36(2), 193–202.
- Pattusamy, M., and Jacob, J. (2017). A test of Greenhaus and Allen (2011) model on work-family balance. *Current Psychology*, 36(2), 193–202.
- Rashmi, K., and Kataria, A. (2022). Work-life balance: A systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 42(11/12), 1028–1050.
- Rofcanin, Y., Las Heras, M., and Bakker, A. B. (2017). Family supportive supervisor behaviors and organizational culture: Effects on work engagement and performance. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(2), 207–217.
- Saks, A. M. (2019). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement revisited. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 6(1), 19–38.
- Shikusinde, E. (2025). Remote work: The impact of communication, technology and work-life balance on employee motivation. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23, 1–12.
- Shirmohammadi, M., Au, W. C., and Beigi, M. (2022). Antecedents and outcomes of work-life balance while working from home: A review of the research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Human Resource Development Review*, 21(4), 473–516.
- Taşdelen-Karçkay, A., and Bakalim, O. (2017). The mediating effect of work-life balance on the relationship between work-family conflict and life satisfaction. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 26(1), 3–13.
- Thilagavathy, S., and Geetha, S. N. (2021). Work-life balance: A systematic review. *Vilakshan–XIMB Journal of Management*, 20(2), 258–276.
- Udin, S., Khan, M., and Alam, R. (2023). Organisational support and work-family compatibility: Implications for employee performance. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 13(4), 77–95.
- Zaitouni, M., Hewapathirana, G., Mostafa, M., Al Hajj, R., and ElMelegy, A. R. (2024). Work-life balance: A landscape mapping of two decades of scholarly research. *Heliyon*, 10(14), e34084.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Ekanem, Samuel A.; Okolisah, Chinenye P. & Yohanna, Amachondi H. (2026). "An Essencist Examination of Religious Languages in the Interpretation of 'The Kingdom of God Suffereth Violence, and the Violent Taketh it by Force' and the Jihadist Motivation." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 97-108.

Article

Open Access

AN ESSENCIST EXAMINATION OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGES IN THE INTERPRETATION OF "THE KINGDOM OF GOD SUFFERETH VIOLENCE, AND THE VIOLENT TAKETH IT BY FORCE" AND THE JIHADIST MOTIVATION

Samuel Asuquo Ekanem¹, Chinenye Precious Okolisah² & Amachondi Hikon Yohanna³

Department of Philosophy, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria^{1, 2 & 3}

Corresponding Email: samekanem@gmail.com¹

Abstract

Religious language is among humanity's most powerful instruments for articulating transcendence, morality, identity, destiny, and the meaning of existence. Yet the same language that can inspire sacrifice, compassion, justice, and peace may, when detached from context and philosophical scrutiny, become an instrument of exclusion and violence. This paper adopted a comparative philosophical examination of Matthew 11:12 "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" and the Islamic concept of jihad as appropriated within contemporary jihadist ideology. It argued that the central problem is not the mere presence of difficult religious expressions but the hermeneutical structures through which they are interpreted. Drawing upon philosophical hermeneutics, philosophy of language, logic, Christian theology, Islamic thought, and Essencism, the paper distinguishes sacred meaning from ideological appropriation. It examined the historical and linguistic context of Matthew 11:12, the semantic and theological development of jihad, the distinction between Qur'anic jihad and modern jihadism, and the philosophical dangers of literalist and violent hermeneutics. The paper proposed Essencism, associated with Samuel Asuquo Ekanem, as a hermeneutical criterion based upon the distinction between essence and accidental historical manifestations. On this account, religious interpretation must proceed from linguistic appearance through historical context toward the essential moral and ontological orientation of revelation. The paper concluded that neither Matthew 11:12 nor the Qur'anic concept of jihad can philosophically sustain indiscriminate violence when interpreted within the comprehensive ethical horizons of their respective traditions. The

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

recovery of essence therefore becomes an important philosophical resource for peace, interreligious understanding, and human flourishing.

Keywords: Essencism, Religious Language, Hermeneutics, Kingdom of God, Jihad, Jihadism, Violence, Philosophy of Religion, Religious Symbolism, Human Flourishing.

Introduction

Few questions in the philosophy of religion are more consequential than the question of how sacred language acquires meaning. Human beings speak of God through human words; they describe eternity through temporal concepts; they articulate transcendence through the grammar of history. The paradox is profound: the finite attempts to speak about the Infinite, and the historical interpreter attempts to understand a revelation that claims to transcend history. Religious language therefore stands at the frontier between language and ontology, between the visible world of human experience and the invisible horizon of ultimate reality. It is precisely at this frontier that the problem of religious violence emerges. Sacred texts contain narratives, symbols, commands, metaphors, prophecies, legal formulations, descriptions of historical conflict, and eschatological visions. When these linguistic forms are isolated from their literary, historical, theological, and philosophical contexts, they may be transformed from vehicles of meaning into weapons of ideology. A sentence becomes a slogan; a metaphor becomes a command; a historical episode becomes a universal prescription; and an interpretation becomes an unquestionable dogma. The violence is consequently not always located in the text itself but in the hermeneutical process through which the text is appropriated. The present paper focuses on two particularly contested cases. The first is Jesus' declaration in Matthew 11:12: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11.12). The second is the Islamic concept of jihad, particularly its appropriation by modern jihadist movements as a vocabulary of revolutionary violence. The juxtaposition is philosophically significant because both cases demonstrate how religious expressions can be separated from their larger theological horizons and converted into ideological instruments. The paper does not seek to establish a facile equivalence between Christian and Islamic traditions, nor does it deny the real historical occurrence of religious violence. Rather, it asks a more fundamental philosophical question: What happens to religious meaning when language is detached from its essential moral and ontological horizon?

The paper advances three principal arguments. First, religious language cannot be adequately interpreted through lexical literalism alone because its meaning is mediated by genre, context, historical consciousness, symbolic structure, and communal use. Second, the distinction between jihad and jihadism is indispensable: jihad is a polyvalent Qur'anic and Islamic concept whose meanings cannot be reduced to armed violence, whereas jihadism is a modern ideological phenomenon that selectively appropriates Islamic vocabulary for political and violent ends. Third, Essencism provides a potentially useful hermeneutical criterion by distinguishing the essential meaning of a religious concept from its contingent, historical, and ideological manifestations. This inquiry is particularly important in contemporary Nigeria and Africa, where religious identity, insecurity, political competition, and extremist violence intersect. Ekanem and Ekefre have explicitly argued that Essencism can contribute to confronting religious intolerance in Nigeria, particularly through education and intellectual transformation. More recently, Ekanem and Emejulu have applied Essencism to the relationship between poverty, social injustice, religion, and insecurity,

indicating the author's continuing development of the philosophy as an instrument for social transformation. The task, therefore, is philosophical rather than merely apologetic. It is to determine whether religious language can be interpreted in a manner that preserves fidelity to revelation without surrendering reason, historical consciousness, or ethical responsibility.

Conceptual and Philosophical Clarification

Religious Language: Religious language refers to the linguistic forms through which religious communities articulate claims about God, transcendence, salvation, morality, revelation, human destiny, sacred history, and ultimate reality. Unlike ordinary empirical language, religious language frequently speaks about realities that cannot be exhaustively verified through sensory observation. It consequently employs metaphor, analogy, symbol, paradox, narrative, poetry, prophecy, and performative utterance. A statement such as “God is my rock” is not ordinarily a geological proposition. “God is light” does not imply that God is a physical electromagnetic phenomenon. “The Kingdom of God” is not merely a geographical territory. Such expressions derive their significance from a semantic field in which language points beyond itself. Paul Ricoeur's philosophy of symbol is particularly useful here. Symbols disclose meanings that cannot be exhausted by literal paraphrase; they possess what may be called a semantic surplus (Ricoeur 15–20). Paul Tillich similarly distinguishes symbols from ordinary signs because symbols participate in and disclose dimensions of reality that ordinary signs merely designate (Tillich 41–49). Ludwig Wittgenstein's later philosophy also cautions against abstracting words from the forms of life in which they function. Meaning is connected with use, and religious language possesses a distinctive use within religious forms of life (Wittgenstein 43–47). Consequently, a word cannot be interpreted adequately merely by consulting a dictionary. Its meaning is generated within a network of practices, narratives, institutions, beliefs, and historical experiences. Religious language is therefore simultaneously semantic, symbolic, existential, ethical, and communal.

Jihad and Jihadism

The Arabic term *jihad* derives from the root j-h-d, associated with exertion, effort, or striving. The Qur'anic concept consequently cannot be reduced automatically to warfare. The Qur'an uses the language of striving in diverse contexts, including striving through moral commitment and struggle through one's resources and person (Qur'an 9:41; 25:52; 29:69). Armed conflict is more specifically associated with *qitāl*. This distinction is philosophically important because conceptual confusion between *jihad* and *qitāl* can produce a category error: a broad normative concept of striving is collapsed into one particular form of struggle. Contemporary scholarship has continued to emphasize that the Qur'anic semantic field of *jihad* is broader than armed combat. Jihadism, by contrast, refers to a modern ideological phenomenon in which selected Islamic concepts and texts are mobilized to legitimate revolutionary violence, political domination, or transnational militancy. It should therefore not be treated as a simple synonym for *jihad*. The distinction is conceptually necessary: *jihad* belongs to Islamic theological and ethical discourse, whereas jihadism is a modern ideological formation. The distinction does not mean that armed struggle has never been discussed within Islamic jurisprudence. Classical jurists developed extensive legal discussions concerning warfare, political authority, treaties, communal defence, and relations with non-Muslim polities. But these discussions cannot simply be transported without qualification into modern ideological contexts. The philosophical danger lies in allowing the historical existence of armed struggle to determine the total meaning of *jihad*. Such reasoning

commits a reductionist fallacy: because something is one historical manifestation of a concept, it is assumed to constitute the essence of that concept.

Violence and Sacred Violence

Violence is the intentional use or threat of force to injure, dominate, destroy, or compel. Sacred violence, however, introduces an additional dimension: violence becomes associated with transcendent authorization. It is not merely “I am entitled to do this,” but “God authorizes me to do this.” The philosophical consequence is enormous because the claim of divine authorization may immunize the actor from ordinary moral criticism. Once violence is sacralized, human judgment can be presented as divine judgment. The combatant no longer perceives an opponent merely as a political adversary but as an enemy of God. Such dehumanization is one of the most dangerous consequences of violent hermeneutics. Yet the existence of violent religious movements does not logically entail that religion is essentially violent. That inference would constitute a genetic fallacy: it would explain a doctrine solely through some of its historical uses rather than examining its conceptual structure. The appropriate philosophical question is therefore not simply, “Has religion ever been used violently?” Obviously it has. The deeper question is, “Does violence constitute the essential meaning of the religious language being invoked?” This is the question to which Essencism becomes particularly relevant.

Theoretical Framework and Philosophical Analysis of Religious Language

The theoretical framework of this study combines philosophical hermeneutics, philosophy of language, logic, and Essencism.

Hermeneutics and the Problem of Understanding

Hermeneutics is concerned with interpretation, but interpretation is never an entirely neutral activity. The interpreter approaches a text from a historical location, carrying assumptions, experiences, conceptual categories, and expectations. Gadamer therefore emphasizes the historically effected consciousness of the interpreter and the “fusion of horizons” through which understanding occurs (Gadamer 300–12). The implication is decisive for religious interpretation. A modern reader of Matthew 11:12 does not inhabit the same world as a first-century Jewish hearer. Likewise, a twenty-first-century reader encountering jihad does not automatically inhabit the intellectual world of seventh-century Arabia or the jurisprudential world of classical Islam. Interpretation must therefore move dialogically between the world of the text and the world of the interpreter. Ricoeur supplements this approach by insisting that texts achieve a degree of autonomy from their original authors and contexts, thereby generating new possibilities of interpretation. But this does not imply interpretive anarchy. A text can yield multiple meanings without yielding every conceivable meaning. The philosophical task is therefore to distinguish legitimate plurality from arbitrary appropriation.

Language, Logic, and Meaning

Logic functions as a safeguard against interpretive contradiction. A valid interpretation cannot affirm simultaneously that a passage commands indiscriminate violence and that the same passage categorically prohibits such violence unless it supplies a coherent distinction explaining the apparent contradiction. Religious extremism frequently operates through equivocation, selective quotation, false dilemmas, hasty generalization, and contextual omission. A historical command becomes a universal command; a metaphor becomes a literal instruction; a defensive permission becomes an unlimited mandate; a theological

symbol becomes a political programme. Aristotle's logical tradition reminds us that persuasion is not equivalent to validity. A rhetorically powerful proposition may remain logically defective (Prior Analytics I.1). This distinction is indispensable because extremism frequently possesses powerful rhetoric. The fact that a statement is emotionally compelling does not make it logically sound.

Symbolism versus Literalism

Religious texts are frequently symbolic. Symbolism does not mean that religious statements are meaningless or fictional. Rather, symbols function as mediating structures through which transcendent realities become intelligible. Literalism becomes philosophically problematic when it assumes that the surface grammatical meaning exhausts the meaning of the text. A literal reading may be necessary at one level, but it is not necessarily sufficient at every level. The phrase "Kingdom of God" itself demonstrates the problem. If interpreted geographically, it becomes a territory. If interpreted politically in a crude sense, it becomes a state. If interpreted eschatologically and theologically, it signifies divine sovereignty and the transformation of human existence. The philosophical hermeneutic must therefore ask: What reality is the language trying to disclose? This question leads directly to Essencism.

Essencism as a Hermeneutical Philosophy

Essencism is presented in Ekanem's work as a philosophical position concerned with the identification and realization of essence. In his discussion of the Essencist model, Ekanem derive the term from "essence" and describes essence as that which constitutes the basic nature of a thing and without which it could not be what it is (Ekanem and Ekefre 269). His work further emphasize the relationship between human nature, moral values, knowledge, and the ordering of society. Ekanem and Okolisah subsequently situated Essencism within a broader conversational method of philosophy, arguing that philosophical inquiry proceeds through dialogue and the exchange of ideas. This is significant for the present study because a philosophy that seeks essence should not begin from dogmatic closure. Essence must be investigated through reasoned inquiry. The central hermeneutical principle proposed here is therefore: A religious interpretation is philosophically authentic when it moves from linguistic appearance and historical circumstance toward the essential moral and ontological reality that the religious tradition seeks to disclose. This does not mean that every interpretation must be reduced to one single meaning. Nor does it mean that historical circumstances are irrelevant. Rather, historical circumstances are treated as mediating conditions through which essential meanings become manifest. Essencism consequently establishes a distinction between: linguistic form and essential meaning; historical circumstance and ontological significance; symbol and referent; religious doctrine and ideological appropriation; Normative revelation and contingent human practice. This distinction is particularly important in the study of religious violence. If a religious concept produces an interpretation that fundamentally contradicts the essential moral structure of the tradition from which it derives, the interpreter must provide a philosophical justification for that contradiction.

Historical Context of Matthew 11:12.

Matthew 11:12 occurs within a chapter devoted to John the Baptist, Jesus' identity, and the dawning of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus says: "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11:12). The passage is difficult partly because the Greek verb *biazetai* can support more than one grammatical possibility. It may be understood in a passive sense as "suffers violence" or in a

middle sense as something like “forces its way” or “advances forcefully.” The noun *biastai* can likewise refer to violent persons or those who press vigorously toward something. This ambiguity is not a trivial grammatical curiosity. It determines the philosophical horizon of the passage. If the Kingdom “suffers violence,” then the text describes opposition against God's reign. If the Kingdom “forces its way” or is entered by forceful determination, then the text emphasizes the urgency and radical commitment of discipleship. Either way, the passage cannot reasonably be isolated from the surrounding narrative. John the Baptist's ministry occurred within a politically charged Jewish world dominated by Rome and marked by messianic expectations. John announced repentance and the coming of divine judgment (Matt. 3.1–12). His imprisonment and eventual execution demonstrate that the proclamation of God's Kingdom was politically and religiously consequential. Jesus' proclamation likewise challenged existing conceptions of power. The Kingdom was not simply a political rebellion against Rome. Nor was it merely an inward psychological state. It represented divine sovereignty breaking into human history. The historical setting thus helps explain why the language of conflict appears in the text. The arrival of God's reign generates opposition because it challenges rival claims to authority.

Major Christian Interpretations of Matthew 11:12

Christian interpretation of Matthew 11:12 has historically developed along several lines. The spiritual interpretation understands the violence metaphorically. Origen and Chrysostom associated the “violence” with the intensity of spiritual discipline and the determination required for entrance into the Kingdom. Augustine similarly interpreted Christian struggle primarily in relation to the conquest of sinful desires rather than physical domination (City of God XIX.17). The persecution interpretation understands the passage as describing violence directed against the Kingdom. The imprisonment and death of John, the opposition to Jesus, and the persecution of the early Christian community provide historical support for this reading. R. T. France situated the saying within the hostility surrounding the Kingdom's arrival (France 432–35). This recognizes a degree of semantic polyvalence. The text may simultaneously evoke the violent opposition encountered by God's Kingdom and the radical determination demanded of those who receive it. This approach is philosophically attractive because religious language frequently communicates through paradox. The Kingdom is powerful, yet its King is crucified. The first become last; the last become first. Strength appears through weakness; sovereignty is manifested through service. The theological context therefore makes it difficult to construe Matthew 11:12 as an uncomplicated command to commit physical violence. Jesus' teaching in Matthew consistently places love, mercy, reconciliation, and enemy-love at the centre of discipleship (Matt. 5.9, 5.44). At Gethsemane, Jesus rejects Peter's attempt to advance His cause through the sword (Matt. 26.52). The Cross becomes the ultimate theological paradox: divine victory is expressed through sacrificial self-giving. The essential Christian meaning of the Kingdom must therefore be reconstructed from the whole christological narrative rather than from one ambiguous sentence.

Historical Development of Jihad in Islamic Thought

The concept of jihad developed within a complex Islamic intellectual tradition encompassing Qur'anic revelation, prophetic practice, jurisprudence, theology, ethics, spirituality, and political thought. The Qur'anic root j-h-d concerns striving or exertion. The Qur'an employs the language of striving in contexts that cannot be reduced to warfare. Indeed, Qur'an 25:52 instructs believers to strive against unbelief through the Qur'an itself, indicating a form of

non-military struggle. At the same time, the Qur'an contains passages concerning armed conflict. These passages cannot responsibly be erased from Islamic history. Qur'an 2:190, however, places a significant limitation upon fighting: believers are instructed to fight those who fight them and not to transgress. The Qur'anic discourse therefore distinguishes between struggle and aggression. Classical Islamic jurisprudence developed detailed doctrines concerning warfare. These doctrines were shaped by the political realities of premodern states and should not be confused automatically with modern international relations or contemporary militant ideology. Alongside jurisprudence existed an extensive spiritual tradition. Al-Ghazālī's writings emphasize the purification of the soul, the struggle against the *nafs*, and the moral transformation of the believer. The Islamic intellectual tradition therefore contains both juridical and spiritual dimensions of jihad. Modern scholarship has increasingly emphasized this plurality. The Oxford study striving in the Path of God explicitly argued that jihad has acquired different meanings across historical contexts and that reducing it to armed combat produces an inadequate account of the concept's development.

Distinguishing Qur'anic Jihad from Modern Jihadism

The distinction between jihad and jihadism is philosophically indispensable. Jihadism is a modern ideological phenomenon. It emerged within particular historical circumstances involving colonialism, political authoritarianism, geopolitical conflict, revolutionary ideology, and identity crisis. Its advocates frequently appropriate religious vocabulary to establish political legitimacy. This does not mean that jihadist movements possess no connection to Islamic texts. They frequently cite Islamic texts. The philosophical issue, however, is how those texts are interpreted. Jihadist hermeneutics often involves: Textual selectivity; decontextualization; absolutization of historically situated passages; binary classification of humanity; delegitimization of competing interpretations; sacralization of political objectives; moral exclusion of opponents. This is not simply a theological problem. It is a problem in epistemology and logic. When an interpreter selects only passages concerning warfare while ignoring passages concerning mercy, justice, restraint, treaties, patience, and human accountability, the resulting picture is not the whole Qur'anic moral universe. It is a constructed fragment presented as the whole. Such reasoning is comparable to interpreting Christianity exclusively through its wars while ignoring the Sermon on the Mount, or interpreting Judaism exclusively through narratives of ancient warfare while ignoring prophetic demands for justice and righteousness. The principle is universal: a tradition should be interpreted through its normative totality rather than through its most violent fragments.

Comparative Analysis of Christian and Islamic Interpretations of Sacred Violence

Christianity and Islam are not identical traditions. Their scriptures, theological structures, doctrines of revelation, concepts of salvation, and historical trajectories differ substantially. Yet both traditions possess internal resources for regulating interpretations of violence. Christianity contains traditions of pacifism as well as traditions of just-war reasoning. Augustine and Aquinas developed moral criteria for legitimate warfare, while later thinkers such as John Howard Yoder emphasized the radical nonviolence of Jesus' political ethics. Islam contains jurisprudential traditions concerning warfare as well as extensive spiritual and ethical traditions emphasizing restraint, justice, patience, and moral struggle. This comparison yields an important philosophical insight: the existence of violence within the historical experience of a religion does not establish violence as its essence. The Crusades

cannot exhaust Christianity. The Inquisition cannot exhaust Christianity. Colonial violence conducted under Christian symbolism cannot exhaust Christianity. Likewise, jihadist terrorism cannot exhaust Islam. Boko Haram cannot exhaust Islam. Al-Qaida and ISIS cannot exhaust Islam. The proper philosophical question is whether such movements faithfully embody the normative essence of the traditions they invoke. This distinction also prevents the opposite error: romanticizing religious traditions by denying their difficult histories. An honest philosophy must acknowledge historical violence while refusing to confuse historical practice with essential doctrine.

An Essencist Critique of Violent Hermeneutics

Violent hermeneutics occurs when interpretation becomes a mechanism for converting sacred language into authorization for coercion, domination, or destruction. Its first characteristic is decontextualization. A passage is removed from the historical circumstances in which it arose. Its second is semantic absolutization. One possible meaning of an ambiguous expression is treated as its only meaning. Its third is ethical isolation. The selected passage is detached from the broader moral principles of the tradition. Its fourth is ideological appropriation. The interpreter's political objective is presented as though it were identical with divine intention. Essencism challenges all four. The philosophical criterion becomes: Does the proposed interpretation disclose or destroy the essential moral purpose of the religious tradition? If an interpretation of Matthew 11:12 makes Jesus a teacher of indiscriminate violence, it must explain how that interpretation coheres with enemy-love, forgiveness, mercy, and the rejection of Peter's sword. If an interpretation of jihad makes indiscriminate killing an unrestricted religious obligation, it must explain how such a reading coheres with Qur'anic injunctions against transgression and the broader ethical architecture of Islamic revelation. The burden of coherence therefore falls upon the violent interpretation. Essencism does not simply ask, "Can this interpretation be extracted from the text?" It asks the deeper question, "Can this interpretation survive within the essential whole of the tradition?" That is the difference between textual extraction and philosophical interpretation.

Religious Language, Logic, and the Crisis of Extremism

Extremism is sustained by more than emotion. It is sustained by a particular logic of interpretation. One recurring structure is the false dilemma: Believer or enemy; sacred or profane; loyalty or betrayal; obedience or apostasy; victory or annihilation. Such binary categories simplify a complex moral universe and transform disagreement into existential warfare. Another structure is equivocation. A term with multiple meanings is assigned the meaning most useful to the interpreter's political purpose. Jihad, for example, is reduced to warfare; "violence" in Matthew 11:12 is transformed into a divine command for physical aggression. Another is hasty generalization. Because violence occurred in one historical context, violence is declared universally obligatory. Another is contextual omission. The interpreter deliberately excludes passages that complicate the desired conclusion. Philosophy has an essential role in exposing these errors. The purpose of logic is not merely to win arguments but to protect thought from contradiction, manipulation, and fallacy. Gadamer's hermeneutics adds another safeguard: the interpreter must allow the text to challenge the interpreter rather than forcing the text to say what the interpreter already believes. Religious extremism often does precisely the opposite. It begins with the conclusion and then searches Scripture for authorization.

Towards an Essencist Philosophy of Peace and Human Flourishing

The philosophical alternative to violent hermeneutics must be more than negative. It must provide a positive account of what religious interpretation ought to accomplish. Essencism provides such an orientation through the concepts of truth, human dignity, moral responsibility, justice, and flourishing. Peace cannot simply mean the absence of armed conflict. Peace must involve the restoration of relationships, justice, dignity, security, and the possibility of human development. This understanding has resonance within both religious traditions. Christianity speaks of peace as shalom and associates blessedness with peacemaking (Matt. 5:9). Islam speaks of salām and repeatedly links righteousness with justice and mercy (Qur'an 16:90; 49:13). An Essencist philosophy therefore interprets religious traditions according to their capacity to promote the flourishing of human beings as moral and spiritual persons. Human flourishing cannot be reduced to material prosperity. A society may possess wealth and technology while suffering moral disintegration. Likewise, a religious community may possess powerful institutions while lacking compassion. The human essence requires intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, and material development. Ekanem's published Essencist work is particularly relevant here because it treats philosophy not merely as abstract speculation but as a framework for addressing concrete social problems. His 2014 work presents Essencism as a model for educational and social development, while his later work explicitly connects Essencism with religious intolerance, insecurity, and social justice. This practical orientation gives Essencism a distinctive relevance to peace philosophy.

An Essencist Hermeneutical Model

The analysis developed in this paper may be condensed into five hermeneutical principles. The first is: Contextuality: No sacred expression should be interpreted without examining its historical and literary context. Second, Semantic Plurality Where language is genuinely ambiguous, interpretation must acknowledge the plurality of possible meanings rather than manufacture artificial certainty. Third, Logical Coherence: An interpretation must remain compatible with the broader moral and theological architecture of the tradition. Fourth: Essentiality: The interpreter must distinguish the enduring essence of a religious concept from its contingent historical manifestations. Fifth' Ethical Consequence: Interpretation must be evaluated in relation to the moral consequences it generates. An interpretation that requires the systematic dehumanization of others demands extraordinary philosophical justification. These five principles produce a hermeneutics that is neither naïvely literalist nor arbitrarily relativist. The model may be represented philosophically as: Text → Context → Meaning → Essence → Ethical Application. The movement is not circular in the sense of returning mechanically to the beginning. It is dialectical. Context illuminates meaning; meaning points toward essence; essence provides ethical orientation; ethical application tests the adequacy of interpretation.

Philosophical Implications for Christianity and Islam

The significance of this approach extends beyond the two texts examined. First, it suggests that religious pluralism need not imply philosophical relativism. Christians and Muslims may disagree profoundly about revelation while still engaging in rational dialogue concerning justice, human dignity, peace, and violence. Second, it demonstrates that faith and reason are not necessary enemies. Both Aquinas and Ibn Rushd represent traditions in which rational reflection contributes to religious understanding. Third, it establishes that interpretive humility is an intellectual virtue. The interpreter who claims complete

possession of sacred meaning may actually be demonstrating a failure to understand the depth of sacred language. Fourth, it reveals that religious education is a security issue. Where young people are taught to memorize texts without understanding context, genre, logic, and ethical purpose, they may become vulnerable to ideological manipulation. Fifth, it demonstrates that peace requires hermeneutical work. Military force may suppress a violent movement temporarily, but it cannot eliminate the intellectual structures that reproduce extremism. A durable peace must therefore include education, philosophical reasoning, theological dialogue, historical literacy, and ethical reconstruction.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the philosophical problem of religious language through an Essencist analysis of Matthew 11:12 and the concept of jihad as distinguished from modern jihadism. The central argument has been that sacred language cannot be responsibly interpreted through isolated literalism. Religious meaning emerges through the interaction of language, history, context, symbolism, tradition, reason, and ethical purpose. Matthew 11:12 illustrates the danger of interpreting an ambiguous religious expression outside its theological and historical horizon. The language of “violence” belongs to a narrative in which the Kingdom of God is breaking into a world marked by political domination, religious expectation, prophetic confrontation, suffering, and ultimately the Cross. To transform this language into an unrestricted command for physical violence is to ignore the wider ethical and Christological structure of the Gospel. The Islamic concept of jihad presents a parallel but not identical hermeneutical problem. The concept encompasses striving and exertion in the path of God and has developed through spiritual, ethical, juridical, political, and historical traditions. Modern jihadism represents a particular ideological appropriation of Islamic language rather than a sufficient description of the entire concept of jihad. The distinction is indispensable both intellectually and ethically. The deeper philosophical lesson is that texts do not interpret themselves. Human beings interpret them, and human beings bring desires, fears, political interests, historical memories, and ideological commitments to the interpretive enterprise. Consequently, the struggle against religious extremism must also be a struggle for responsible interpretation. Here lies the principal contribution of Essencism. By distinguishing essence from accident, Essencism provides a philosophical mechanism for determining whether a particular interpretation expresses the intrinsic purpose of a religious concept or merely reflects a contingent historical appropriation. It refuses to deny historical violence, but it equally refuses to make violence the essence of religion merely because violence has occurred in religious history. The essential question therefore becomes: What does the religious concept fundamentally seek to disclose and produce in human existence? If the answer is truth, justice, moral responsibility, spiritual transformation, human dignity, and flourishing, then interpretations that systematically destroy these values must be subjected to serious philosophical criticism.

The Kingdom of God cannot be reduced to conquest when its central narrative culminates in sacrificial love. Jihad cannot be reduced to terrorism when its conceptual history encompasses striving, moral discipline, spiritual purification, communal responsibility, and regulated struggle. To confuse these distinctions is to confuse the shadow with the substance. Ultimately, the crisis of religious extremism is also a crisis of interpretation. The sacred word can become either a lamp or a weapon, depending upon the intellectual and moral hands that carry it. Philosophy must therefore stand at the threshold of interpretation as both guardian and questioner. It must ask whether language is being used to disclose truth or to sanctify power; whether scripture is being interpreted or manipulated; whether

faith is producing moral transformation or merely legitimizing political desire. An Essencist philosophy of religious language answers by calling interpretation back to essence. It is a movement from letter to meaning, from meaning to essence, from essence to ethical responsibility, and from ethical responsibility to human flourishing. In this movement lies the possibility of a more mature philosophy of religion one that neither trivializes the sacred nor surrenders reason; one that neither denies historical conflict nor glorifies it; one that respects religious difference without abandoning universal ethical responsibility. The future of interreligious peace may therefore depend not only upon what humanity believes, but upon how humanity learns to interpret what it believes. Sacred texts have survived empires, wars, migrations, revolutions, and civilizations because their meanings continue to speak across generations. The responsibility of the present generation is to ensure that those meanings become instruments of wisdom rather than weapons of destruction. The ultimate task of an Essencist hermeneutics is consequently not merely to understand religious language. It is to understand it well enough to prevent misunderstanding from becoming violence.

Works Cited

- Al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid. *The Revival of the Religious Sciences (Ihya Ulum al-Din)*. Translated by Fazlul Karim, Islamic Book Service, 1993.
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Benziger Bros., 1947.
- Averroes (Ibn Rushd). *The Decisive Treatise and Epistle Dedicatory*. Translated by Charles E. Butterworth, Brigham Young UP, 2001.
- Calvin, John. *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke*. Vol. 2, Baker Book House, 2005.
- Ekanem, S A. *A Philosophy of Education for Technological Development in Nigeria*, Unpublished Doctoral (Ph.D) Dissertation, University of Calabar, 2005.
- Ekanem, S. A, Ogar J. N. (Eds). *A Systematic Approach to Philosophy & Logic*, Calabar: University of Calabar Press, 2008.
- Ekanem, S. A. "Education and Personality Development: An Essencist Philosophical Matrix", *Journal of Integrative Humanism*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2014, 85-87
- Ekanem, S. A. *The Value of Philosophy in Education and Technological Development in Nigeria: An Essencist Voyage*, 1ST Innaugural Lecture, Federal University, Wukari: Calabar: University of Calabar, April, 2021.
- Ekanem, S. A., and Ekeng N. E., "Education and Religious Intolerance in Nigeria: The Need for Essencism as a Philosophy", *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, Vol. 3 No. 2, May 2013, 1-8.
- Ekanem, S.A, Magdalyn, A, and Kidzu, T. O., "Essencism as an African Paradigm towards the Salvation of the Environment", *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2017, 220-230.
- Ekanem, S.A., Zhema S. and Okolisah, C.P. "Ethnic Agitations and Restructuring of Nigeria: Essencism as a Panacea for true Federalism and Peace", *Contemporary Journal of Inter-Disciplinary Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 2018, 142-148.
- Ekanem, Samuel Asuquo, and Chukwuemeka Emejulu. "An Essencist Assessment of the Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on Educational Development in Nigeria." *International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2025, pp. 27–35.
- Ekanem, Samuel Asuquo. "The Philosophy of Creative Education in Nigeria: Utilitarian Approach." *Contemporary Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, Feb. 2015, pp. 400-407
- Esposito, John L. *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*. Oxford UP, 2002.
- France, R. T. *The Gospel of Matthew*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007.

- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*. 2nd rev. ed., translated by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, Continuum, 2004.
- Hagner, Donald A. *Matthew 1–13*. Word Books, 1993.
- Ibn Khaldūn. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Translated by Franz Rosenthal, Princeton UP, 1967.
- Keener, Craig S. *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009.
- Khadduri, Majid. *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*. Johns Hopkins UP, 1955.
- Ladd, George Eldon. *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959.
- Luther, Martin. *Luther's Works*. Vol. 21, edited by Jaroslav Pelikan, Concordia Publishing House, 1956.
- Luz, Ulrich. *Matthew 8–20: A Commentary*. Translated by James E. Crouch, Fortress Press, 2001.
- Origen. *Commentary on Matthew*. Translated by Ronald E. Heine, Catholic University of America Press, 2002.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *The Symbolism of Evil*. Translated by Emerson Buchanan, Beacon Press, 1967.
- Searle, John R. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge UP, 1969.
- The Holy Bible*. King James Version. Cambridge UP.
- The Qur'an*. Translated by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, Oxford UP, 2004.
- Thiselton, Anthony C. *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980.
- Tillich, Paul. *Dynamics of Faith*. Harper & Row, 1957.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Philosophical Investigations*. 4th ed., translated by G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- Wright, N. T. *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Fortress Press, 1996.
- Yoder, John Howard. *The Politics of Jesus*. 2nd ed., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Asuquo, Gabriel; Abui, Abraham A. & Adidi, Timothy D. (2026). "Ethics of Energy Transition: Nigeria and the Moral Imperative of Climate Responsibility." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 109-121.

Article

Open Access

ETHICS OF ENERGY TRANSITION: NIGERIA AND THE MORAL IMPERATIVE OF CLIMATE RESPONSIBILITY

Gabriel Asuquo ¹, Abui Abraham Abui ² & Timothy Dopkesi Adidi ³

Department of General Studies, College of Social and Management Sciences , Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State ¹

Department of Philosophy, Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Buwaya, Kaduna State, Nigeria ²

Department of Philosophy, Veritas University, Abuja ³

Corresponding Email: asuquogabriel@achievers.edu.ng ¹

Abstract

Nigeria, Africa's largest oil producer yet one of the most energy-poor nations, faces a profound ethical dilemma: whether to prioritise fossil fuel-driven development to address poverty or transition to renewables in line with global climate imperatives. This paper therefore explored Nigeria's energy future through three normative lenses: cosmopolitan climate justice, nationalist developmental rights, and African environmental ethics, with a focus on Samuel Bassey's anthropoholism. Cosmopolitan theorists argue that climate duties must be shared globally, distributed according to responsibility, capacity, and fairness. From this perspective, Nigeria must participate in mitigation efforts while demanding financial and technological support from industrialized nations. In contrast, the developmentalist position emphasizes sovereignty and historical justice, asserting Nigeria's right to utilise its fossil resources just as the Global North did. Yet these two frameworks, when taken alone, risk either downplaying historical inequality or justifying unsustainable dependency. Anthropoholism provides a mediating alternative. Rejecting both human supremacy and purely ecocentric approaches, it grounds energy ethics in the indivisibility of human and ecological flourishing. By framing Nigeria's choices as duties of care to communities, ecosystems, and future generations, anthropoholism supports a just transition that is sequenced, participatory, and restorative. This approach enables Nigeria to harmonize

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

development with responsibility, offering an authentically African pathway to sustainable futures.

Keywords: Anthropoholism, Climate Justice, Developmental Rights, Energy Transition, Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country and largest oil producer. However, the country embodies one of the starkest paradoxes in global energy politics. Despite vast fossil fuel reserves and decades of petroleum exports, over 90 million Nigerians lack reliable access to electricity (IEA, 2022). Oil dominates state revenues, yet it has also fuelled corruption, ecological devastation, and violent conflict in the Niger Delta (Watts, 2021). This paradox places Nigeria at the crossroads of two pressing imperatives: the pursuit of energy-driven development to alleviate poverty, and the obligation to transition toward renewable energy in response to the global climate emergency. The ethical tension here is profound. Cosmopolitan climate justice argues that all states share duties to mitigate climate change, distributed according to fairness, capacity, and responsibility (Shue, 2019; Caney, 2020). From this perspective, Nigeria cannot claim exemption, even as a developing country, because its choices affect the global commons. In contrast, nationalist developmental rights emphasise sovereignty and historical justice, defending Nigeria's entitlement to use its fossil resources just as industrialised nations once did (Sachs, 2016; Okereke, 2021). Yet both approaches remain incomplete if assessed solely through external frameworks. This paper introduces anthropoholism, developed by Nigerian philosopher Samuel Bassey, as a distinctly African contribution to environmental ethics. Anthropoholism rejects both anthropocentrism, which elevates human supremacy, and ecocentrism, which dissolves human agency into nature. Instead, it posits that humans and ecosystems are co-constitutive, bound in a holistic life-support system where harming the environment is equivalent to harming humanity (Bassey, 2019; 2020). Grounding Nigeria's energy transition in anthropoholism reframes the debate: development and responsibility are not competing demands but inseparable duties of care to people, communities, ecosystems, and future generations. By situating Nigeria within the global debate between cosmopolitan justice and nationalist sovereignty while foregrounding anthropoholism, this paper proposes a framework for a just transition that is globally responsible, developmentally legitimate, and philosophically authentic to African thought.

Nigeria's Energy Landscape

Historical Background of Energy Dependence: Nigeria's energy story is inseparable from its history of oil discovery. Petroleum was first struck in Oloibiri, Bayelsa State, in 1956, and commercial production began in 1958. By the early 1970s, oil had overtaken agriculture as the primary driver of government revenues (Omeje, 2021). This marked a structural shift from a largely agrarian economy to one dominated by petroleum exports. Today, Nigeria is a member of OPEC and remains one of the world's top ten crude oil exporters, with reserves estimated at 37 billion barrels (NNPC, 2022). This dependence, however, created what scholars have termed the "resource curse." Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian (2013) argue that Nigeria's overreliance on oil rents weakened institutions, entrenched corruption, and fostered rent-seeking behaviour among elites. The oil boom of the 1970s, rather than catalysing industrial diversification, entrenched a mono-economy vulnerable to global oil

price shocks. Thus, the foundations of Nigeria's energy paradox were laid: resource wealth without structural transformation.

Energy Access and Poverty

Despite being an oil giant, Nigeria faces staggering energy poverty. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA, 2022), about 92 million Nigerians lack access to electricity, making it the country with the largest energy access deficit globally. Even for those connected to the national grid, power supply is unreliable, with frequent blackouts that force households and businesses to rely on diesel and petrol generators. These generators, while filling the supply gap, contribute to environmental pollution and increased carbon emissions (Eberhard et al., 2021). The paradox is stark: a country with abundant energy resources remains unable to deliver reliable power to its citizens. As Okoro and Chikuni (2007) note, this reflects not just technical deficiencies but also governance failures, policy inconsistency, and infrastructural neglect. Thus, any conversation on Nigeria's energy transition must begin from the lived reality of energy poverty, not abstract global commitments alone.

Environmental Consequences of Fossil Fuel Dependence

Oil extraction has imposed heavy ecological costs, particularly in the Niger Delta. Frequent oil spills, estimated at more than 240,000 barrels annually, have devastated local ecosystems, poisoned water sources, and disrupted livelihoods dependent on fishing and farming (Amnesty International, 2018). Gas flaring, despite being officially banned, continues at high levels, releasing toxic pollutants and greenhouse gases. Watts (2021) describes this as "petro-violence," where communities are trapped in cycles of ecological degradation, poverty, and conflict. Beyond the Delta, climate change exacerbates vulnerabilities across Nigeria. In the north, desertification threatens pastoralist livelihoods, fuelling farmer-herder conflicts (Blench, 2021). In the south, sea-level rise and coastal erosion threaten densely populated cities like Lagos and Port Harcourt. Nigeria's fossil fuel dependence thus creates both local and global environmental harms.

Renewable Energy Potential

Paradoxically, Nigeria also possesses vast renewable energy potential. Solar radiation levels average 5.5 kWh/m²/day, making solar energy highly viable, particularly in northern states (Shaaban & Petinrin, 2014). Hydropower resources along the Niger and Benue rivers could be expanded, while biomass and wind resources remain underutilised. Yet renewables contribute less than 10% of the national energy mix, excluding traditional biomass (IEA, 2022). Scholars argue that Nigeria's transition is constrained less by technical potential than by policy inertia, financing gaps, and vested interests in fossil fuel rents (Akinyi, 2020). This raises the ethical stakes: if alternatives exist, continued fossil fuel dependence is not merely a matter of necessity but of choice, implicating questions of justice and responsibility.

The Policy Landscape and International Commitments

Nigeria has signalled its commitment to climate action. In 2021, the government announced a net-zero target by 2060 and passed the Climate Change Act to institutionalise a national transition framework (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2021). Nigeria is also a signatory to the Paris Agreement, pledging to reduce emissions by 20% unconditionally and 47% conditionally by 2030. However, critics highlight a "commitment-implementation gap." Okereke and Etemire (2022) argue that Nigeria's pledges often remain aspirational, lacking robust enforcement, financing, and accountability mechanisms. Subsidies for fossil fuels

persist, distorting energy markets and discouraging investment in renewables. Moreover, the influence of multinational oil corporations entrenches fossil fuel dependence and resists transition efforts.

Nigeria in the Debate on Energy Futures

Nigeria's situation epitomizes the broader Global South dilemma in energy futures. On one hand, the nation embodies the urgent need for development, electrification, and poverty alleviation. On the other hand, it is both a victim of climate change and a contributor through emissions from oil and gas. As Sovacool et al. (2020) note, this creates a "double bind" where developing countries must navigate the competing imperatives of growth and sustainability. By situating Nigeria's energy paradox within this global debate, it becomes clear why philosophical reflection is necessary. The country's decisions are not merely about technology or economics; they are about justice, sovereignty, and ethical responsibility. Nigeria's energy future, therefore, is not just a national issue but a global ethical question.

Cosmopolitan Climate Justice: Global Responsibility

The Cosmopolitan Argument: Cosmopolitanism begins from the premise that moral responsibility transcends borders. Climate change, as a global commons problem, exemplifies this challenge: the atmosphere is shared, and emissions anywhere affect people everywhere. Philosophers such as Henry Shue (2019), Simon Caney (2020), and Thomas Pogge (2017) argue that obligations for climate mitigation must be distributed according to principles of fairness, regardless of national boundaries. This means that Nigeria, despite its developmental challenges, cannot opt out of the collective duty to address climate change. From a cosmopolitan perspective, three main principles are relevant: historical responsibility, capacity to act, and vulnerability to harm. Each provides a moral lens through which Nigeria's role can be assessed.

Historical Responsibility and Nigeria's Emissions

Cosmopolitan theorists stress the importance of historical emissions. Industrialised nations such as the United States and members of the European Union bear primary responsibility, having contributed the bulk of cumulative carbon emissions since the Industrial Revolution. Nigeria, by contrast, contributes only about 0.3% of global emissions annually (IEA, 2022). Yet, cosmopolitan ethics does not allow Nigeria to use its comparatively small footprint as a total exemption. As Shue (2019) argues, while historical emissions matter, all states with fossil-fuel economies must recognise their ongoing responsibilities in the present. Nigeria's expanding oil and gas sector, if left unchecked, could lock the country into a carbon-intensive future, exacerbating climate change and undermining global mitigation efforts. Thus, while Nigeria can rightly demand that wealthy nations bear the brunt of responsibility, it still has obligations to minimize further harm.

Capacity to Act: The Argument from Ability

Cosmopolitan justice also considers the capacity of states to contribute to mitigation. Caney (2020) emphasises that duties should be distributed according to both responsibility and ability. Wealthier states have greater financial and technological resources to reduce emissions. However, Nigeria, as Africa's largest economy, also has non-trivial capacity. Its GDP (around \$477 billion in 2022, World Bank, 2023) and significant renewable potential mean it cannot claim incapacity. Nigeria has already invested in solar mini-grids and hydropower projects, signalling that capacity exists, albeit limited. For cosmopolitans, the ethical imperative is proportional: Nigeria should do what it can without undermining its

developmental goals, while wealthier nations must do more. This introduces the concept of differentiated responsibility – a shared but unequal obligation.

Vulnerability and the Ethics of Protection

A third dimension is vulnerability. Nigeria is highly exposed to climate impacts: desertification in the north, flooding in the Niger Delta, and rising sea levels in coastal cities. As Abubakar (2020) notes, climate change threatens food security, displaces populations, and intensifies conflicts.

Cosmopolitan climate justice stresses the duty to protect the most vulnerable, not just within national borders but globally (Gardiner, 2011). Nigeria's vulnerability, paradoxically, strengthens the case for transition: reducing reliance on fossil fuels not only aids global mitigation but also reduces local harms like gas flaring and oil pollution. Thus, from a cosmopolitan view, Nigeria's transition is both a duty to others and a responsibility to its own citizens.

Nigeria in the International Climate Regime

Nigeria has already entered the cosmopolitan climate governance framework. As a signatory to the Paris Agreement, it has pledged to reduce emissions by 20% unconditionally and 47% conditionally by 2030 (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2021). Its 2060 net-zero commitment aligns with global solidarity. However, critics argue that Nigeria's implementation has been inconsistent. Okereke and Etemire (2022) highlight the gap between commitments and actual enforcement, pointing to weak institutions and fossil fuel subsidies. From a cosmopolitan perspective, such gaps undermine not only Nigeria's credibility but also global climate cooperation. The cosmopolitan ethic would therefore demand not just signing agreements but actively aligning domestic policies with global goals – phasing out subsidies, expanding renewable investment, and ensuring environmental justice for affected communities.

Intergenerational Justice

Cosmopolitan climate ethics is deeply intergenerational. Shue (2019) and Gardiner (2011) stress that current decisions impose irreversible burdens on future generations. For Nigeria, this raises profound ethical stakes: will future Nigerians inherit an economy locked into oil dependency, with degraded ecosystems and unmanageable climate impacts? Or will they inherit a diversified, sustainable energy system? This obligation is not abstract. Rising youth populations mean that by 2050, Nigeria will have the third-largest population in the world, projected at over 400 million people (UN DESA, 2022). Ensuring their flourishing requires ethical foresight today.

Critiques of Cosmopolitan Demands

Not all scholars accept cosmopolitan arguments uncritically. Critics argue that cosmopolitanism risks imposing unfair burdens on the Global South, ignoring historical injustices and structural inequalities (Robinson, 2020). Nigeria may justifiably resist moralising discourses that obscure the disproportionate responsibility of the Global North. Yet, even acknowledging these critiques, cosmopolitanism provides a normative reminder that global interdependence demands shared responsibility. For Nigeria, rejecting cosmopolitan justice entirely risks isolating itself from climate finance, green technology transfers, and global partnerships that could aid its transition.

Nigeria's Ethical Position in Global Climate Responsibility

Nigeria embodies the dual role of both a victim and a contributor. It is among the most vulnerable to climate harms, but also a fossil fuel producer with agency in shaping Africa's energy future. Cosmopolitan ethics situates Nigeria as a responsible actor in the global commons, not merely a passive recipient of harm or aid.

Thus, the moral case for Nigeria's transition is not that it bears equal responsibility as wealthy nations, but that it has a duty proportional to its capacity and vulnerability. By embracing a cosmopolitan ethic of solidarity, Nigeria can align its energy policies with both domestic well-being and global justice.

Nationalist Developmental Rights: Energy for Growth

The Developmentalist Argument: While cosmopolitanism emphasizes global duties, the developmentalist perspective stresses the moral right of nations to pursue industrialization and poverty alleviation using whatever resources are available. For Nigeria, where over 40% of the population lives below the poverty line (World Bank, 2022), access to affordable and reliable energy is indispensable for development. Fossil fuels, despite their environmental costs, remain the fastest and most accessible route to large-scale electrification and economic transformation.

This argument is grounded in the principle of sovereignty: states should retain autonomy over how they use their resources to meet domestic needs (Okereke, 2021). Moreover, developmentalists argue that pressuring Nigeria to rapidly transition away from fossil fuels amounts to climate injustice, since wealthy nations have already reaped the benefits of carbon-intensive development (Muttitt & Kartha, 2020; Sultana, 2022). Muttitt and Kartha (2020) emphasise that forcing low-emitting, energy-poor nations to forego their remaining hydrocarbon reserves without adequate financial compensation or renewable alternative capacity severely restricts their right to economic development and exacerbates global inequalities. In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, such demands are increasingly critiqued as a form of "climate coloniality" that shifts the primary burden of decarbonisation onto nations least responsible for historical emissions (Sultana, 2022, 2024).

Historical Injustice and Unequal Carbon Footprints

The principle of fairness is central to nationalist developmental claims. Industrialised nations bear overwhelming responsibility for cumulative emissions: the United States and Europe together account for nearly half of historical CO₂ emissions, while Africa as a whole contributes less than 4% (IPCC, 2023). To demand immediate fossil fuel restraint from Nigeria, a late-developing state, is to perpetuate historical injustice. Sachs (2016) argues that the Global North effectively "used up" much of the global carbon budget while building prosperity, leaving little room for developing nations to grow. From this perspective, Nigeria has a right to exploit its oil and gas reserves as part of its development trajectory. Any global climate strategy that overlooks this historical asymmetry risks reproducing neo-colonial hierarchies, where the Global South bears disproportionate sacrifices.

The Right to Development in International Law

The nationalist developmental position is reinforced by international legal norms. The 1986 UN Declaration on the Right to Development affirms that all peoples have an inalienable right to economic, social, and cultural development (United Nations, 1986). Energy is fundamental to realizing this right. Without expanding energy access, Nigeria cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to poverty eradication,

education, and industrialisation. The principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR), enshrined in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, acknowledges that while all states share responsibility for environmental protection, developing states have the right to prioritise development. Nigeria can therefore legitimately argue that its developmental rights must not be curtailed by climate obligations imposed from outside.

Energy for Poverty Alleviation and Industrialisation

Nigeria's developmental needs are immense. Over 90 million Nigerians lack electricity access, and millions more rely on biomass for cooking, with severe health consequences (IEA, 2022). Expanding energy access is therefore not a luxury but a moral imperative for human dignity. Fossil fuels, being currently abundant and infrastructurally embedded, provide the fastest route to electrification. Moreover, energy is critical for industrialisation. Without reliable and affordable power, manufacturing, digital infrastructure, and agricultural modernisation remain stunted. As Akinyele and Iwayemi (2020) note, industrial diversification is central to reducing Nigeria's dependency on oil rents. Ironically, fossil fuels themselves may provide the bridge to building the very industrial base that would later enable renewable integration.

Postcolonial Critiques of Climate Governance

Nationalist developmental arguments also resonate with postcolonial critiques of international climate politics. Scholars such as Okereke (2021) argue that global climate governance often marginalises African voices, framing the Global South as "defaulters" rather than partners. Climate conditionalities tied to aid or finance can undermine sovereignty, perpetuating dependence on donor institutions and multinational corporations. For Nigeria, this raises the risk of a "green dependency": becoming reliant on Western financing and technology for renewables while losing autonomy over its development path. As Acemoglu and Robinson (2019) remind us, development cannot be imposed externally; it must emerge from domestic priorities. Nigeria's right to determine its energy future is therefore a matter of both justice and sovereignty.

The Problem of Energy Colonialism

A growing literature highlights "energy colonialism," where wealthy nations and corporations push renewable projects in the Global South primarily to meet their own climate goals, often sidelining local communities (Newell & Phillips, 2021). For example, large-scale land acquisitions for biofuels or solar farms may displace rural populations, replicating the extractive logic of fossil capitalism under a green guise. Nigeria must therefore guard against being pressured into a transition that sacrifices local needs for global optics. The ethical question is not simply whether Nigeria should transition, but under what conditions, and whose interests the transition serves.

The Pragmatic Argument: Fossil Fuels as a Development Bridge

Even some climate justice advocates such as Okereke (2021) and Onyekwena (2025) acknowledge that fossil fuels, particularly natural gas, may serve as a temporary "bridge" for development in resource-rich countries. Prominent climate policy scholars argue that an abrupt phase-out without viable modern energy infrastructure risks plunging developing nations deeper into systemic poverty and energy deficit (Okereke, 2021; Onyekwena, 2025). Oil and gas revenues, if managed transparently, could fund renewable infrastructure, education, and healthcare (Akinyi, 2020). Leading African climate advocates emphasise that a pragmatic, equitable transition must allow energy-poor nations to utilise domestic hydrocarbon reserves strategically as transitional assets (Okereke, 2021; Onyekwena, 2025).

For Nigeria, abandoning fossil resources prematurely may mean forfeiting critical fiscal revenues without viable alternatives, effectively undermining both national development and long-term climate resilience. The pragmatic version of the developmentalist argument thus stresses sequencing: Nigeria should transition gradually, ensuring that developmental milestones such as poverty reduction, industrialisation, and infrastructure expansion are achieved first. Only then can renewables sustainably take over.

Limits and Challenges of the Developmentalist Argument

Despite its moral force, the developmentalist perspective has limits. First, fossil fuel dependence has already proven unsustainable in Nigeria. Oil rents have fuelled corruption, conflict, and inequality (Watts, 2021). Thus, relying further on fossil fuels risks deepening the very underdevelopment it seeks to overcome. Second, the global energy market is shifting. Demand for oil may peak by the 2030s (IEA, 2022), threatening the long-term viability of fossil rents. Betting on oil as the engine of future development may therefore lock Nigeria into stranded assets. Finally, climate change itself imposes severe developmental costs. Desertification, flooding, and food insecurity disproportionately harm the poor, undermining the nationalist developmental claim that fossil fuels unequivocally promote well-being.

Nigeria's Negotiating Position

In practice, Nigeria oscillates between cosmopolitan and developmentalist positions in international fora. On the one hand, it pledges ambitious climate targets. On the other hand, it emphasises its right to exploit fossil resources for growth. This “dual rhetoric” reflects the real ethical and political tension Nigeria faces: acknowledging climate responsibility while defending developmental rights. A balanced path forward may lie in pursuing a just transition: leveraging fossil resources in the short term to build renewable capacity, while ensuring that the burdens and benefits are distributed fairly. This is core of Anthropoholism as an ethics for environmental management.

Anthropoholism and African Environmental Ethics

Why Anthropoholism Matters for Nigeria's Energy Debate: Most discussions of climate ethics in Nigeria draw on Western paradigms like cosmopolitan justice, utilitarian cost–benefit analysis, or nationalist developmental rights. While these frameworks provide important insights, they risk marginalizing African contributions to environmental philosophy. Anthropoholism, developed by Nigerian philosopher Samuel Akpan Bassey, offers a homegrown paradigm that rejects the polarities of anthropocentrism (which privileges humans over nature) and ecocentrism (which subordinates humans to ecosystems). Instead, anthropoholism posits a mutual embeddedness of human and ecological life, emphasizing that human flourishing and environmental integrity are indivisible (Bassey, 2019; 2020; Asuquo, 2020). In the context of Nigeria's energy transition, anthropoholism is not just a theoretical innovation; it provides an ethical compass. By grounding energy choices in the indivisibility of human–nature flourishing, anthropoholism enables Nigeria to chart a pathway that is both developmentally responsive and ecologically responsible. Locating the ethics of energy transition within anthropoholist framework examines the moral questions of moving from fossil fuels to clean energy, ensuring that the shift is fair and does not harm vulnerable peoples and communities.

Principles of Anthropoholism

Bassey articulates anthropoholism around three core principles:

- i. **Holistic Interdependence:** Humans are not separate from nature but part of a relational whole. Harming ecosystems harms humans because both co-constitute the life-support system.
- ii. **Human Distinctiveness without Supremacy:** Humans possess moral agency and responsibility, but this does not translate into domination. Rather, humans act as caretakers within the broader ecological community.
- iii. **Live-and-Let-Live Ethic:** The guiding norm of anthropoholism is coexistence. Human activity must allow for the survival, continuity, and flourishing of non-human life, since this underpins human well-being itself (Bassey, 2019; Asuquo, 2020).

These principles shift the ethical focus from short-term utility to long-term co-flourishing. They demand policies that enhance both human development and ecological sustainability, rather than trading one off against the other.

Anthropoholism versus Fossil Fuel Dependence

From an anthropoholistic perspective, Nigeria's reliance on oil extraction and gas flaring violates the duty of care embedded in human–nature interdependence. The Niger Delta exemplifies this violation: oil spills and pollution have devastated fisheries, poisoned farmlands, and displaced communities (Watts, 2021). Under anthropoholism, these harms are not collateral costs of progress but ethical failures that undermine the integrity of the human–ecological whole. Nationalist developmentalists often justify fossil fuel use on grounds of sovereignty and poverty alleviation. Yet anthropoholism reveals the paradox: policies that degrade ecological systems ultimately perpetuate human suffering. Developmental rights cannot be sustained on the destruction of the very environment that sustains life. Thus, fossil dependency is self-defeating when viewed through an anthropoholistic lens.

Anthropoholism and Renewable Energy

Anthropoholism does not demand an immediate halt to fossil fuel use; rather, it provides criteria for judging energy pathways. Renewable energy is favoured because it sustains the live-and-let-live ethic by minimising ecological harm and promoting long-term human flourishing. For example, solar energy harnesses Nigeria's abundant sunlight without degrading ecosystems. Hydropower, if managed inclusively, can serve communities while protecting ecological balance.

However, anthropoholism also warns against "green colonialism." Renewable projects imposed without community participation such as large-scale land acquisitions for biofuels, violate the anthropoholistic principle of relational integrity. Energy transition must therefore be participatory, ensuring that communities are agents in shaping decisions that affect their socio-ecological futures.

Duties to Future Generations

Anthropoholism places strong emphasis on intergenerational responsibility. Since humans are embedded in a continuum of ecological life, present generations owe duties to ensure that future Nigerians inherit both a habitable environment and viable energy systems. This principle aligns with, but is distinct from, cosmopolitan intergenerational justice (Shue, 2019). While Shue grounds responsibility in fairness across time, anthropoholism roots it in the indivisibility of human–ecological flourishing. Failing to protect ecosystems is not merely unfair; it is ontologically destructive, severing the continuity of life itself.

Anthropoholism, Participation, and Justice

One of the most practical contributions of anthropoholism is its insistence on participatory responsibility. Just as humans are embedded in ecosystems, communities must be embedded in decision-making. Top-down policies whether fossil-fuel extraction by multinationals or renewable mega-projects funded by international donors fail, if they rupture socio-ecological relations. An anthropoholistic energy policy for Nigeria must therefore be community-driven, inclusive, and restorative. This aligns with contemporary frameworks of energy justice, but anthropoholism grounds participation in African ontology rather than liberal rights theory.

Toward an Anthropoholistic Framework for Nigeria's Energy Future

Taken together, anthropoholism provides a distinctly Nigerian ethical framework for navigating the energy transition. It suggests three evaluative questions:

- i. Does this policy sustain the integrity of socio-ecological relations?
- ii. Does it respect human distinctiveness without ecological domination?
- iii. Does it enhance the co-flourishing of people, ecosystems, and future generations?

By applying these criteria, Nigeria can move beyond the reductive binaries of global climate justice versus sovereign development. Anthropoholism reconciles these perspectives by showing that true development is impossible without ecological sustainability, and that true responsibility is impossible without community well-being.

Reconciling the Tension: Towards an Anthropoholistic Just Transition

Nigeria's energy dilemma embodies the clash of competing ethical frameworks. Cosmopolitan climate justice demands Nigeria's participation in global mitigation, proportional to its responsibility and capacity. Nationalist developmental rights defend its sovereignty and entitlement to exploit fossil resources for growth. African environmental philosophy, particularly Samuel Bassey's anthropoholism, offers a mediating framework that grounds energy ethics in the indivisibility of human and ecological flourishing. Anthropoholism adds a critical dimension to reconciliation. Unlike cosmopolitanism, which frames duties in terms of distributive fairness across borders, anthropoholism insists that ecological harm anywhere is harm to humanity itself, since humans and nature co-constitute a holistic life system (Bassey, 2019; 2020). Unlike nationalist developmentalism, which can justify ecological sacrifice in the name of sovereignty, anthropoholism cautions that development premised on degrading ecosystems is self-defeating. By foregrounding the "live-and-let-live" ethic, anthropoholism reorients Nigeria's energy debate from abstract global obligations or state-centered rights toward concrete duties of care to communities, ecosystems, and future generations. A just transition for Nigeria must therefore integrate three dimensions:

- i. **Cosmopolitan Responsibility:** Commit to global climate goals while demanding fair finance and technology transfers.
- ii. **Developmental Sovereignty:** Use available resources to alleviate poverty and expand energy access, but without entrenching extractive dependency.
- iii. **Anthropoholistic Ethics:** Evaluate energy policies by whether they sustain socio-ecological relations and enhance co-flourishing across generations.

In practice, this means that fossil revenues, where still exploited, should be transparently invested in renewable infrastructure, ecological remediation, and community empowerment. Policy should prioritise decentralised renewables such as solar mini-grids that align with

anthropoholistic values by respecting both human needs and ecological integrity. Participation is central: communities bearing the costs of extraction or renewable projects must be agents, not objects, of decision-making. By combining cosmopolitan justice, developmental rights, and anthropoholism, Nigeria can move beyond reductive binaries of “growth versus responsibility.” Instead, it can model an authentically African pathway of just transition should be sequenced, inclusive, and ecologically respectful. Such a framework not only advances Nigeria’s developmental goals but also contributes to global climate ethics by showing how indigenous African philosophies can enrich the discourse.

Conclusion

Nigeria’s energy dilemma dramatizes the wider ethical tensions of the Global South in a climate-constrained world. Cosmopolitan climate justice highlights its responsibility to contribute to global mitigation, while nationalist developmental rights defend its sovereignty and entitlement to exploit resources for growth. Yet both frameworks remain incomplete unless anchored in a philosophy that reflects Nigeria’s own socio-ecological realities. Samuel Bassey’s anthropoholism provides such an anchor. By rejecting both human supremacy over nature and purely ecocentric approaches, anthropoholism emphasises the indivisibility of human and ecological flourishing. It reframes Nigeria’s choices not as a trade-off between development and responsibility, but as a duty of care to sustain the holistic life-support system that binds present and future generations. A just transition for Nigeria must therefore be anthropoholistic in orientation: sequenced to allow poverty reduction, participatory to empower affected communities, and restorative to heal the ecological wounds of fossil dependency. Fossil revenues must be reinvested in renewable energy, ecological remediation, and community resilience, with policies evaluated by whether they enhance the co-flourishing of people and ecosystems. By synthesizing cosmopolitan justice, nationalist sovereignty, and anthropoholistic ethics, Nigeria can resist reductive binaries and articulate an authentically African pathway. In doing so, it can transform its energy paradox into a normative model for the Global South demonstrating that sustainable futures are possible when development and ecological care are pursued as inseparable imperatives.

References

- Abubakar, I. R. (2020). Climate change and sustainable development in Nigeria: Challenges and opportunities. *Sustainability*, 12(9), Article 3682. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12093682>
- Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2019). *The narrow corridor: States, societies, and the fate of liberty*. Penguin Press.
- Akinyele, D. O., & Iwayemi, A. (2020). Energy and industrialization in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. *Energy Policy*, 138, Article 111257. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2019.111257>
- Akinyi, R. (2020). Renewable energy policy and transition challenges in sub-Saharan Africa. *Energy Policy*, 137, Article 111138. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2019.111138>
- Amnesty International. (2018). *Negligence in the Niger Delta: Oil spills, human rights, and justice*. Amnesty International.
- Asuquo, G. (2020). Live and let live: Making sense of Samuel Bassey’s ‘anthropoholism’ as ethics for environmental management. *Cogito - Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 12(1), 34–42.

- Bassey, S. A. (2019). 'Anthropoholism' as an authentic tool for environmental management. *International Journal of Environmental Pollution and Environmental Modelling*, 2(3), 160–168.
- Bassey, S. A. (2020). Technology, environmental sustainability and the ethics of anthropoholism. *Social Space*, 20, 1–20. <https://socialspacejournal.eu/20%20numer/Technology%2C%20environmental%20sustainability%20-%20Bassey.pdf>
- Blench, R. (2021). Climate change, desertification and pastoralism in Nigeria. *Journal of Arid Environments*, 186, Article 104383.
- Caney, S. (2020). *Cosmopolitanism and climate change*. Cambridge University Press.
- Eberhard, A., Gratwick, K., Morella, E., & Antmann, P. (2021). Independent power projects in Nigeria: Lessons for the energy transition. *Energy for Sustainable Development*, 64, 44–53.
- Federal Government of Nigeria. (2021). *Nigeria's Climate Change Act 2021*. Government Printer.
- Gardiner, S. M. (2011). *A perfect moral storm: The ethical tragedy of climate change*. Oxford University Press.
- Gyekye, K. (1997). *Tradition and modernity: Philosophical reflections on the African experience*. Oxford University Press.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2023). *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis report*. IPCC.
- International Energy Agency. (2022). *Africa energy outlook 2022*. IEA.
- Mbiti, J. S. (1990). *African religions and philosophy*. Heinemann.
- Metz, T. (2017). Ubuntu as a moral theory and human rights in South Africa. *African Human Rights Law Journal*, 17(2), 532–559.
- Muttitt, G., & Kartha, S. (2020). Equity, climate justice and fossil fuel extraction: Principles for a managed phase out. *Climate Policy*, 20(8), 1024–1042. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2020.1763900>
- Newell, P., & Phillips, J. (2021). *Political economy of energy transitions in the Global South*. Routledge.
- Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. (2022). *Annual statistical bulletin*. NNPC.
- Okereke, C. (2021a). Climate justice and the energy transition in Africa: Why a one-size-fits-all approach fails the Global South. *Development and Change*, 52(4), 890–912. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12650>
- Okereke, C. (2021b). Equity and justice in climate change governance. *Environmental Politics*, 30(1–2), 1–21.
- Okereke, C., & Etemire, U. (2022). Climate law and governance in Nigeria: Opportunities and challenges. *Climate Policy*, 22(2), 134–147.
- Okoro, O. I., & Chikuni, E. (2007). Power sector reforms in Nigeria: Opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Energy in Southern Africa*, 18(3), 52–57.
- Onyekwena, C. (2025). *Beyond clean tech extractivism: African countries must embrace multiple energy sources, including natural gas*. Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa / Development Today. <https://www.development-today.com/archive/2025/dt-6--2025/beyond-clean-tech-extractivism-african-countries-must-embrace-multiple-energy-sources-including-natural-gas>
- Pogge, T. (2017). *World poverty and human rights*. Polity.
- Ramose, M. B. (2002). *African philosophy through Ubuntu*. Mond Books.

- Robinson, J. (2020). Beyond cosmopolitan justice: Climate change and postcolonial critiques. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 34(2), 153–170.
- Sachs, W. (2016). The sustainable development goals and the future of development. *Development*, 59(3–4), 181–190.
- Sala-i-Martin, X., & Subramanian, A. (2013). Addressing the natural resource curse: An illustration from Nigeria. *Journal of African Economies*, 22(4), 570–615.
- Shaaban, M., & Petinrin, J. O. (2014). Renewable energy potentials in Nigeria: Meeting rural energy needs. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 29, 72–84.
- Shue, H. (2019). *Climate justice: Vulnerability and protection*. Oxford University Press.
- Sovacool, B. K., Burke, M., Baker, L., Kotikalapudi, C. K., & Wlokas, H. (2020). New frontiers and conceptual frameworks for energy justice. *Energy Policy*, 105, 677–691.
- Sultana, F. (2022). Critical climate justice. *The Geographical Journal*, 188(1), 118–124. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12417>
- Sultana, F. (2024). *Confronting climate coloniality*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003465973>
- Tempels, P. (1959). *Bantu philosophy*. Présence Africaine.
- United Nations. (1986). *Declaration on the right to development* (Resolution 41/128). General Assembly.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2022). *World population prospects 2022*. UN DESA.
- Watts, M. (2021). Resource curse and petro-violence in the Niger Delta. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 39(4), 467–488.
- Wiredu, K. (1996). *Cultural universals and particulars: An African perspective*. Indiana University Press.
- World Bank. (2022). *Nigeria poverty assessment 2022*. World Bank.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Oriwoh, Victoria E. & Abam, Michael E. (2026). "Research Ethics and the Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Conflict Studies." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 122-132.

Article

Open Access

RESEARCH ETHICS AND THE UTILIZATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN CONFLICT STUDIES

Victoria Ebosetale Oriwoh¹ & Michael E. Abam²

Department of Political Science, Edo University, Iyamo, Edo State¹

Department of Political Science/General Studies, Western Delta University, Oghara, Delta State²

Corresponding Email: mikeabam@gmail.com²

Abstract

This paper examined the ethical implications of the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) in conflict studies research. In recent years, AI has increasingly been adopted in conflict research to enhance data collection, analysis, prediction, and early warning systems. However, the sensitive nature of conflict studies raises concerns about whether existing research ethics frameworks are adequate to regulate the ethical challenges introduced by AI. The paper was guided by three objectives: to examine how the utilization of AI raises ethical challenges in conflict studies research; to identify the forms of AI currently utilized and their analytical purposes; and to assess the adequacy of existing research ethics frameworks in addressing AI-related ethical concerns. The paper adopted a descriptive research design, and relied on secondary sources of data, which were presented and analyzed thematically. Findings revealed that while AI significantly improves the analytical depth and predictive capacity of conflict research, its utilization raises major ethical concerns such as lack of transparency and explainability, algorithmic bias, data privacy and ownership issues, and weak accountability mechanisms. The study further found that machine learning, natural language processing, and big data analytics are the major forms of AI currently utilized in conflict studies for pattern recognition, predictive modelling, and scenario simulation. However, existing ethical frameworks were found to be only partially adequate, as they do not sufficiently address AI-specific ethical complexities in conflict-sensitive environments. The paper therefore recommended the development of context-sensitive and enforceable

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

ethical guidelines to ensure responsible, transparent, and accountable utilization of AI in conflict studies research.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Conflict Research, Ethical Guidelines, Research Ethics, ChatGPT.

Introduction

In recent years, scholars have argued that Artificial Intelligence (AI) has grown to become an important tool in the conduct of academic research, including peace and conflict studies. However, due to the sensitivity surrounding conflict studies, research ethical standards such as confidentiality, informed consent, and accurate information are very necessary in the field of study (Fujii, 2018). These ethical obligations are further emphasized in conflict situations where misinformation, misrepresentation, or misuse of data can escalate tensions or endanger lives. In line with this, Wood (2016) asserted that new methodological tools and designs introduced into conflict research must be analyzed through a strong ethical lens. The introduction of Artificial Intelligence into the delicate research space of conflict studies raises new questions about the efficiency of existing ethical frameworks. Fjelde and Hultman (2014) highlighted that AI techniques such as machine learning, big data analytics, and natural language processing are now introduced to analyze conflict patterns, make predictions, and support early warning signs. Bode and Huelss (2018) argued that with these new technologies, researchers are able to conveniently process large volumes of conflict-related data derived from news reports, social media platforms, satellite imagery, or policy documents. These are tasks that were previously time-consuming and difficult to solve using earlier methodological approaches. In conflict studies, where data is required to be accurate and timely, artificial intelligence has become a welcome means of improving the analytical depth and predictive capacity of conflict research (Bode and Huelss, 2018). Regardless of this, scholars and researchers in the field of conflict studies have raised concerns about the need to critically examine the ethical implications of the use of AI in conflict research, as AI in research introduces ethical challenges that traditional research ethics frameworks were not properly designed to address. According to Resnik and Hosseini (2024), the use of AI techniques for analytical tasks and critical research work in conflict studies raises concerns about who is accountable for flawed or harmful research outcomes. In line with this, Floridi *et al.* (2018) further stated that, considering the fact that most research in conflict studies is delicate and sensitive, as its outcomes often address vulnerable and affected populations, the wrong use of AI can create misleading and incorrect conflict narratives or rely on opaque algorithms, which can in turn lead to the marginalization of vulnerable groups and the creation of biased datasets.

Mittelstadt *et al.* (2016) identified lack of transparency, algorithmic bias, inaccurate information, unclear data ownership, and lack of accountability for AI-generated data and outputs, as some of the ethical issues researchers tend to face in the utilization of AI for critical research work. These ethical concerns are particularly significant in conflict studies, where research outputs often influence policy decisions, security responses, and peace-building interventions affecting vulnerable populations. Scholars have argued that non-transparent and unexplained AI systems make it difficult for researchers to identify how conclusions are reached, thereby limiting the ability to verify findings or identify biases within datasets (Floridi *et al.*, 2018; Jobin, Ienca and Vayena, 2019). Furthermore, the absence of clear accountability mechanisms for AI-assisted research raises questions about responsibility when there is a flaw in data interpretation, or harmful research

recommendations (Resnik and Hosseini, 2024). In conflict research, such shortcomings may contribute to the marginalization of affected communities, or misrepresentation of complex conflict dynamics. This supports the claim that, as much as the introduction of AI offers numerous methodological advantages, it simultaneously introduces ethical concerns that challenges conventional research practices and existing ethical frameworks in conflict studies.

There have been various arguments on how newly introduced AI techniques and frameworks require localization to reflect communal values and conflict dynamics within specific regions, particularly in contexts such as Nigeria, where the adoption of AI in research is advancing faster than the development of context-specific ethical guidelines (Abebe *et al.*, 2020; Ewuoso and Hall, 2023). International bodies such as the OECD (2019) and UNESCO (2021) have also supported this position. In Nigeria, where complex conflict situations ranging from insurgency to banditry persist, the absence of clear ethical guidance for AI utilization increases the risk of data exploitation or policy decisions that may further worsen insecurity. By examining how AI is utilized in conflict studies and assessing the ethical implications of its use, research can be conducted in a more responsible, transparent, and context-sensitive manner. It is against this backdrop that this study examines research ethics and the utilization of artificial intelligence in conflict studies, with the aim of strengthening ethical standards within peace and conflict research.

Conceptualizing Research Ethics Problematic

As a result of the increasing use of artificial intelligence in conflict studies, the methods through which conflict researchers gather, analyze, and interpret data have significantly evolved. Fjelde and Hultman (2014) supported this view by noting that the development of AI in conflict analysis has been widely documented by researchers, as AI-based methods are now frequently employed to analyze large volumes of conflict related data. Similarly, Bode and Huelss (2018), argued that AI makes it possible for researchers to collect and analyze data more efficiently and thoroughly than using existing research methods, and these advancements have greatly improved conflict studies' analytical capabilities. Artificial intelligence technologies have introduced new techniques such as machine learning, natural language processing, and also big data analytics into conflict studies research space, and these techniques are used to enhance early warning systems, conflict prediction, and also pattern recognition in complex conflict environments. Despite the methodological advantages possessed with the use of AI in conflict studies research, various studies have shown it utilization also raises significant ethical challenges that are not sufficiently solved by traditional research ethics frameworks. Scholars like Jobin, Ienca and Vayena (2019) observed that the majority of current AI ethics standards lack adequate localization and are high-level and globally oriented. In the absence of strong and context-sensitive ethical principles, AI systems may unintentionally promote dominant or biased patterns, thereby creating inaccurate results or policy recommendations that may lead to the marginalizing of vulnerable populations (Birhane, 2021). Consequently, these studies collectively show that existing research ethics frameworks are ill-suited to handle the ethical challenges associated with an AI utilized conflict research, as they were primarily designed to direct human led research processes rather than automated and data-intensive analytical systems.

The growing application of artificial intelligence in conflict studies has been recognized by researchers and scholars, who have emphasized the technology's potential to improve data processing, prediction, and early warning systems. However, a large portion of the existing literature analyzed this evolution in a disjointed manner. While some literature

focused on the analytical capabilities of AI in conflict research, others discussed ethical principles in AI governance more broadly, often without sufficient attention to the specific methodological realities of conflict studies. This shows that there is little systematic investigation of how these ethical challenges explicitly manifest in conflict studies research practice, despite the widespread recognition of ethical concerns associated with the use of AI. There is a gap in knowledge about how AI-driven techniques changes research conduct, transparency, and ethical decision-making in conflict-sensitive environments because the majority of ethical discussions are either abstract or technology-focused. By carefully examining the ethical issues generated up by AI in conflict research, identifying the forms and analytical purpose of AI tools used, and critically evaluating the suitability of current research ethics frameworks in addressing ethical challenges associated with artificial intelligence in conflict studies, this paper aims to close this gap.

Conceptual Clarification Literature and Review

Artificial Intelligence: Floridi *et al.* (2018) described artificial intelligence (AI) as systems capable of processing large volumes of data, learning from experience, and producing outputs that support or automate decision-making. In other words, artificial intelligence refers to the ability for computer systems and machines to perform tasks that ordinarily require human reasoning, learning, and intelligence. These capabilities enable AI systems to generate solutions to problems, aid decision-making, and enhance pattern recognition. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2019) conceptualized AI as a system that can extract data, interpret data, learn from such data, and utilize these learnings to achieve specific goals through flexible adaptation. Contemporary studies have emphasized that AI is not a single technology but rather a collection of diverse computational techniques and tools designed to evolve, understand, and adapt human learning processes. Russell and Norvig (2021) posited that AI functions through the design of intelligent agents that perceive and analyse their environments and act in ways that maximize the achievement of specified goals. Consequently, artificial intelligence functions as an umbrella term encompassing various approaches, including machine learning, deep learning, natural language processing, and expert systems, all of which collectively aim to replicate elements and features of human intelligence through computational methods (Olojede and Polo, 2025).

Historically, Bellaby (2024) noted that artificial intelligence emerged in the mid-twentieth century when early pioneers in computer science introduced the idea that machines could perform tasks traditionally associated with human intelligence. Ever since its emergence, AI has evolved significantly, shifting from rule-based systems to data-driven machine learning models, a transition that forms the foundation of most modern AI applications (Saleh, 2019). This evolution, has further led to the data-driven machine system, having similar characteristics with the human learning process. In this regard, Olojede and Polo (2025) identified some key characteristics, including the ability to predict and adapt, make decisions independently, engage in continuous learning, adopt forward-looking analytical capabilities, and perform observation-based functions. An effective utilization of artificial intelligence enhances efficiency, speeds up analytical processes, and reduces the level of direct human intervention in research activities, thereby making AI an important aspect in our lives and society (Riedl, 2019). In the field of conflict studies, the evolution of AI has facilitated the possibility of large and diverse datasets analysis, process social media content and satellite feeds, identify emerging conflict patterns, and assess potential escalation of violence before its manifestation (Usman, 2025). As a result, AI is increasingly

embedded in conflict studies research processes relating to data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Artificial intelligence is made up diverse parts and analytical techniques, each with specific methodologies for how research is designed and conducted. One defining feature of modern AI is its capacity to learn from data rather than rely solely on fixed rules. In the context of conflict studies, this development is particularly important because conflict dynamics are complex, non-linear, and shaped by multiple interacting factors (Bellaby, 2024). Consequently, AI's ability to analyze complex datasets enhances its relevance as a research tool for understanding contemporary conflict environments, while also raising important ethical considerations.

Concept of Research Ethics

Before making a clarification of 'research ethics.' It is pertinent we attempt a definition of the broader concept of ethics. Ethics the discipline concerned with what is morally good and bad, right and wrong. The word 'ethos' originally referred to a person's character (Valsquez, 2017). In the same vein, (Trevino, 2017) sees ethics as a set of moral principles or values that govern the conduct of an individual or a group. It is not a list of rules, but a way of making decisions about what is right or wrong. Consequently, research ethics establishes the basis upon which a researcher may conduct their research without causing harm to others, exploiting others, or contributing to injustice, or unjust outcomes. Research ethics are set of rules and guidelines established as a foundation to measure what is acceptable and how research should be conducted in its design, data collection, data analysis, as well as research reporting. According to Resnik (2020), Research Ethics is about applying moral values, such as honesty, respect, accountability, and fairness to scientific inquiry. Emanuel et al. (2004) further defined a number of core principles of ethics for research practice, including: respect for persons, beneficence, justice; informed consent, confidentiality, and scientific integrity. These ethical principles have been incorporated into various global research frameworks, and have continued to influence current academic practices across disciplines. Based on the principles of research ethics, to demonstrate respect for persons, researchers must ensure that each participant in their study has given voluntary, informed consent prior to participation, and be aware of the potential risks of participating. Researchers must also be able to maximizing benefit and minimizing risk of participation and adhere to the principle of justice and ensuring equal access to the benefits of the research. Additionally, protecting the confidentiality and sensitive data of participants protects their rights, especially in highly politicized or sensitive social settings. Resnik (2020) posited that these are the major reasons why ethics was introduced in research practice. Overall, these principles serve to not only regulate the guidelines of data collection, but it is also used for data analysis, data storage, data presentation, and the protection of participants for the research.

Research ethics is particularly important in conflict studies as most research work are often related to experiences of people affected by war, displacement, security actors, insurgents, or other politically-exposed groups. Consequently, in most conflict areas, there are high power imbalances between various actors, and this makes it difficult for researchers to remain neutral. In line with this, Fujii (2018) argued that most conflict studies research is often characterized by fear, trauma, inequalities of power, and political sensitives, especially because of the environment the research is revolved around in, and for this reason, conflict research are rarely neutral. Failure to adhere to ethical principles within this environment could result in exposing participants to significant levels of risk, distorting the narrative of conflict, or undermining peace building initiatives. The increasing use of artificial intelligence in research has created new ethical challenges that traditional frameworks were not

designed to address, and the complex nature and sensitivity of conflict environment make ethical norms increasingly demanding. Considering the fact that poor ethical judgment in conflict studies research can result in the misrepresentation of people's experiences and harm to vulnerable communities and individuals, Resnik and Hosseini (2024) further argued that current ethical guidelines are insufficient for handling AI-assisted research, particularly with regard to responsibility, accountability, and oversight (Fujii, 2018). Floridi *et al.* (2018) urged the creation of ethical frameworks that specifically and significantly address these problems because of this. As AI becomes more embedded in research practice, ethical standards must evolve to ensure that technological efficiency does not override human dignity, fairness, and social justice. For conflict studies, this evolution is essential in order to produce knowledge that is credible, socially responsible, and supportive of conflict resolution and human security.

Concept of Conflict Studies

Conflict is not merely an event, but a process shaped by political, economic, social, and historical factors. Galtung (2016), argued that conflict exists when two or more parties pursue incompatible goals, whether at the interpersonal, communal, or international level. In other words, conflict emerges when individuals or groups perceive that their interests, values, or objectives cannot be simultaneously achieved, leading to tension, competition, or confrontation. Similarly, Wallensteen (2020) explained conflict as a social situation in which at least two actors perceive their interests to be incompatible and act on the basis of this perception. In the context of conflict studies, conflict is not limited to physical violence but also includes structural and cultural forms of violence that produce inequality, marginalization, and insecurity. The term conflict studies refer to a field of study that explores the methods for managing, resolving, and promoting peace as well as the causes, dynamics, and effects of both violent and nonviolent conflicts. According to Ramsbotham *et al.* (2026), conflict studies is the interdisciplinary study of violent and non-violent conflicts and the strategies used to prevent, manage, and transform them. In other words, conflict studies are used to comprehend the causes of conflicts, how they intensify, and how they might be avoided or changed. In contemporary societies where violence is often associated with poverty, weak institutions, and marginalization, modern conflict studies is introduced. Modern conflict studies goes beyond the traditional descriptive approaches by employing systematic, data-driven, and interdisciplinary methods to analyze complex conflict environments, including the use of geographic information systems, conflict event datasets, digital media analysis, and computational tools to understand patterns of violence, escalation, and peacebuilding processes (Cederman and Weidmann, 2017; Fjelde and Hultman, 2014).

Kalyvas (2018) noted that modern conflict research increasingly relies on micro-level data to explain patterns of violence, civilian victimization, and armed group behaviour. This is because, contemporary conflict studies place strong emphasis on data, evidence-based analysis, and systematic research in understanding conflict dynamics. In the same vein, various studies such as Cederman and Weidmann, (2017); Fjelde and Hultman, (2014) claimed that conflict studies researchers now use quantitative, and computational methods to identify trends, predict escalation, and evaluate impacts of intervention. This methodological shift has enhanced analytical precision but also increased the complexity of conflict research. The growing alignment of artificial intelligence into conflict research has reshaped the field, causing conflict studies to be deeply concerned with the ethical principles of research, especially because it deals with human suffering, insecurity, and political

sensitivity. Fujii (2018) emphasized that ethical precautions are crucial since conflict research frequently entails speaking with traumatized groups, displaced people, and violent actors. Because conflict data often originates from victims, eyewitnesses, or contested sources, researchers must exercise caution in how information is collected, interpreted, and disseminated. Ethical challenges in conflict studies include protecting identities, avoiding retraumatization, ensuring informed consent, and preventing misuse of findings for political or military purposes. In a similar vein, Wood (2016) cautioned that badly executed conflict research may put participants in danger, alter narratives, or unknowingly give violent groups legitimacy.

According to Fjelde and Hultman (2014), conflict trends, media reports, and early warning signals are increasingly being analyzed using AI-based methods like machine learning and natural language processing. In a similar vein, Bode and Huelss (2018) pointed out that researchers can examine vast amounts of conflict-related data that would be impossible to analyze manually, with the aid of computational techniques and tools. By enabling large-scale text analysis, predictive modelling, and real-time monitoring, these technologies have broadened the field of conflict studies. However, they also restrict researchers from direct engagement with data sources, making it harder to evaluate context, bias, and reliability. As AI becomes more integrated into the field, the ethical and methodological underpinnings of conflict studies are changing, and this makes it necessary to critically examine how AI influences not only what we know about conflict but also how that knowledge is produced.

Relationship between Artificial Intelligence and Conflict Research

The relationship between artificial intelligence and conflict research is both enabling and problematic. Although scholars acknowledge the methodological benefits of AI, they are also greatly concerned that existing ethical principles and regulatory frameworks are insufficient to address AI-specific risks in conflict research (Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena, 2019; Resnik and Hosseini, 2024). Artificial intelligence has emerged as a critical methodological innovation that restructures how conflict data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted. This development reflects the growing demand within contemporary conflict studies for more advanced analytical tools capable of addressing the complexity of modern conflicts. The introduction of artificial intelligence into conflict research has significantly altered the relationship between the researcher and data, thereby reshaping methodological responsibility. In this regard, Bode and Huelss (2018) argued that the use of AI tools and techniques in data analysis reduces direct human involvement in decision-making processes, which may cause researchers to become detached from data sources and analytical procedures. Similarly, Floridi *et al.* (2018) contended that such detachment limits transparency and accountability in AI-assisted research. When AI systems increasingly shape research findings, concerns arise regarding bias, interpretability, and the difficulty of explaining how analytical outcomes are produced. Understanding the relationship between artificial intelligence and conflict research is therefore essential, as it provides a foundation for examining how ethical frameworks can be strengthened to guide responsible AI utilization in conflict studies. According to Cederman and Weidmann (2017), the evolution of AI within conflict research has transformed the field by enabling more accurate spatial and temporal analysis of conflict events. Consequently, other scholars have observed that AI techniques such as machine learning, natural language processing, and automated data extraction are widely used to analyze large datasets, identify patterns of violence, and support early warning systems (Bode and Huelss, 2018; Fjelde and Hultman, 2014).

In contrast to traditional conflict research methods, which relied heavily on field interviews, manual coding, and historical analysis, artificial intelligence enables the processing of vast amounts of structured and unstructured data while enhancing predictive and early warning capacities. Fjelde and Hultman (2014) noted that AI-driven models can analyze conflict trends, social signals, and political indicators to detect escalation risks and generate early warnings. Similarly, Ward *et al.* (2016) posited that AI techniques significantly improve the prediction of political instability and violent conflict. In summary, the relationship between artificial intelligence and conflict research reflects a significant shift in contemporary conflict research methodology. This shift demonstrates that, while the integration of AI enhances analytical capacity, it simultaneously introduces ethical and methodological challenges that reinforce the need for robust ethical principles and frameworks capable of addressing AI-specific concerns within conflict research. Without adequate ethical guidance, the methodological advantages of AI may inadvertently undermine research integrity and the broader objectives of peacebuilding and conflict prevention (Resnik & Hosseini, 2024; Bellaby, 2024).

Conceptual Framework on Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence

The advent of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has opened up transformative possibilities in academic research. Tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude hold the potential to help with idea and content development, structure and research design, literature review and synthesis, data management and analysis, as well as proofreading and editing. However, as enticing as these advancements are, they bring ethical challenges that require careful navigation.

- i. **Examine Policies and Guidelines:** Researchers must consult international, national, and institutional GenAI policies. This involves not only aligning with global GenAI ethics recommendations but also understanding the specifics of local guidelines. Adhering to these ensures compliance and fosters trust.
- ii. **Think About the Social Impacts:** GenAI can reinforce biases and perpetuate inequalities. Researchers should critically evaluate the societal consequences of using GenAI, considering both environmental sustainability and digital equity.
- iii. **Harness Understanding of the Technology:** A robust understanding of how GenAI tools operate (beyond their surface-level functionalities) is essential. Researchers must grasp the limitations and ethical implications of the technologies they use and should promote AI literacy within their academic communities.
- iv. **Indicate Use Transparently:** Transparency is key to maintaining academic integrity. Researchers should explicitly disclose where and how GenAI tools were used, documenting their role in the research process. This fosters accountability and mitigates risks related to copyright and authorship disputes.
- v. **Critically Engage with Outputs:** GenAI outputs are not infallible and require rigorous validation. Researchers bear the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that GenAI-generated content aligns with disciplinary standards and is free from inaccuracies or ethical breaches.
- vi. **Access Secure Versions:** Security and privacy are paramount when using GenAI. Free versions of tools may not offer adequate protections for sensitive data, underscoring the need for secure, institutional subscriptions or private deployments of GenAI models.
- vii. **Look at User Agreements:** Many GenAI tools have complex user agreements, which can have significant implications for data ownership and privacy. Researchers should

carefully review these terms to ensure ethical compliance and to safeguard their intellectual property.

Conclusion

The paper essentially examined whether existing research ethics frameworks are adequate to guide the utilization of artificial intelligence in conflict studies research. The findings of the paper revealed that while AI provides significant methodological benefits, such as the ability to analyze large and complex datasets, detect emerging patterns, predict conflict escalation, and support early warning systems, it also introduces new ethical challenges that existing research ethics frameworks are unprepared to address. Major challenges highlighted includes; lack of transparency and explainability, algorithmic bias, data privacy and ownership issues, and inadequate accountability measures. The paper further identified machine learning, natural language processing, and big data analytics, as various forms of artificial intelligence utilized in conflict studies research, and each form has its distinct analytical goals, ranging from pattern identification, scenario simulation, and predictive modelling. Consequently, the study further observed that in areas where conflict dynamics are complex and existing ethical frameworks are still in operation, AI tools have surpassed the context-specific ethical guidelines. In conclusion, while AI improves the analytical capabilities and predictive ability of conflict research, its application emphasizes the critical need to update, evolve, and localize ethical frameworks to address the unique challenges posed by AI, ensuring research is conducted appropriately, ethically, and contextually.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study

- i. Scholars, research institutions, policymakers, and international organizations should collaborate closely to develop ethical principles that explicitly address the difficulties created by AI, such as algorithmic bias, transparency, accountability, and data ownership.
- ii. Conflict studies researchers should be adequately trained on ethical and accurate use of artificial intelligence, with more focus on informed consent, ethical automated analysis, and data protection.
- iii. AI systems employed in conflict research should contain procedures for transparency, interpretability, and human oversight to guarantee that findings are valid and understood by both researchers and affected populations.
- iv. To reduce the dangers of bias, unforeseen repercussions, and harm to vulnerable populations, research institutions should continuously conduct ethical supervision of AI-driven research.

References

- Abebe, R., Birhane, Barocas, S., Kleinberg, J., Levy, K., Raghavan, M., & Robinson, D. (2020). *Roles for computing in social change*. Proceedings of the 2020 Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency, 252–260. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3351095.3372871>
- Bellaby, R. (2024). *The ethical problems of 'intelligence–AI'*. International Affairs, 100(6), 2525–2542. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iaae227>
- Birhane, A. (2021). *Algorithmic injustice: A relational ethics approach*. Patterns, 2(2).
- Bode, I., & Huelss, H. (2018). *Autonomous weapons systems and changing norms in international security*. Review of International Studies, 44(3), 393–413. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210517000614>
- Cederman, L.-E., & Weidmann, N. B. (2017). *Predicting armed conflict: Time to adjust our expectations?* Science, 355(6324), 474–476. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aal4483>

- Emanuel, E. J., Wendler, D., Killen, J., & Grady, C. (2004). *What makes clinical research in Developing Countries Ethical? The Benchmarks of Ethical Research*. The Journal of Infectious Diseases, 189(5), 930–937. <https://doi.org/10.1086/381709>
- Ewuoso, C., & Hall, M. (2023). *Ethical AI in Africa: Challenges and policy directions*. Journal of African Research Ethics, 12(1), 45–63.
- Fjelde, H., & Hultman, L. (2014). *Weakening the enemy: A disaggregated study of violence against civilians in Africa*. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 64(7–8), 1230–1257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002713492648>
- Floridi, L., Cows, J., Beltrametti, M., Chatila, R., Chazerand, P., Dignum, V., & Vayena, E. (2018). *AI4People—An Ethical Framework for a Good AI society: Opportunities, Risks, Principles, and Recommendations*. Minds and Machines, 28(4), 689–707. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11023-018-9482-5>
- Fujii, L. A. (2018). *Interviewing in social science research: A relational approach*. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/Interviewing-in-Social-Science-Research-A-Relational-Approach/Fujii/p/book/9780415843744>
- Galtung, J. (2016). *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*. Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446221631>
- Jobin, A., Ienca, M., & Vayena, E. (2019). *The Global Landscape of AI Ethics Guidelines*. Nature Machine Intelligence, 1(9), 389–399. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s42256-019-0088-2>
- Kalyvas, S. N. (2018). *The logic of violence in civil war*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, A., & Haenlein, M. (2019). Siri, Siri, in my hand: Who's the fairest in the land? On the interpretations, illustrations, and implications of artificial intelligence. Business Horizons, 62(1), 15–25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2018.08.004>
- Mittelstadt, B. D., Allo, P., Taddeo, M., Wachter, S., & Floridi, L. (2016). *The ethics of algorithms: Mapping the debate*. Big Data & Society, 3(2), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951716679679>
- OECD. (2019). *Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence*. OECD Legal Instruments. <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/oecd-legal-0449>
- Olojede, H., & Polo, E. (2025). *In Praise of Normative Science: Arts and Humanities in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*. International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 11(2), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5100929>
- Pretorius, L. (2025). *The Ethical Framework for Responsible Generative AI Use*. https://www.lynettepretorius.com/the_scholars_way_blog/ethical-framework-for-generative-ai-use/
- Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., & Miall, H. (2016). *Contemporary conflict resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts* (4th ed.). Polity Press.
- Resnik, D. B. (2020). *The ethics of science: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Resnik, D. B., & Hosseini, M. (2024). Disclosing artificial intelligence use in scientific research and publication: When should disclosure be mandatory, optional, or unnecessary? Accountability in Research, 31(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08989621.2023.2265973>
- Riedl, M. O. (2019). *Human-centered artificial intelligence and machine learning*. Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies, 1, 33-36. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.117>
- Russell, S., & Norvig, P. (2021). *Artificial intelligence: A modern approach* (4th ed.). Pearson Education. <https://www.amazon.com/Artificial-Intelligence-A-Modern-Approach/dp/0134610997>

- Saleh, Z. (2019). *Artificial intelligence definition, ethics and standards*. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332548325_Artificial_Intelligence_Definition_Ethics_and_Standards.
- Trevino, L. K. and Nelson, K. A. (2017). *Managing Business Ethics: Straight Talk About How to do it Right*. London. Wiley.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373434>
- UsmanUllah, M., Saleem, S., & Munir, A. (2025). *Artificial Intelligence in Conflict Prediction and Prevention: Opportunities and Risks*. Global Social Sciences Review [https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2025\(X-1\).17](https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2025(X-1).17)
- Wallensteen, P. (2020). *Understanding conflict resolution* (6th ed.). Sage. <https://study.sagepub.com/wallensteen6e/student-resources/annotated-further-readings/chapter-1-understanding-conflict>
- Ward, M. D., Greenhill, B. D., & Bakke, K. M. (2016). *The perils of policy by p-value: Predicting civil conflicts*. Journal of Peace Research, 47(4), 363–375. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343309356491>
- Wood, E. J. (2016). *Ethical challenges in conflict research*. Qualitative Sociology, 39(3), 373–386. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-016-9335-2>
- Velasquez, M. G. (2017). *Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases* 8th ed. London. Pearson Prentice Hall.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Oguntola Gbemisola F. & Pitan, Susan O. (2026). "Parent-School Partnership: Conceptual and Empirical Review of Academic Success in Secondary Schools in Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 133-144.

Article

Open Access

PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP: CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA

Gbemisola Funmilayo Oguntola ¹ & Susan Oluyomi Pitan ²

Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education

Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria ^{1&2}

Corresponding Email: oguntola.gbemisola@yahoo.com ¹

Abstract

Parent-school partnership has become an important consideration in understanding how schools and families can work together to support students' academic development in secondary education. In Nigeria, however, concerns about students' academic performance and the uneven level of parental engagement make it necessary to examine the contribution of home-school collaboration. This paper reviewed conceptual and empirical literature on parent-school partnership and students' academic success in Nigerian secondary schools, with specific attention to parent-school involvement and parent-school communication. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of the Parent Involvement Process provided the theoretical foundation for the review. The review drew on conceptual literature and empirical studies cited in the paper to synthesise evidence on the two dimensions of parent-school partnership. The reviewed evidence generally indicates that active parental involvement through homework support, school activities, monitoring, volunteering, decision-making and other forms of engagement is associated with improved academic achievement, engagement, motivation and related student outcomes. Similarly, regular, open and supportive communication among parents, teachers and students is associated with academic engagement and achievement, although some studies reported weak or non-significant relationships. The review therefore concludes that sustained academic success requires shared responsibility among parents, teachers and school administrators, supported by inclusive and transparent communication and meaningful opportunities for parental involvement. The paper recommends the use of digital and face-to-face communication

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

channels, flexible participation structures and collaborative school-family activities to strengthen parent-school partnerships across diverse Nigerian secondary school contexts.

Keywords: Parent-School Partnership, Parent-School Involvement, Parent-School Communication, Academic Success.

Introduction

Academic success is the ultimate measure of how effectively students have developed intellectual capabilities and mastered their learning aims, goals and objectives making it the bedrock of secondary education. Thus, when students thrive academically, it substantiates the operational efficiency of the secondary school system and generates the intellectual capital necessary to power sustainable national development in the nation. In the context of this work, academic success is associated with students' academic achievement and performance. It is operationalised as the accomplishment of academic tasks under well-established conditions, achievement of high academic results, rewards and social recognition (Anghel, 2023). Although traditionally quantified through marks and career readiness, academic success transcends the narrow boundaries of numeric grades and course completion. Its foundational value lies in nurturing critical thinking, problem-solving capabilities, and a lifelong commitment to learning which ultimately fosters individual student's advancement while driving broader societal well-being. In secondary school education, academic success is measured via metrics such as grades, test scores, and completion rates (Paperpal, 2024). Despite the vital role of academic success in shaping students' future achievements, available empirical evidence indicates that academic performance among many secondary school students in Nigeria remains a concern. This low trend of academic success has been validated by recent empirical studies. For instance, academic performance was found to be low among secondary school students in Nigeria's North Central Zone (Obaizamomwan, 2023). Recent studies confirmed widespread poor academic performance and character decline across public secondary schools nationwide (Ojetunde & Ayodabo, 2024; Olubunmi & Kolawole, 2023). Recent data highlights poor student performance on the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (Sheu, M. A., Olawumi, E. T., Simiat, O. R., & Kamaldeen, O. S., 2024), reflecting a broader trend of below average success across both internal and external examinations in Nigeria. Self-esteem, school environment, and economic hardships have been examined as factors responsible for poor academic success (Obaizamomwan, 2023; Olubunmi & Kolawole, 2023), whereas the impact of parent-school partnerships remains understudied.

A parent-school partnership is a collaborative alliance where parents and teachers share equal responsibility and accountability for a student's academic and personal growth. In this alliance, both parties act as co-equals, actively brainstorming joint solutions such as custom homework schedules or behaviour plans in order to ensure the student's healthy development into adulthood (Kretchmar-Hendricks, 2024; McIntosh, 2023). Additionally, this partnership requires parents to maintain consistent dialogue with both students and teachers, participate in school activities, and offer structured behavioural support to cultivate healthy, responsible, and capable students (Scott, 2022). Good parents-school partnership may enable children to adjust better emotionally and probably do well academically. The above definition highlights two primary dimensions of parent-school partnership: parent-school involvement and parent-school communication. Parent-school involvement deals with parents' participation in children's learning activities both at school and home. It involves parents attending Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) and various

school events, volunteering in the school and classroom, monitoring children's homework, and creating an environment that is conducive to children's learning (Nnamani et al., 2020; Shilpa & Sandhya, 2024). Parent-school communication refers to the active exchange of information, and feedback especially between parents, teachers and children, characterized by openness, warmth, and responsiveness, creating a consistent learning environment that can influence children's achievement (Musa, S., Dakasku, U. M., Audu, J. H., & Mamudo, S. W., 2020).

Various studies have examined the relationship between parent-school partnership, particularly parent-school communication and parent-school involvement, and students' academic success in Nigerian secondary schools. Several studies have reported positive relationships between parental involvement, communication, collaboration with teachers and students' academic outcomes (Ejuchegahi, 2025; John & Umar, 2024). Conversely, some studies have reported weak or non-significant relationships between parental involvement or communication and students' academic achievement (Iyoha & Nwankwo, 2020). These mixed findings make a synthesis of the conceptual and empirical evidence relevant to understanding how parent-school partnership may contribute to academic success in Nigerian secondary schools. The two specific objectives of this review were to:

- i. Examine the impact of parent-school partnership in the aspect of parent-school involvement on students' academic success; and
- ii. examine the influence of parent-school partnership in the aspect of parent-school communication on students' academic success.

This paper adopted a conceptual and empirical review approach. The review considered conceptual discussions and empirical studies cited in the manuscript on parent-school partnership, parent-school involvement, parent-school communication and students' academic success, with emphasis on secondary school contexts in Nigeria. The evidence was organised thematically around the two dimensions of parent-school partnership identified in the paper: parent-school involvement and parent-school communication. Findings from studies reporting positive, weak and non-significant relationships were considered in order to present a balanced synthesis of the available evidence.

Literature Review and Theoretical Foundation

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of the Parent Involvement Process: A theoretical model of the parental involvement process was proposed by two authors in 1995 and 1997 (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1999; Walker, J. M. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. 2005). Taking a psychological perspective, this model outlines what motivates parents to participate in schooling and how their support elevates student success (Walker, J. M. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. 2005). The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of the parent involvement process suggests that family engagement is a process that begins with families' decision-making about being involved and culminates with student academic outcomes. The cognitive component of involvement decision-making consists of role construction for involvement and self-efficacy for helping children succeed in school. The model suggests that parents' attempts to support children's learning can be classified into one or more of the following categories: involvement through encouragement, involvement through modeling, involvement through reinforcement, and involvement through instruction (Walker, J. M. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. 2005; Whitaker, 2018). The adjusted form of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model also pointed out that the

involvement of parents is multidimensional, both at home and at school. In Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model, home involvement consists of the parent-student relationship outside school and how parents communicate and support students in learning-related activities such as homework. However, school involvement can be seen when parents attend parent-teacher associations and are involved in activities that happen at school (Malatji, C. E., Beeken, C., Haasbroek & Zyl, I. V. 2023; Whitaker, 2018). According to the model, parental communication is central for engagement in that communication influences parents' decision to be involved and enact that involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 199; Malatji, C. E., Beeken, C., Haasbroek & Zyl, I. V. 2023; Walker, J. M. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. 2005).

Students' Academic Success

Academic success is the knowledge, skills, values, and behaviours a student acquires through school instruction and evaluation. It encompasses cognitive, behavioural, and psychological outcomes, formally recognized through credentials like certificates and degrees (Jackson, 2021). Academic success represents a holistic evaluation of a student's intellectual, social, and creative progress within an educational setting. It is a measurable index of how well a student masters skills, retains content, and demonstrates understanding through testing and examinations (Anyanwu & Emesi, 2021). Academic success refers to a student's progress toward specific educational goals, reflected in their GPA, intellectual development, and personality growth across levels of study. It serves as a measurable index of learning, assessed through performance on specific tasks and scholastic standing at any given moment (Adegoke & Orekelewa, 2020; Suleiman, 2023).

Parent-School Partnership

A parent-school partnership is a collaborative alliance where parents and teachers share equal responsibility and accountability for a student's academic and personal growth. In this model, both parties act as co-equals, actively brainstorming joint solutions such as custom homework schedules or behaviour plans to ensure the student's healthy development into adulthood (Kretchmar-Hendricks, 2024; McIntosh, 2023). Additionally, this partnership requires parents to maintain consistent dialogue with students and teachers, participate in school activities, and offer structured behavioural support to cultivate capable, responsible students (Scott, 2022). By fostering mutual trust, open communication, and shared guidance, a parent-school partnership creates a safe, nurturing environment that directly enhances a student's academic exploration and personal growth (Williams, 2023). This parent-school partnership manifests in several ways such as parent-school communication and parent-school involvement.

Parent-School Communication

Parent-school communication is a responsive dialogue among parents, teachers, and students that addresses academic concerns and fosters collaboration, ultimately driving higher student achievement (Musa, S., Dakasku, U. M., Audu, J. H., & Mamudo, S. W., 2020; Williams, 2023). Parent-school dialogue regarding academic progress provides a foundational model for children, teaching them how to communicate effectively, interpret emotions, and build social relationships across both home and school environments (Anibueze & Ugwuanyi, 2020; Falayi, 2023). Parent-school communication establishes a two-way dialogue among parents, teachers, and students to track academic development. This communication includes consistent feedback on schoolwork alongside regular verbal support and praise (Nnamani et al., 2020).

Parent-School Involvement

Parental school involvement comprises both institutional and home-based actions that support a child's education to directly improve learning outcomes. School-based engagement includes attending PTA meetings, participating in school events, volunteering, and consulting with teachers. Concurrently, home-based involvement entails monitoring homework and establishing a supportive learning environment to optimize student academic outcomes (Shilpa & Sandhya, 2024; Nnamani, O., Idoko, E. J., Onuigbo, L. N., & Eze, U. 2020). School-based involvement specifically includes volunteering, fundraising, attending meetings, assisting with events, and contacting teachers regarding student welfare (Anierobi & Unachukwu, 2020; Nnamani, O., Idoko, E. J., Onuigbo, L. N., & Eze, U. 2020). Parent-school involvement takes several forms: fulfilling obligations like parent-teacher conferences, reinforcing learning at home via tutoring and homework monitoring, and supporting the school directly through advocacy, classroom volunteering, and administrative governance (Gimba, 2019).

Impact of Parent-School Partnership and Parent-School Communication on Students' Academic Success

The findings of a study showed a significant positive relationship between parental involvement and academic performance, with teacher communication being the strongest predictor in Ibadan Metropolis. The study underscored the importance of collaboration between parents, teachers, and schools for improved student outcomes (Ejuchegahi, 2025). The findings of a similar study suggested that parental involvement plays a substantial role in influencing students' academic achievements in sciences, in Lagos State, Nigeria. This result underscored the importance of active parental engagement in enhancing student outcomes. The study established that when parents are effectively involved in their children's studies, they would excel academically. In addition, the study showed a significant relationship between various types of parental involvement and academic success, indicating that the nature or quality of parental involvement significantly impacts how well students perform academically (Bamidele, 2024). In a study, Oladipo-Abodunwa and Adeleke (2024) reported a significant influence of parent-teacher partnership in areas of knowledge, attitude and practice on students' academic engagement and mathematics achievement in Nigeria. The results of a similar study showed that parental involvement plays a significant role in influencing student academic success in Nigerian secondary schools. Schools with higher levels of parental engagement saw markedly better academic outcomes, especially in urban regions where parents were more likely to participate in school-related activities, largely due to better socioeconomic conditions and access to resources. In contrast, in rural areas, parental involvement was limited by factors such as illiteracy, long working hours, and lack of communication between parents and teachers (John & Umar, 2024).

Haastrup (2024) in a study in Rivers state revealed that parental participation in decision-making increases school commitment and improves home learning environments, allowing parents to align motivation strategies, monitor academic weaknesses, and provide targeted homework support that boosts student engagement. Parental involvement in infrastructure maintenance and school financing secures functional, resource-rich, and safe learning environments. By funding educational materials, modern technology, teacher training, and extracurricular programs, this dual collaboration cultivates community pride and shared ownership while directly driving student well-being and academic performance. Oni and Osuji (2024) in a study confirmed a significant positive relationship between

parental involvement and school management. It emphasized that parental engagement not only improves student academic performance but also supports effective school governance and decision-making in Lagos District IV, which includes Surulere, Mainland, and Apapa. Nwogbo (2022) in a study revealed that students whose parents were involved in their academic activities performed better than those whose parents were not involved. There was also a significant effect of parental involvement on academic performance of secondary school students in Nnewi Education Zone, Anambra State. Males performed better than females when their parents were involved in their academic activities. A study in the Hong Local Government Area of Adamawa State established that parent-school factors influencing secondary student achievement include PTA attendance, textbook purchases, and prompt tuition payments. Additional factors included tracking student behaviour, attendance, and peer groups through regular phone updates, school events, teacher consultations, and financial support for school projects (Fareo & Musa, 2018). A study demonstrated that parental involvement in aspects of text material provision, guidance counseling, and home teaching all maintain a significant, positive relationship with secondary school student academic achievement in Imo state (Bethel-Eke & Eremie, 2020).

In Kwara State private secondary schools, high parental involvement was shown to directly drive high student achievement, which is evident in strong classroom participation, assignment completion, attendance, and extracurricular engagement. Specifically, funding facilities builds conducive environments, while meeting attendance improves home-school communication. Homework assistance enhances study habits, event participation boosts student confidence, and progress monitoring ensures early intervention for learning difficulties (Olaifa, A. S., Ayoola, A. O., Mustapha, A. I., Warrah, S. M., & Yusuf, A. A.2026). Parent involvement was found to be positively associated with several child outcomes including academic achievement, social development, and emotional well-being in urban schools within Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno state. Nigeria. Even though parental involvement affects children's education; provided that the parents, teachers, school-based committees, and other community-based structures are greatly involved in the education of the children, can provide all the necessary needs of the children in terms of academic performance improvement, self-efficacy, and wellbeing (Mala & Muhammad, 2023). Secondary school students in Awka, Anambra State, showed a moderate positive relationship overall between parental involvement and academic engagement, a trend that holds true for students from both highly educated and less educated households. However, when comparing the two groups, the positive relationship between parental involvement and academic engagement is notably lower for students from less educated homes than for their counterparts from more educated backgrounds (Anatoh, N. J., Obikeze, N. A., & Obikeze, N. 2024).

Abbas, A., Ademilua, T., & Olawuwo, A. A. (2024) found that secondary school students with highly involved parents achieved better academic performance and higher test scores across all subjects. The study highlights the need for parents to increase awareness regarding visiting and supporting their children at school. The finding of Okpako and Egbule (2025) in a study showed a noteworthy connection between parental involvement and academic performance of secondary school students in northern part of Delta State. The finding confirmed that active parental involvement is crucial for academic success. Students whose parents provide guidance, motivation, and resources consistently outperform those with uninvolved parents. A study in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State concluded that parental involvement significantly increases secondary school students'

motivation and academic self-efficacy (Ozoemena, L. C., Ogidi, C. I., Nzewuji, A. U., & Nwobodo, P. 2025).

Impact of Parent-School Partnership in the Aspect of Parent-School Communication on Students' Academic Success

Conversely, a study in Edo State revealed a very weak or negligible relationship between secondary school students' parental involvement and their academic success in Mathematics and English (Iyoha & Nwankwo, 2020). Although, a study showed that the students with less involved parents recorded low academic achievement while those with highly involved parents recorded higher academic achievement, there was however no significant difference in students' academic achievement based on parental involvement. This implied that parental involvement did not significantly influence students' academic achievement (Okafor, I. G., Eze, M. U., & Ihediwa, E. 2026). A study in the Nsukka education zone, Enugu State, showed a moderate positive relationship between students' academic self-efficacy and parental involvement, specifically through communication, volunteering, and learning at home. Conversely, decision-making and community collaboration showed a low positive relationship with self-efficacy (Adimora., 2019).

Impact of Parent-School Partnership in Aspect of Parent-School Involvement on Students' Academic Success

A study in the Awka Education Zone of Anambra State confirms that positive parent-student communication significantly improves academic success and builds healthy self-esteem. While negative parental tones can deter open sharing, maintaining a supportive, open dialogue remains crucial to prevent academic risk and guide positive student choices (Unachukwu, D. I., Obumse, N. A. & Okafor, S. O. 2023). A similar study revealed that parental communication patterns contributed to the students' academic achievements in English language in Enugu State (Anyamene & Odo, 2025). The regression analysis of a study indicated a robust association between successful teacher-parent communication and enhanced kid academic performance, highlighting the crucial importance of regular and high quality interactions. The study emphasized the need to use efficient communication tactics in order to improve parental engagement and, as a result, enhance student academic performance. It emphasized the importance of continuously exploring and adapting communication strategies in response to the changing educational environment (Adeyeye & Dasoo, 2025).

A study showed that family communication patterns have a significant positive relationship with class participation. This implies that students, who communicate their expectations and needs, actively participate in class discussions, ask questions, contribute to group activities in the classroom, seek feedback from teachers and peers, and engage in debates and arguments with classmates. It further showed a significant positive relationship between family communication patterns and class attendance. This implies that students who engage in discussions about their individual strengths and weaknesses, attend their classes regularly, and feel guilty when they miss classes; also perceive class attendance as crucial for academic success (Nnome, C. I., Agbe, N. N., Hanior, E. A., Zading, D. D., & Ameh, A. J. 2024). Sulyman (2023) in a study revealed that teacher-parents communication level is average. It was also discovered that Parent-teacher communication significantly influenced pupils' academic performance, it was therefore recommended that teacher-parent communication be employed always to improve educational system. Conversely, a study revealed that there is no significant relationship between the impact of school

communication and students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria (Dikeh & Jonathan, 2023).

Implications

The impact of parent-school partnerships demonstrates that collaborative engagement and open communication are critical to student academic success, requiring a unified educational framework between home and school. When parents actively participate in school-based activities such as attending meetings, volunteering, and serving on committees, they strengthen their connection to the learning ecosystem, which visibly increases student motivation and dedication. To ensure superior student outcomes, teachers and school administrators must prioritise proactive communication by establishing transparent channels, digital portals, and structured forums to share prompt feedback, behavioural insights, and academic guidance. This systematic collaboration allows parents and teachers to co-create individualised growth plans, build student self-esteem, and swiftly resolve any behavioural, academic, or social-emotional challenges.

Conclusion

This conceptual paper has demonstrated that building robust parent-school partnerships, driven by active parent-school involvement and open parent-school communication is essential for driving students' academic success within Nigerian secondary schools. Parental involvement is not merely an external support mechanism, but a key component of the learning milieu. When parents participate in school activities such as volunteering to work with students, helping in homework, and attendance at meetings/school events, and schools on the other hand provide open digital and face-to-face communication, home and school environments would align. This synergy would directly increase students' motivation, engagement, and early intervention for academic or socio-emotional challenges which will ultimately result in academic success. Thus, sustained academic success requires administrators, teachers, and parents to share partnership responsibility. Open parent-school communication and inclusive parent-school involvement are therefore essential to build a resilient Nigerian secondary education system that aid students' academic success.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are therefore proffered:

- i. Secondary school administrators should use digital portals, SMS, chat groups, and print newsletters to share student progress and bridge the home-school gap across diverse backgrounds;
- ii. School administrators should design flexible volunteer tiers and parent committees to encourage participation from both highly and less-educated households;
- iii. Schools should replace traditional report card distribution with quarterly, interactive workshops where teachers and parents co-create individualised growth plans for students; and
- iv. Ministries of Education and secondary school proprietors should integrate parental diplomacy and inclusive outreach into teacher training to foster welcoming, positive interactions with families.

References

Abbas, A., Ademilua, T., & Olawuwo, A. A. (2024). Impact of parental involvement on children's academic performance of secondary school students in Katsina local

- Government, Katsina State. *Journal of Innovative Research*, 2(3), 27-34. <https://doi.org/10.54536/jir.v2i3.3309>
- Adegoke, O. S., & Orekelewa, O. C. (2020). Indiscipline model and academic achievement of secondary school students in Ibadan: Implication for educational foundation in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 4(8), 450-460. ISSN 2454-6186
- Adeyeye, G. M., & Dasoo, N. (2025). The influence of teachers outreach to parents on students' academic success. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 39(5), 31-44. <https://dx.doi.org/10.20853/39-5-6429>
- Anatoh, N. J., Obikeze, N. A., & Obikeze, N. (2024). Relationship between parental involvement and academic engagement of secondary school students in Anambra State. *African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies*, 13(3), 328-337. <https://ajemates.org>
- Anghel, G. A. (2023). Academic success - explanatory theories. *Journal of Education Society & Multiculturalism*, 4(2), 135-143. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jesm-2023-0023>
- Anibueze, C. O., & Ugwuanyi, C. C. (2020). Effect of parent-child communication patterns on junior secondary school students' self-esteem in mathematics. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 4(1), 47-53. ISSN 2454-6186
- Anierobi, E. I., & Unachukwu, G. C. (2020). Parental home-based involvement and academic self-efficacy as correlates of students' academic engagement among secondary school students in Nnewi North Local Government Area. *UNIZIK Journal of Educational Management and Policy*, 4(1), 1-13. <https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/index.php/ujoemp/article/view/599>
- Anyamene, A., & Odo, C. O. (2025). Parenting styles and family communication patterns as predictors of secondary school students' academic achievement in English language in Enugu State, Nigeria. *Journal of Guidance and Counselling Studies*, 9(2), 197-211. <https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/jgcs/article/view/6730>
- Anyanwu, A. N., & Emesi, K. E. (2021). Academic self-concept and academic self-efficacy beliefs as correlate of academic achievement in English Language of secondary school students in Anambra State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific and Management Research*, 3(4), 59-70. ISSN: 2581-6888
- Bamidele, S. D. O. (2024). An assessment of parental involvement on public secondary school adolescents' academic performance in sciences in Lagos State, Nigeria. *dukasiana: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, 3(1), 1-14. ISSN 2809-6770
- Bethel-Eke, O. A., & Eremie, M. (2020). Parental involvement and academic achievement of students in selected junior secondary schools in Imo State. *European Educational Research Journal*, 13(4), 06-17.
- Dikeh, H. M., & Jonathan, A. G. (2023). Effective school communication and students' academic performance: A study of selected secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Society*, 13(2), 55-68. https://foeiaue.ng/publications/Volume13_Issue2/18.pdf
- Ejuchegahi, A. A. (2023). The impact of parental involvement on students' academic achievement in Nigeria: A case study of parents in Asaba, Delta State. *International Journal of Education*, 15(4), 37-51. DOI: 10.5296/ije.v15i4.20981
- Ejuchegahi, A. A. (2025). Parental involvement and academic achievement of learners in Ibadan Metropolis: A literature review and quantitative empirical analysis. *Global Journal of Educational Studies*, 11(1), 1-21. ISSN 2377-3936

- Falayi, O. O. (2023). Impact of parental involvement on the academic performance of African American elementary school students: A multiple regression analysis, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu>
- Fareo, D. O., & Musa, J. (2018). Influence of parental involvement on academic achievement of junior secondary school students in Hong Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, 10(3), 12-21. ISSN 2289-98
- Gimba, R. W. (2019). *Association between parental involvement and mathematics achievement of secondary school students in Bosso Local Government of Niger State*, A paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Research and Innovation in Education 2019 Jointly Organized by the University of Nairobi College of Education and External Studies School of Education, 23rd to 25th October, 1-12. <http://repository.futminna.edu.ng>
- Haastrup, T. A. (2024). Parents' participation in school management for effective academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Economics, Environmental Development and Society*, 5(1), 90-110
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1995). Parental involvement in children's education: Why does it make a difference? *Teachers College Record*, 97(2), 310-331. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146819509700202>
- Iyoha, I., & Nwankwo, C. A. (2020). Relationship between secondary school students' perceived parental attachment and their academic achievements in Edo State. *Socialscientia Journal*, 5(2), 10-22. ISSN:2636-5979
- Jackson, L. L. (2021). The role of self-concept in students' academic achievement in English Language. *ERUDITE Journal of Linguistics and Languages*, 3(1), 1-10. <https://www.globalacademicstar.com>
- John, M. O., & Umar, A. (2024). The influence of parental involvement on student academic success in Nigerian Schools. *Iconic Research and Engineering Journals*, 8(5), 687-692. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV815-1706513>
- Kretchmar-Hendricks, M. (2024). *Parenting*, Encyclopedia Britannica. Available at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/parenting> (Published 31 May, 2024)
- Mala, K., & Muhammad, A. K. (2023). Effect of parental involvement on the academic performance of public secondary school students in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Humanities & Contemporary Education Research*, 12(1), 168-179. www.afropolitanjournals.com
- Malatji, C. E., Beeken, C., Haasbroek & Zyl, I. V. (2023). Improving students' academic performance through parent-teacher collaboration in the foundation phase. *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 4(1), 78-90. <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.2023416>
- McIntosh, M. (2023). Building strong student-parent-teacher relationships: Strategies for enhancing academic performance and student success. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, 27(3), 1-3. <https://www.abacademies.org>, DOI: 1528-2643-27-2-109
- Musa, S., Dakasku, U. M., Audu, J. H., & Mamudo, S. W. (2020). Influence of parent-child communication on anti-social behaviour among senior secondary school adolescents in Damaturu Metropolis, Yobe State, Nigeria. *British Journal of Education, Learning and Development Psychology*, 3(3), 10-18. ISSN: 2682-6704
- Nnamani, O., Idoko, E. J., Onuigbo, L. N., & Eze, U. (2020). Impact of parental involvement on emotional adjustment and school achievement of primary school pupils. *Journal of the*

- Nigerian Academy of Education* 16(1), 23-36.
<https://journals.ezenwaohaetorc.org/index.php/JONAED/article/view/1447>
- Nnome, C. I., Agbe, N. N., Hanior, E. A., Zading, D. D., & Ameh, A. J. (2024). Relationship between family communication patterns, class attendance and class participation of secondary school students in Benue and Nasarawa States, Nigeria. *International Journal of Management, Social Sciences, Peace and Conflict Studies (IJMSSPCS)*, 7(4), 141-152. ISSN: 2682-6135
- Nwogbo, D. C. (2022). Effect of parental involvement on academic performance of secondary school students in Nnewi Education Zone, Anambra State. *Asian Journal of Social Science and Management Technology*, 4(3), 241-248. ISSN: 2313-7410
- Obaizamomwan, I. D. (2023). Impact of economic challenges on the enrollment and academic performance of secondary school students in North Central Zone, Nigeria. *Journal of Contemporary Education Research*, 2(1), 35-46. <https://hummingbirdjournals.com/jcer/article/view/113>
- Ojetunde, S. A., & Ayodabo, O. (2024). Causes of and remedies to poor academic performance and character decline in public secondary schools in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education, Library and Information Communication Technology (IJELICT)*, 3(1), 68-77.
- Okafor, I. G., Eze, M. U., & Ihediwa, E. (2026). Influence of parental education level and involvement on students' academic achievement in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State, Nigeria. *Universal Education Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 3(1), 33-40. <https://doi.org/10.63081/uejtl.v3i1.122>
- Okpako, V. N., & Egbule, E. O. (2025). Parental marital status and involvement as correlates of academic performance of secondary school students in Delta State North Senatorial District, Nigeria. *DELSU Journal of Educational Research and Development (DJERD)*, 22(2), 310-318. ISSN: Print - 0794-1447 Online — 2682-535X DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61448/djerd22227>
- Oladipo-Abodunwa, T., & Adeleke J. (2024). Influence of parent-teacher partnership on students' academic engagement and mathematics achievement in Nigeria. The Paris Conference on Education 2024: Official Conference Proceedings (pp. 379-394). <https://doi.org/10.22492/issn.2758-0962.2024.30>
- Olaifa, A. S., Ayoola, A. O., Mustapha, A. I., Warrah, S. M., & Yusuf, A. A. (2026). Parental involvement and academic achievement of private secondary school students in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Jurnal Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Pengajaran (JPPP)*, 7(1), 1-12. ISSN: 2721-7795. DOI: 10.30596/jppp.v7i1.30648
- Olubunmi, G., & Kolawole, A. (2023). Secondary school student's academic performance self-esteem and school environment: An empirical assessment from Nigeria. *Journal of Education Method and Learning Strategy*, 1(03), 126-135. <https://doi.org/10.59653/jemls.v1i03.170>
- Oni, A., & Osuji, C. (2024). Unlocking the potential of Nigerian schools through effective parental involvement. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, 2(50), 235-250. DOI: 10.3592/JES.2024.2.15
- Ozoemena, L. C., Ogidi, C. I., Nzewuji, A. U., & Nwobodo, P. (2025). Parental involvement as correlates of students' motivation and academic self-efficacy among senior secondary school students in nsukka local government area of Enugu State. *International Journal of Studies in Education [Special Edition]*, 21(3), 52-65. ISSN: 2636-6320 [ONLINE] - 2636-6339 [PRINT]

- Paperpal (2024). *Measuring academic success: Definition & strategies for excellence*. Available at <https://paperpal.com/blog/researcher/measuring-academic-success-definition-and-strategies-for-excellence> (Published 23 April, 2024)
- Scott, E. (2022). *Essential guide to connection-based parenting*. Available at <https://renewedhopeparenting.com/connection-based-parenting> (Published 10 September, 2022)
- Sheu, M. A., Olawumi, E. T., Simiat, O. R., & Kamaldeen, O. S. (2024). Teachers' perception of the causes of poor academic performance of students in West African Senior School Certificate Examinations. *Journal of Educational Innovation and Practice (JEIP)*, 8(2), 58-66. <https://api-kwasuspace.kwasu.edu.ng>
- Shilpa, P., & Sandhya, S. K. (2024). Exploring the relationship between parental involvement and self-concept in secondary school students and its influence on educational adjustment. *International Journal of Education (IJE)*, 5(1), 24-32. ISSN Online: 2251-5779
- Suleiman, A. (2023). Factors that affect students' academic achievement in the faculty of social science at the University of Bosaso, Garowe, Somalia. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 11, 446-461. doi: 10.4236/jss.2023.112029
- Sulyman, H. T. (2023). Influence of teacher-parent communication on pupils' academic performance in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. *An International Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 31(1), 1-15. https://journals.co.za/doi/full/10.10520/ejc-ifepsyc_v31_n1_a15
- Unachukwu, D. I., Obumse, N. A. & Okafor, S. O. (2023). Influence of parents-students communication on academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka Education Zone. *The Anambra Counsellor*, 1(1), 27-40. <https://cassonanambra.org>
- Walker, J. M. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. (2005). Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development. *Elementary School Journal*, 106(2), 85–104. <https://doi.org/10.1086/499193>
- Whitaker, M. C. (2018). The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of the parent involvement process. Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781119083054.ch20> (21 December, 2018)
- Williams, K. (2023). Parent-child communications: Overview, types & importance. Available at <https://study.com/academy/lesson/parent-child-relationships-definition-lesson> (published 21 November 2023)



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Charles, Answer M. & Nwankwo, Sabastine J. (2026). "The Political Class and Financial Management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, Rivers State, Nigeria, 2015-2026." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 145-157.

Article

Open Access

THE POLITICAL CLASS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN OBIO/AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL, RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA, 2015-2026

Answer Mezu Charles ¹ & Sabastine Junior Nwankwo ²

Department of Political Science, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

Port Harcourt, Rivers State ^{1 & 2}

Corresponding Email: Sabastine08@gmail.com ²

Abstract

This study examined the role of the political class in financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by concerns over persistent political interference, weak financial accountability, and poor compliance with public financial management regulations at the local government level. Specifically, the study examined the existing financial management system in the Council, assessed the influence of the political class on financial management, and identify the factors hindering effective financial management. The study was anchored on Public Financial Management Theory and adopted a mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were obtained through structured questionnaires administered to relevant administrative staff and community stakeholders, complemented by document analysis. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to analyse the quantitative data, while qualitative information was analysed thematically. The findings revealed that although Obio/Akpor Local Government Council operates a formal financial management system guided by statutory regulations and the Financial Memoranda, its effectiveness was significantly undermined by political interference, poor adherence to financial procedures, and weak internal control mechanisms. Other challenges identified include corruption, inadequate staff capacity, limited technological integration, and institutional weaknesses. The study concluded that excessive political interference remains a major obstacle to sound financial management and effective service delivery in the Council.

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

It recommended strengthening institutional autonomy, enforcing financial regulations, enhancing staff capacity through regular training, adopting modern financial management technologies, and limiting undue political influence in financial administration to improve transparency, accountability, and sustainable local government governance.

Keywords: Political Class, Financial Management, Financial Regulations, Institutional Autonomy Obio/Akpor, Nigeria.

Introduction

Background to the Study: Financial management in local governments is significantly influenced by the relationship between political leaders and administrative institutions. While public servants implement financial policies, elected officials determine budget priorities, approve expenditures, and oversee development projects. Effective financial management depends on political actors adhering to accountability, transparency, fiscal discipline, and the rule of law. However, political interference often results in patronage, poor budgeting, and inefficient resource allocation (Adamolekun, 2002; Ola & Tonwe, 2009). In Nigeria, despite the constitutional recognition of local governments as the third tier of government, their financial autonomy has been constrained by institutional and political factors, particularly the State–Local Government Joint Account. Political interference in budgeting, procurement, contract awards, and revenue administration has weakened financial accountability and service delivery (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). To strengthen public financial management, the Federal Government introduced reforms such as the Fiscal Responsibility Act (2007), Public Procurement Act (2007), Treasury Single Account (TSA), and Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these reforms has been limited by political interference, corruption, weak institutional oversight, and poor enforcement of financial regulations, resulting in revenue leakages, abandoned projects, and weak financial reporting (Premchand, 1993). Obio/Akpor Local Government Council is one of the most economically viable councils in Rivers State, with substantial revenue from statutory allocations and internally generated revenue. Despite this, concerns persist over financial accountability, budget implementation, project execution, and transparency. The period 2015 to 2026 witnessed significant political developments, including leadership changes, debates on local government autonomy, and judicial interventions that influenced financial administration. Against this background, this study examined the political class and financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, Rivers State, Nigeria, from 2015 to 2026.

Statement of the Problem

Local governments are constitutionally established to promote grassroots development through the efficient provision of basic public services such as primary healthcare, basic education, rural road maintenance, environmental sanitation, markets, and other socio-economic amenities. To achieve these objectives, local government councils receive statutory allocations from the Federation Account, internally generated revenue (IGR), grants, and other lawful sources of finance. Ideally, these financial resources should be managed in accordance with established public financial management principles of transparency, accountability, efficiency, economy, and fiscal discipline. However, despite the availability of these financial resources and the existence of financial regulations, many local government councils in Nigeria have continued to experience poor financial

management, weak accountability, budget implementation failures, and declining service delivery (Adamolekun, 2002; Ola & Tonwe, 2009).

Political interference in budgeting, procurement, contract awards, revenue administration, and expenditure management has been identified as a major factor undermining financial performance. Such practices often lead to corruption, abandoned projects, inflated contract costs, poor financial reporting, and inefficient use of public funds (Nwankwo & Nte, 2021).

In Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, concerns remain regarding transparency, accountability, and the effective utilisation of financial resources despite its strong revenue base. The period 2015 to 2026 was characterised by major political developments, including leadership changes, legal disputes, and debates on local government financial autonomy, all of which affected financial administration. Furthermore, while previous studies such as Wechie *et al*, (2024); Graham and Ehule (2025) have examined public financial management, internally generated revenue, accountability, transparency, and local government administration in Nigeria, relatively few have specifically investigated how the political class influences financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council during the period 2015 to 2026. Most existing studies such as Arowolo (2008); Emmanuel (2024) and Asonnam (2026) either focused broadly on Rivers State or other local government areas without examining the unique political and fiscal dynamics of Obio/Akpor. This has created a gap in knowledge regarding the extent to which political decisions, leadership practices, and institutional relationships affect budgeting, revenue mobilisation, expenditure management, procurement, accountability, and financial performance within the council. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the political class and financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, Rivers State, Nigeria, 2015 to 2026.

Research Questions

The study raised the following research questions:

- i. what is the existing system of financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council?
- ii. what is the influence of the political class in financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council?
- iii. what are the factors hindering proper financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the impact of the political class on public financial management in Obio/Akpor Local government area, Rivers State, while the specific objectives for the study are to:

- i. ascertain the existing system of financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council.
- ii. assess the influence of the political class in financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council.
- iii. examine the factors hindering proper financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council?

Literature Review

Concept of Political Class: The concept of the political class refers to a group of individuals who occupy positions of political power and influence, often constituting an elite stratum

within the political structure. This group is typically characterized by its control over decision-making processes, access to state resources, and its capacity to shape governance and policy outcomes (Orie, 2023). Mosca (1939) was one of the earliest scholars to articulate the idea of a political class. In his theory of the ruling class, Mosca argued that in every society, a minority the political class rules over the majority due to organizational and leadership capabilities. This class monopolizes political functions and perpetuates its dominance through institutional structures. Pareto (1968) extended this concept in his theory of elite circulation, emphasizing that the political class is not static but subject to periodic renewal through a process of elite rotation. Yet, regardless of changes in individuals, the structure and control of power remain largely intact. In the African context, Ake (1996) highlighted how the political class in post-colonial African states, including Nigeria, is often self-serving, focused more on resource accumulation than on public service or development. This class, he argued, operates within a neo-patrimonial system where loyalty and ethnic affiliations are more influential than merit or democratic ideals. Recent scholarship by Egobueze and Ojirika (2017), contended that the political class in Nigeria has become increasingly disconnected from the citizenry, with governance characterized by elite consensus that excludes the masses. They argued for a redefinition of political engagement to include participatory and inclusive governance.

Financial Management

Finance is very important to the sustainability of any government and especially for the Rivers State Government. Financial management is the process of planning, mobilising, allocating, utilising, controlling, and accounting for financial resources to achieve organisational or governmental objectives efficiently and transparently. Allen *et al.* (2013) described it as the system through which governments raise, allocate, spend, and account for public funds. Similarly, the International Monetary Fund (2017) defined public financial management as the legal and institutional framework governing the mobilisation, allocation, expenditure, reporting, and auditing of public finances. Public financial management (PFM) refers to the set of laws, rules, systems and processes used by sovereign nations (and sub-national governments) to mobilize revenue, allocate public funds, undertake public spending, account for funds and audit results. It encompasses a broader set of functions than financial management and is commonly conceived as a cycle of six phases, beginning with policy design, budget formulation, budget approval, budget execution, accounting and ending with external audit and evaluation. There are large number actors that are outside the 'PFM cycle' that ensure it operates effectively and transparently, whilst preserving accountability. The actors are civil society, political parties, the legislature, internal audit, procurement boards, accountant general's department, the legislature, and academic research bodies (Egobueze & Ojirika, 2017).

Local Government

The concept of Local government is widely viewed as a branch of public administration that exists at the lowest tier of a government system that is designed through the Constitution to provide the needs of people at the grassroots. Local government is the constitutionally recognised third tier of government established to administer local affairs and provide essential services at the grassroots level. Olisa (1990) defined local government as the lowest level of government empowered by law to exercise political authority within a defined geographical area through elected representatives. Arowolo (2008) viewed local government as a system that encourages grassroots participation in governance and local

development. Fatile and Adejuwon (2017) described local government as an autonomous political and administrative institution with defined territorial jurisdiction, legal authority, and responsibility for promoting local development and service delivery.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory, which is associated with the works of James Buchanan, Vincent Ostrom, and Richard Musgrave (Shoup, 1959). The theory explains how governments can effectively mobilise, allocate, manage, and account for public financial resources to achieve efficiency, transparency, accountability, and sustainable development. Green and Onuoha (2021), argued that individuals act rationally in pursuit of their interests, making institutional checks and accountability mechanisms necessary for prudent financial management. Similarly, Ostrom (2008) emphasises that effective institutions and collective action can prevent the misuse of shared public resources and improve the provision of public goods. PFM theory is built on the principles of allocative efficiency, distributive justice, and macroeconomic stability, which require governments to allocate scarce resources efficiently, ensure equitable distribution, and maintain fiscal discipline. The theory further advocates sound budgeting, financial planning, transparent reporting, auditing, debt management, revenue generation, and performance evaluation as essential components of effective public sector governance. The theory is relevant to this study because it provides a framework for examining financial management practices in local government administration. It highlights the importance of accountability, transparency, prudent resource utilisation, and effective financial control in improving service delivery. In Nigeria, local governments have frequently been criticised for corruption, weak financial management, poor budgeting, and inadequate accountability, which have undermined grassroots development. As noted by Okoli and Orlu (2020), ineffective public financial management contributes significantly to poor local government performance and developmental challenges. The adoption of reforms such as the Treasury Single Account (TSA) further reflects the practical application of PFM principles in promoting transparency, preventing financial leakages, and strengthening fiscal discipline. Therefore, Public Financial Management Theory provides an appropriate framework for analysing financial management and accountability in Nigerian local governments.

Methodology

Research Design: This study adopted descriptive survey method which involves collection of data in order to provide answers to questions concerning the current status of subjects in a study. Here, data gathered that described the events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection.

Population of the Study: The population of study comprises all the employees of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. (All employees are compulsorily members of NULGE). The staff strength is 4,360 (OBALGA, Norminal Roll, 2026).

Sampling and Sampling Technique: The study made use of two sampling techniques namely purposive and simple random sampling techniques.

The respondents were sampled as shown in the table below.

DEPARTMENT	POPULATION SIZE
Administration	779
Agriculture	374
Education	456
Finance	550
Health	750
Planning and Statistics	791
Works	660
TOTAL	4,360

Source: Field work (2026)

This study derived its sample size by employing Taro Yamene's Statistical Formula

i. n = Sample Size

ii. N = Total Population

iii. 1 = Constant

e = Margin Error or Error margin (0.52)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + \frac{N \times e^2}{4350}}$$

$$n = \frac{4350}{1 + \frac{4350 \times 0.05^2}{4350}}$$

$$n = \frac{4350}{1 + 4350 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{4350}{1 + 10.875}$$

$$n = \frac{4350}{10.875}$$

$$n = 399.7 \text{ approximately } 400$$

Therefore $n = 400$

Therefore, the sample size of this study is 400

Based on the Taro Yamane formula computed above, the sample size drawn for the study is four hundred (400). However, the researcher increased the initial sample by forty percent (40%) leading to 560 instruments in order to compensate for anticipated non-response or attrition, so that the number of valid completed questionnaires will still approximate the required sample size.

Method of Data Analysis

The primary data generated from the respondents were tabulated and analyzed with the use of the four-point Likert rating scale method (4-point scale) based on the criterion mean of 2.00 mean. The responses of the respondents from the questionnaire's items and the content of existing works were used in analysing the study.

Result

This section presented the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the respondents. Interpretation of results were organised under the following sub-headings:

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Report

Details	Administered Questionnaires	Returned/Relevant Questionnaires
Total no.	560	550
Percentage		98.2% of the sample (560)

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The table 4.1 above showed the administered questionnaires to the staff. It showed that 560 questionnaires were distributed to the staff, while 550 representing 98.2% of the sample (560) were retrieved and found relevant.

Bio-Data of the Respondents

Table 4.1.2 Respondents Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	297	54	1.46	0.50
Female	253	46		
Total	550	100.0		

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.1.2 shows that 297 respondents (54.0%) were male, while 253 (46.0%) were female. The distribution indicates a relatively balanced representation, although males constituted the larger proportion. The mean of 1.46 and standard deviation of 0.50 reflect the coded gender distribution.

Table 4.1.3 Respondents Age Grade

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
20-30 Years	200	36.4	2.09	1.04
31-40 Years	175	31.8		
41-50 Years	100	18.2		
51-60	75	13.6		
Total	550	100.0		

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.1.3 reveals that 200 respondents (36.4%) were aged 20–30 years, 175 (31.8%) were 31–40 years, 100 (18.2%) were 41–50 years, while 75 (13.6%) were 51–60 years. Thus, respondents aged 20–30 years constituted the largest group. The mean of 2.09 and standard deviation of 1.04 indicate the distribution of respondents across the coded age categories.

Table 4.1.4 Educational Level of the Respondents

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
SSCE	125	22.7	2.59	1.07
NCE/OND	100	18.2		
HND/B.Sc.	200	36.4		
M.Sc/Ph.D	125	22.7		
Total	550	100.0		

Source: Field Survey, 2026

As regards the educational level of the respondents Table 4.1.4 indicates that 200 respondents (36.4%) possessed HND/B.Sc. qualifications, representing the largest group. This was followed by SSCE and M.Sc./Ph.D. holders, each with 125 respondents (22.7%), while 100 respondents (18.2%) possessed NCE/OND qualifications. The mean of 2.59 and standard deviation of 1.07 reflect the spread of respondents across the coded educational categories.

Table 4.1.5 Marital Status of the Respondents

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Single	150	27.3	1.91	0.67
Married	300	54.5		
Others	100	18.2		
Total	550	100.0		

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.1.5 shows that 300 respondents (54.5%) were married, 150 (27.3%) were single, while 100 (18.2%) belonged to other marital categories. Married respondents therefore constituted the largest group in the study. The mean of 1.91 and standard deviation of 0.67 indicate the distribution of respondents across the coded marital-status categories.

Table 4.1.6 Occupational Status of the Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage(s)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Civil service	208	38	2.33	1.22
Farming	78	14		
Business	157	29		
Trading	90	16		
Unemployed/house wife	17	3		
Total	550	100		

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.1.6 revealed that civil servants constituted the largest occupational group, with 208 respondents (38.0%), followed by businesspersons with 157 (29.0%). Traders accounted for 90 (16.0%), farmers 78 (14.0%), while unemployed/housewives constituted the smallest group with 17 (3.0%). The mean of 2.33 and standard deviation of 1.22 indicate variation in the occupational categories represented in the study.

Data Analysis

System of financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council.

Table 4.2 shows the responses of the respondents on the existing system of financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council.

Table 4.2: The existing system of financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council N=550, Criterion=2.00

SN	Statement	SA4	A3	D2	SD1	Mean	S.D.	Remark
1	The local government follows an established procedure for financial documentation and reporting.	173 (31.5%)	238 (43.3%)	118 (21.5%)	21 (3.8%)	3.02	0.83	Agreed
2	There is a functional and transparent accounting system within the Council.	233 (42.4%)	231 (42%)	59 (10.7%)	27 (4.9%)	3.22	0.83	Agreed
3	The financial management process is guided by the Nigerian Financial Memoranda.	292 (53.1%)	178 (32.4%)	60 (10.6%)	20 (3.6%)	3.35	0.82	Agreed
4	Monthly financial	230	223	57	40	3.17	0.89	Agreed

	reports are consistently generated and submitted as required.	(41.8%)	(40.5%)	(10.4%)	(7.3%)			
5	There is a clear separation of roles in the management of financial resources.	238 (43.3%)	239 (43.5%)	0 (0%)	73 (13.3%)	3.17	0.97	Agreed
Grand Mean						3.13	0.87	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

Table 4.2 shows that all five variables recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50, with a grand mean of 3.13 (SD = 0.87), indicating respondents' agreement that Obio/Akpor Local Government Council has an established financial management system. The highest mean score (3.35, SD = 0.82) was recorded for the statement that the financial management process is guided by the Nigerian Financial Memoranda, suggesting strong compliance with statutory financial regulations. This was followed by the existence of a functional and transparent accounting system (3.22, SD = 0.83). The findings further show agreement that monthly financial reports are consistently prepared (3.17, SD = 0.89), there is a clear separation of financial management roles (3.17, SD = 0.97), and established procedures exist for financial documentation and reporting (3.02, SD = 0.83). Overall, the results indicate that the Council operates a structured financial management system.

Influence of the political class in financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council

Table 4.3: The influence of the political class in financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D.	Remark
11	Political leaders significantly influence the disbursement of local government funds.	238 (43.3%)	181 (32.9%)	114 (20.7%)	17 (3.1%)	3.16	0.86	Agreed
12	Budget priorities are often redirected based on political interests.	284 (51.6%)	172 (31.3%)	58 (10.5%)	36 (6.5%)	3.28	0.90	Agreed
13	Appointments to financial positions are often politically motivated.	351 (63.8%)	170 (30.9%)	0 (0%)	29 (5.3%)	3.53	0.75	Agreed
14	The political class sometimes bypasses financial regulations for expediency.	353 (64.2%)	174 (31.6%)	0 (0%)	23 (4.2%)	3.56	0.71	Agreed

15	There is limited financial autonomy due to political interference.	115 (20.9%)	360 (65.5%)	59 (10.7%)	16 (2.9%)	3.04	0.66	Agreed
Grand Mean						3.33	0.78	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

Table 4.3 indicates that all five variables had mean scores above the benchmark of 2.00, with a grand mean of 3.33 (SD = 0.78), implying that respondents agreed that the political class significantly influences financial management in the Council. The highest mean score (3.56, SD = 0.71) was for the variable that political leaders sometimes bypass financial regulations for expediency, followed by politically motivated appointments to financial positions (3.53, SD = 0.75). Respondents also agreed that budget priorities are often redirected to serve political interests (3.28, SD = 0.90), political leaders influence the disbursement of local government funds (3.16, SD = 0.86), and political interference limits the Council's financial autonomy (3.04, SD = 0.66). These findings suggest that political considerations play a substantial role in shaping financial management practices.

Factors hindering proper financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council

Table 4.4 shows factors hindering proper financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council

S/ N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D.	Remark
16	Poor internal control mechanisms negatively affect financial accountability.	59 (10.7%)	467 (84.9%)	0 (0%)	24 (4.4%)	3.02	0.53	Agreed
17	Inadequate staff capacity limits proper financial record-keeping.	175 (31.8%)	237 (43.1%)	119 (21.6%)	19 (3.5%)	3.03	0.82	Agreed
18	Corruption among officials is a major barrier to effective financial management.	238 (43.3%)	234 (42.5%)	61 (11.1%)	17 (3.1%)	3.26	0.78	Agreed
19	Lack of modern financial tools and technologies impedes transparency.	287 (52.2%)	177 (32.2%)	59 (10.7%)	27 (4.9%)	3.32	0.85	Agreed
20	Political pressure makes it difficult to enforce financial discipline.	232 (42.2%)	231 (42%)	59 (10.7%)	28 (5.1%)	3.21	0.83	Agreed
Grand Mean						3.18	0.79	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

Table 4.4 revealed that all five variables recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50, with a grand mean of 3.18 (SD = 0.79), indicating respondents' agreement on the major factors hindering effective financial management. The highest mean score (3.32, SD = 0.85) was recorded for the lack of modern financial tools and technologies, suggesting that inadequate technological infrastructure affects transparency. This was followed by corruption among officials (3.26, SD = 0.78) and political pressure that weakens financial discipline (3.21, SD = 0.83). Respondents also agreed that inadequate staff capacity limits proper financial record-keeping (3.03, SD = 0.82) and poor internal control mechanisms undermine financial accountability (3.02, SD = 0.53). Overall, the findings indicated that institutional, political, technological, and human resource challenges hinder effective financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council.

Discussion of Findings

- i. **Existing Financial Management System in Obio/Akpor LGC:** The findings reveal that Obio/Akpor LGC operates a formal financial management system in line with statutory requirements. This supports Orie (2023) and Emmanuel (2024), who found that Nigerian local governments possess established financial structures but face weak record-keeping, poor internal controls, and outdated procedures. However, the findings differ from Fatile and Adejuwon (2017), who reported improved transparency and accountability through recent public financial management reforms.
- ii. **Influence of the Political Class on Financial Management:** The findings show that political actors significantly influence financial decisions, budget priorities, and expenditure patterns. This supports Tonwe (2013), who linked political interference to weak financial autonomy and accountability. However, it contradicts studies like Orie (2023) who suggested that effective political oversight can strengthen financial discipline under transparent governance.
- iii. **Factors Hindering Proper Financial Management:** The study identified corruption, political interference, weak institutional capacity, poor record management, inadequate technology, and ineffective internal controls as major constraints. This supports Emmanuel (2024) but differs from research showing improved accountability in councils that adopted digital financial systems, staff training, and stronger governance frameworks.

Laconically, the findings indicated that although Obio/Akpor LGC has formal financial management structures, their effectiveness is constrained by political interference, weak institutional capacity, poor compliance with financial regulations, and inadequate internal controls.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the political class exerts significant influence over financial management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, often undermining its effectiveness despite the existence of constitutional and Financial Memoranda guidelines. Political interference frequently affects budgeting, financial reporting, and procurement, leading to inefficiency, misuse of public funds, and weak accountability. Consequently, the gap between financial management policies and their implementation is driven largely by political interests rather than administrative shortcomings, thereby hindering effective service delivery and local development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Obio/Akpor Local Government Council should strengthen Institutional autonomy and internal control mechanisms to improve financial management in local governments.
- ii. Obio/Akpor Local Government Council should strictly enforce compliance with financial memoranda and budgeting laws through regular audits and appropriate sanctions.
- iii. Political interference in financial management should be minimized through merit-based appointments and institutional safeguards.
- iv. Financial management technology systems should be adopted to automate budgeting, procurement, and reporting for greater transparency and accountability in Obio/Akpor Local Government Council.

References

- Adamolekun, L. (2002). *Public administration in Africa: Main issues and selected country studies*. Spectrum Books.
- Ake, C. (1996). *Democracy and development in Africa*. Spectrum Books Nigeria Ltd.
- Allen, R., Hemming, R., & Potter, B. H. (Eds.). (2013). *The international handbook of public financial management*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Arowolo, D. (2008). Local government administration and the challenges of rural development in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(3), 207–213.
- Asonnam, J. (2026). Revenue generation and local government administration in Rivers State: A study of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. *International Journal of Progressive Research in Engineering Management and Science*, 6(5), 107–110.
- Black, J. (2003). *A dictionary of economics (2nd ed.)*. Oxford University Press.
- Egobueze, A. & Ojirika C. U. (2017). Fiscal federalism and local government financial autonomy in Nigeria, 1999 - 2015. *Port Harcourt Journal of History & Diplomatic Studies (PJHDS)*, 4 (2), 157 – 178.
- Emmanuel, A.J. (2024). Assessment of financial management and control in Nigerian Local Government Administration. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*. (8), 51- 70.
- Fatile, J. O., & Adejuwon, K. D. (2017). Local government administration and local autonomy in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 7(4), 1–15.
- FGN (1999). *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999)*. Federal Government Printers
- Graham, N., & Ehule, H. W. (2025). Accountability and good governance in local government administration: A study of selected local government councils in Rivers State. *Journal of Public Administration and Social Welfare Research*, 10(7), 103–115.
- Green, J., T., J. & Onuoha, B., C. (2021). Public financial management and effectiveness in ministry of finance, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. *EPRA International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Studies (EBMS)*, 8(1), 2347-4378.
- International Monetary Fund. (2017). *Fiscal transparency handbook*. International Monetary Fund.
- Mosca, G. (1939). *The ruling class*. McGraw-Hill.
- Nwankwo, C., & Nte, N. (2021). Political elite and financial governance in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. *Rivers State Journal of Political Science*, 3(2), 88–102.
- Okoli, A. C., & Orlu, N. C. (2020). Local government administration in Nigeria: The case of Obio/Akpor. *Journal of Political Inquiry*, 12(1), 87–105.
- Ola, R. F. I., & Tonwe, D. A. (2009). *Local administration and local government in Nigeria*. Amfitop Books.

- Olisa, M. S. O. (1990). *Government for senior secondary schools*. African-FEP Publishers.
- Orie, S.O. (2023). Financial management in Nigerian public sector: An exploratory study of local government. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies* 9(1), 47- 57.
- Ostrom, E. (2008). *The new pelgrave dictionary of economics*. Palgrave MacMillian.
- Pareto, V. (1968). *The rise and fall of elites: An application of theoretical sociology*. Bedminster Press.
- Premchand, A. (1999). *Public financial management*. International Monetary Fund.
- Shoup, C. (1959). The theory of public finance: A review article. *American Economic Review* 49(5), 1018-1029.
- Tonwe, D. A. (2013). Democratic decentralization and local government accountability in Nigeria: A theoretical and empirical appraisal. *The Nigerian Journal of Politics and Administration*, 5(1), 32–48.
- Wechie, C. H.-G., Igwe, L. E. B., Davis, E. O., & Osai, O. J. (2024). Public financial management and local government performance in Rivers State, 2012–2023. *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 12(7), 56–67.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Anyam, Damian T. & Agbo, Christiana O. (2026). "Ethical Implications of Invitro Fertilisation on Christian Families in Benue State." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 158-169.

Article

Open Access

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF INVITRO FERTILISATION ON CHRISTIAN FAMILIES IN BENUE STATE

Damian Tersoo Anyam¹ & Christiana Omoo Agbo²

Department of Philosophy, Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi^{1&2}

Corresponding Email: dammydutts23@gmail.com¹

Abstract

The increasing availability of Invitro Fertilisation (IVF) in Benue State marks a significant development in the treatment of infertility and presents Christian families with new possibilities as well as complex ethical, theological, and pastoral questions. The establishment of an IVF unit at Benue State University Teaching Hospital (BSUTH) in 2024 has further brought assisted reproduction closer to ordinary families in the state, where procreation carries profound cultural, familial, and religious significance. This paper aims to examine the ethical implications of IVF for Christian families in Benue State and to identify principles that can guide responsible reproductive decisions within Christian faith and practice. The problem addressed is that many Christian couples confronted by infertility now have access to IVF but lack adequate theological, ethical, medical, and pastoral guidance for evaluating its moral implications. The study adopts the qualitative research design and makes use of the expository and evaluative methodologies. The expository method explained Christian-denominational ethical teachings on IVF in detail while the evaluative method considered moral dilemmas and the ethical implications of IVF. The findings reveal that IVF raises significant concerns regarding the sanctity of human life, the moral status and fate of embryos, marital integrity, commodification of reproduction and the emotional and spiritual well-being of couples. The study further shows that Christian denominations in Nigeria do not hold a uniform position on IVF, thereby, creating a need for informed and sensitive pastoral responses. It recommends that churches strengthen bioethical education and pastoral training; Christian couples engage in prayerful discernment with qualified medical and spiritual advisers; adoption be actively

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

destigmatised as an alternative pathway to parenthood; and theological institutions, churches, and medical organisations collaborate in developing relevant Christian bioethical guidelines for assisted reproduction. The paper concludes that Christian engagement with IVF in Benue State requires a balanced integration of respect for human dignity, biblical convictions, medical knowledge, pastoral compassion, and sensitivity to the cultural realities surrounding infertility and family life.

Keywords: Invitro Fertilisation (IVF), Christian Families, Benue State, Ethical Implications, Christian Bioethical Guidelines.

Introduction

In recent years, Benue State has witnessed the emergence of assisted reproductive services previously unavailable locally. In March 2024, the Benue State University Teaching Hospital (BSUTH) in Makurdi established a dedicated IVF unit to make the procedure accessible to women challenged with infertility. This brought IVF to a publicly funded hospital in Benue for the first time. The hospital's Chief Medical Director, Dr. Stephen Hwande, reported that 25 women were scheduled as the first batch for IVF treatment in April–May 2024, and that the Governor, His Excellency, Rev. Fr. Dr. Hyacinth Iormem Alia had directed these services be subsidized for those women (<https://www.vanguardngr.com ›Health>). This public-sector initiative means BSUTH became one of the few teaching hospitals in Nigeria offering IVF. In January 2025, BSUTH announced its first IVF baby as a news report noted, BSUTH was “the first among public hospitals in northern Nigeria to record IVF success, and the cheapest all over the country at the rate of N400,000” (<https://www.vanguardngr.com ›Health>). This is vastly lower than the millions often charged elsewhere in Nigeria. The implication is that IVF is now an available fertility option in Benue State, moving IVF from an abstract notion to real practice for many Christian couples in the state.

Background on the Notion of IVF in Benue State

In vitro fertilisation (IVF) is one of the most transformative medical technologies of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, enabling millions of couples who would otherwise be unable to conceive to have children. IVF involves the fertilisation of an egg by sperm outside the human body, in a laboratory setting, after which the resulting embryo or embryos are transferred into the uterus of a woman. Since the birth of Louise Brown, the world's first IVF baby, in England in 1978, the technology has spread globally and has been embraced with varying degrees of enthusiasm across different cultural, religious, and socioeconomic contexts (Stephoe and Edwards 366). In Nigeria, and particularly in Benue State, IVF has gradually become more accessible as fertility clinics have proliferated across major urban centres including Makurdi, the state capital. Benue State, situated in the Middle Belt of Nigeria, is predominantly inhabited by the Tiv, Idoma, and Iggede peoples, communities with deeply rooted Christian traditions and strong extended family systems that place enormous social and spiritual significance on procreation. The inability to bear children commonly described as infertility carries enormous stigma in this cultural milieu, often leading to marital instability, social ostracism, and profound psychological distress (Omale 48). It is within this social and cultural framework that IVF has emerged as both a medical solution and a theological dilemma for Christian families in Benue State. As the technology becomes more accessible due to the establishment of assisted reproductive technology (ART) centres across Nigeria, including facilities accessible to residents of Benue State, Christian couples increasingly find themselves confronted with decisions that pit medical possibility against religious conviction. The conversation about IVF in Nigeria is not occurring in a vacuum.

National-level discourse, as well as global theological debates, shapes how local communities receive and interpret this technology. The National Health Act of 2014 and subsequent regulatory frameworks have attempted to address reproductive technologies in Nigeria, though comprehensive legislation specifically governing ART practices remains a work in progress (Adekunle and Oluwafemi 34). Meanwhile, fertility specialists in Nigeria report a dramatic increase in demand for IVF services, driven by high rates of infertility linked to conditions such as fallopian tube damage, polycystic ovary syndrome, male factor infertility, and unexplained infertility (Ikechebelu and Onah 3). For Christian families in Benue State, navigating these medical realities through the lens of faith remains an urgent and largely unresolved challenge.

Ethical Concerns

There are several ethical concerns regarding the practice of Invitro-fertilisation which will be explored under this section.

Sanctity of Life

Itodo Philip strongly noted that most of the foundational ethical concerns raised by IVF in Christian thought is the question of the sanctity of human life, particularly as it relates to the status of the human embryo. Christian theology, across many traditions holds that human life begins at conception and that each human being, from the moment of fertilisation, bears the image of God (*imago Dei*) and possesses inherent dignity and worth. This conviction, rooted in texts such as Psalm 139:13-16 and Jeremiah 1:5, forms the bedrock of Christian ethical opposition to practices that threaten embryonic life (Grenz 49). IVF, in its standard practice, involves the creation of multiple embryos, not all of which are transferred to the uterus. Surplus embryos may be frozen indefinitely, donated to other couples, used for research, or discarded. Each of these outcomes raises profound questions for Christians who believe that every embryo constitutes a human person deserving of life and protection. The destruction of embryos, even those deemed medically unviable, is viewed by many within the Roman Catholic tradition and significant segments of evangelical Christianity as morally equivalent to the taking of human life (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 16). Okoh Theresa and Nalaya R agree that for Christian families in Benue State, many of whom belong to denominations that affirm the sanctity of life from conception, this presents an acute moral dilemma.

Furthermore, IVF often involves procedures such as preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), which allows embryos to be screened for genetic abnormalities before transfer. While proponents argue that PGD prevents suffering, critics contend that it reduces human embryos to objects of quality control and reintroduces eugenic logic into reproductive medicine (Sandel 46). Philomena Mba says that for Christians in Benue State who hold a providential view of human life, believing that God has a purpose even in human suffering and disability, the selective destruction of embryos on the basis of genetic profile is theologically troubling (Oral interview). Similarly, Ogbaji Catherine and Rose Ama hold that the issue of selective reduction, wherein one or more fetuses in a multiple pregnancy are terminated to improve the chances of survival for the remaining fetuses, is yet another dimension of the sanctity of life debate (Oral interview). Although selective reduction is not always required in IVF, the statistical likelihood of multiple pregnancies arising from multiple embryo transfers makes it a real possibility that families must reckon with (Oduyoye 72). For Nigerian Christians in Benue State, whose religious traditions categorically condemn abortion, the prospect of selective reduction may render IVF entirely unacceptable.

Moral Concerns

Beyond the specific question of embryonic life, IVF raises broader moral concerns that are relevant to Christian ethical reflection. One of the central concerns relates to the commodification of reproduction: the transformation of human procreation into a commercial transaction. IVF is expensive, and in the Nigerian context, the costs can be prohibitive, with a single IVF cycle typically costing between three hundred thousand and one million naira or more (Giwa-Osagie 18). The commercial dimension of IVF means that access to assisted reproduction is heavily stratified by socioeconomic class, raising questions about justice and equity that Christian social ethics must address. This view was also immensely quoted by Aseshi Musa and Ekpah S during an interview. They insisted that IVF has turned human beings into products that could be easily bought so long as anyone could afford yet, this also creates the challenge of widening the socioeconomic gap since the poor may not afford it (Oral Interview).

Moral concerns also arise from the involvement of third parties in the reproductive process. Egg donation, sperm donation, and surrogacy, which are sometimes associated with IVF, introduce complex questions about parenthood, identity, and the relational obligations that arise from procreation. The Christian tradition has consistently affirmed that children have a right to know their biological origins and to be raised within stable family structures (Atkinson and Field 315). Where IVF involves gamete donation, these values may be placed under stress, particularly in communities like Benue State where lineage and kinship ties are of profound social and spiritual importance. The moral concern about playing God is also frequently articulated in Christian critiques of IVF. This objection holds that by taking control of the processes of conception, gestation, and selection, human beings are arrogating to themselves a creative prerogative that properly belongs to God alone (Mbiti 92). While not all Christian theologians accept this argument, many contend that medicine in general involves a legitimate human participation in God's ongoing care for creation as it remains a powerful intuition for many ordinary Christians in Benue State whose theological anthropology emphasises human dependence on divine sovereignty.

Stewardship and Trust

Christian ethics has increasingly engaged with the concept of stewardship as a framework for evaluating human actions, particularly in relation to natural resources, biological life, and technological power. Stewardship theology holds that human beings are not autonomous owners of creation but trustees who are accountable to God for how they use the gifts and capacities entrusted to them (Wright 48). Applied to IVF, this idea raises questions about whether the technological mastery over reproduction constitutes responsible stewardship or an overreaching of human agency. For Christian families in Benue State, the stewardship question is often framed in terms of trust. Infertility, within many theological frameworks, is not necessarily interpreted as a curse or divine punishment, but rather as a circumstance within which God calls his people to trust in his provision and timing. The stories of barren women in the Hebrew Bible such as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah, and Elizabeth are frequently cited as paradigms of faithful waiting and divine faithfulness, not as endorsements of medical intervention (Okafor 63). The decision to pursue IVF can thus be experienced as a failure of trust, a reaching for human solutions where divine provision is expected. At the same time, a more nuanced stewardship theology would argue that God has also given human beings the gift of intelligence, scientific inquiry, and medical skill, and that these too are to be used wisely in service of human flourishing. The tension between trust and action, between waiting on God and employing human means, is not unique to IVF

but characterises Christian engagement with medicine as a whole. Theological discernment in this area requires careful attention to both the specific practices involved in IVF and the broader spiritual context in which couples are making decisions (Kilner 201).

Impact on Family Dynamics

The impact of IVF on family dynamics is multi-dimensional and cannot be reduced to a simple positive or negative assessment. For couples who successfully conceive through IVF, the experience can deepen bonds of marital intimacy forged through shared struggle, reaffirm religious faith through answered prayer, and bring the immeasurable joy of parenthood. However, the process itself, which typically involves multiple cycles, significant financial investment, physical discomfort for the woman, emotional strain for both partners, and the uncertainty of outcome, can also impose severe stress on marital relationships (Dyer et al. 1304). In the Benue State context, the dynamics of extended family involvement further complicate the IVF experience. Nigerian families, including those in Benue State, tend to operate on a model of collective decision-making in which the extended family: parents, siblings and in-laws play a significant role in reproductive choices. The decision to pursue IVF is rarely, if ever, a purely private conjugal matter; it is embedded within networks of familial expectation and obligation. In some cases, family elders may oppose IVF on religious or traditional grounds, creating conflict between couples who wish to pursue treatment and family members who regard it as unnatural or impious (Eze 87).

The question of disclosure is particularly sensitive. Many couples who undergo IVF in Nigeria prefer to keep this information private, for fear of social stigma or theological censure from their church communities. This culture of secrecy can create psychological burdens and prevent couples from accessing the pastoral and communal support they need. Children born through IVF may grow up unaware of the circumstances of their conception, raising questions about identity and truth-telling that Christian ethics regards as foundational (Nwachukwu 114). The long-term implications for children's sense of identity, particularly in cultures where biological lineage is central to personhood, are areas that require further empirical and theological attention. The emotional and relational toll of IVF failure must also be considered. For couples who undergo IVF unsuccessfully particularly those who experience repeated failures or the loss of embryos, the grief can be profound and complex. Miscarriage and implantation failure in the context of IVF are experienced not only as medical events but as spiritual crises, especially for Christians who have prayed earnestly for conception. The theological processing of reproductive loss, and the role of the church in supporting grieving couples, represents an important dimension of pastoral care that is often inadequately addressed in Nigerian Christian communities (Imhangbe 56).

Biblical Principles

A thoughtful engagement with the ethics of IVF for Christian families in Benue State must be grounded in biblical principles, even where those principles do not straightforwardly resolve the complex questions raised by reproductive technology. Several biblical themes are particularly relevant to this discussion. First, the biblical affirmation of children as a gift from God (Psalm 127:3) establishes the theological context for understanding the desire for children as good and legitimate. The anguish of infertility is acknowledged throughout Scripture with deep compassion, and the Lord is depicted as one who opens the womb and hears the prayers of the barren (1 Samuel 1:10-20; Genesis 30:22). These texts affirm that the longing for children is not merely a cultural or biological drive but a spiritual aspiration that God regards with favour. Second, the biblical principle of the sanctity of human life, as

discussed in the previous section, requires that any reproductive practice be evaluated in terms of its treatment of nascent human life. The sixth commandment's prohibition against murder, as well as texts such as Proverbs 6:17 (which lists the shedding of innocent blood among things the Lord hates), has been interpreted by many theologians as extending protection to embryonic human beings (Frame 388).

Third, the biblical vision of marriage as a covenant between husband and wife, ordered toward mutual love and the procreation of children within that covenantal bond, has implications for how IVF is evaluated when it involves third-party gametes. The one-flesh union of Genesis 2:24, and the theological significance of biological parenthood within the covenant of marriage, suggests that practices which introduce third-party genetic material into the family unit may compromise the integrity of marital covenant (Thatcher 143). This is an argument that not all Christian theologians accept, and its application requires careful contextual sensitivity. Fourth, the biblical call to justice (Micah 6:8; Amos 5:24) raises questions about the equitable distribution of reproductive technologies and the exploitation of vulnerable women who may serve as egg donors or surrogates under conditions of economic duress. Christian families and communities in Benue State who are considering IVF are called to reflect not only on their own circumstances but also on the broader social justice implications of the systems within which they participate.

Diverse Church Views

The Nigerian Christian landscape is marked by striking denominational diversity, and the attitudes of different church traditions toward IVF reflect this diversity. The Roman Catholic Church has articulated the most systematic and comprehensive opposition to IVF, rooted in its natural law tradition and its understanding of the inseparability of procreation and conjugal love. The document *Donum Vitae* (1987) and its successor *Dignitatis Personae* (2008), both issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, unequivocally reject IVF on the grounds that it separates procreation from the conjugal act, treats embryos as objects, and routinely involves the destruction of human life (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 8). Catholic churches in Benue State, including those under the Diocese of Makurdi and the Diocese of Gboko, are expected to counsel their members in accordance with these teachings. Mainline Protestant denominations, including the Anglican Church of Nigeria, the Methodist Church Nigeria, and the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, have generally taken more nuanced positions, neither categorically condemning nor unconditionally endorsing IVF. These traditions tend to affirm the value of medical science in treating illness, including infertility, while expressing concern about specific practices such as the destruction of embryos, gamete donation, and surrogacy. The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has encouraged its members to seek pastoral counsel before pursuing IVF and has called for the development of denominational guidelines that can help families navigate these decisions (Akinwande 102).

Pentecostal and charismatic churches, which represent the fastest-growing segment of Nigerian Christianity and have a strong presence in Benue State, have tended to engage with IVF primarily through the lens of healing and divine provision. Many Pentecostal pastors encourage couples to first exhaust the possibilities of prayer, fasting, and miraculous healing before turning to medical intervention. Some Pentecostal leaders are categorically opposed to IVF on the grounds that it represents a lack of faith, while others take a more pragmatic view, supporting IVF as a legitimate tool of God's provision so long as it is conducted within ethical boundaries such as the avoidance of embryo destruction and the exclusive use of the couple's own gametes (Ojo 78). African Instituted Churches (AICs),

which blend Christian faith with African traditional religious sensibilities, often approach infertility through a spiritual and communal framework that may include prayer, ritual, and traditional medicine alongside or instead of biomedical intervention. For members of these communities, IVF may be viewed with suspicion not only on theological grounds but also because it is perceived as a foreign, Western technology that is incompatible with African spiritual understandings of procreation and family (Ezenweke 134).

Guiding Principles

Given the diversity of church positions on IVF, it is important to identify some guiding principles that can help Christian families in Benue State navigate this complex terrain with theological integrity and pastoral wisdom (Yaakugh Nancy, Zoho Msughter and Esther Onoja, Oral Interview). Drawing on the resources of Christian ethics, bioethics, and African theology, several principles emerge as particularly important. The principle of respect for human life from conception requires that any form of IVF pursued by Christian families avoid practices that deliberately destroy human embryos or treat them as objects of research or quality selection. This principle supports the use of modified IVF protocols, such as natural cycle IVF or single embryo transfer, which minimise or eliminate the creation of surplus embryos. It also implies a commitment to the dignified care and, where possible, the adoption of frozen embryos rather than their indefinite storage or destruction (George and Tollefsen 97). The principle of marital integrity suggests that IVF, if pursued, should involve only the gametes of the husband and wife, excluding third-party donation and surrogacy. This principle is rooted in the biblical vision of the one-flesh union and the covenantal character of marriage, and it is affirmed by a wide range of Christian denominations. It also has practical implications for family dynamics, identity, and disclosure, as children born from donor gametes face unique challenges in understanding their origins and forming their identities.

The principle of communal discernment affirms that decisions about IVF should not be made in isolation but in prayerful conversation with pastors, spiritual directors, and trusted members of the Christian community. The church is called to be a community of moral formation and pastoral support, walking alongside couples as they navigate difficult reproductive decisions, celebrating with those who succeed, and mourning with those who grieve (Romans 12:15). In Benue State, where the church plays a central role in community life, this principle has particular resonance. The principle of justice requires that Christians who are in a position to pursue IVF be mindful of the broader social and economic contexts within which reproductive technologies operate. The high cost of IVF in Nigeria means that it is accessible primarily to the affluent, raising questions about social equity that Christians committed to justice cannot ignore. Advocacy for greater investment in preventive reproductive health care, affordable fertility treatments, and supportive social policies for infertile couples is a legitimate expression of Christian social responsibility.

Emotional and Spiritual Challenges

The personal and spiritual implications of IVF for Christian families in Benue State are profound and often underappreciated in both medical and ecclesiastical contexts. The journey through IVF is not merely a medical process; it is a deeply personal, relational, and spiritual experience that can reshape couples' understanding of themselves, their marriages, their faith, and their relationship with God. Emotionally, the IVF process exposes couples to a range of intense experiences, including hope, anxiety, grief, anger, shame, and joy. The hormonal interventions required for ovarian stimulation can affect women's mood and psychological well-being in significant ways, while the uncertainty of outcome imposes

ongoing stress on both partners. Research conducted in sub-Saharan African contexts has documented elevated levels of anxiety and depression among women undergoing fertility treatment, often compounded by the cultural pressure to achieve pregnancy quickly (Dyer et al. 1305). In Benue State, where infertility is frequently attributed to spiritual causes such as ancestral curses or divine punishment, the psychological burden of failed IVF cycles can be intensified by theological self-doubt and communal stigma.

Spiritually, the IVF journey can be a crucible of faith, testing Christians' trust in God's goodness and sovereignty in circumstances of profound vulnerability and need. For many couples, the decision to pursue IVF is accompanied by intense prayer and a sense of seeking God's direction, reflecting a genuine integration of faith and medical action. However, when IVF fails, the spiritual implications can be devastating. Couples may struggle with anger at God, doubt about their own spiritual worthiness, and confusion about the meaning of their suffering. The church's failure to provide adequate pastoral support for these experiences represents a significant gap in Nigerian Christian ministry (Nwachukwu 89). The spiritual challenge is further complicated by the theological question of whether the pursuit of IVF itself reflects faith or a lack thereof. In Pentecostal contexts, where healing and miraculous provision are central theological commitments, the decision to pursue IVF can be accompanied by a sense of spiritual failure a concession that one's faith has not been strong enough to attract divine intervention. This theology of health and prosperity, which is widely prevalent in Nigerian Christianity, can impose an additional burden of shame on infertile couples and may deter them from seeking both medical care and honest pastoral engagement (Ojo 112). At the same time, many Christian couples in Benue State report that the IVF journey, however difficult, has deepened their faith and their appreciation of God's sovereign grace (Ashwe Emmanuel and Ashwe Esther, Oral interview). The experience of vulnerability, the practice of prayer, the support of Christian community, and when it is successful the gift of a child through an extraordinarily complex process, can all become occasions for spiritual growth and theological reflection. The testimony of couples who have navigated IVF within a confines of faith and ethical responsibility can be a powerful resource for the broader Christian community, offering models of how to engage with biomedical technology in a way that is both faithful and compassionate (Kilner 218).

Seeking Guidance

Given the complexity of the ethical, spiritual, and emotional challenges associated with IVF, it is essential that Christian families in Benue State have access to competent and compassionate guidance as they navigate their reproductive decisions. This guidance must come from multiple sources and must integrate medical, pastoral, and ethical expertise in a holistic and person-centred way. Pastoral guidance is of primary importance. Pastors and spiritual leaders in Benue State need to be equipped with accurate information about IVF — its medical processes, its ethical dimensions, and the diverse positions held by Christian traditions so that they can offer informed and balanced counsel to their congregants. Too often, pastoral responses to IVF are shaped by incomplete information, ideological commitment to a single denominational position, or a generalised suspicion of medical technology. There is an urgent need for continuing theological education programmes that address bioethical issues, including reproductive technologies, in ways that are relevant to the Nigerian context (Adekunle and Oluwafemi 67). Medical guidance from fertility specialists who are sensitive to the religious and cultural values of their patients is equally important. Christian couples in Benue State who consult fertility clinics deserve to have their ethical concerns taken seriously and to be offered options that are compatible with their

beliefs, such as single embryo transfer or natural cycle IVF. Fertility specialists should be prepared to discuss the fate of surplus embryos, the risks of multiple pregnancies, and the implications of third-party involvement in reproduction, in terms that are accessible and respectful of patients' faith commitments. The development of a Christian bioethics framework for reproductive medicine in the Nigerian context is an important scholarly and practical task (Ikechebelu and Onah 9).

Peer support from other Christian couples who have experienced infertility and IVF is a third important source of guidance. Support groups, whether organised through churches, parachurch organisations, or medical institutions, can provide a space in which couples share their experiences, offer mutual encouragement, and develop collective wisdom about navigating fertility challenges within a Christian framework. The establishment of such groups in Benue State, drawing on both local experience and global resources, would represent a significant pastoral and social contribution. Moreover, the guidance of African Christian ethicists and theologians who are deeply versed in both the theological tradition and the cultural realities of Benue State is essential for developing contextually appropriate ethical frameworks for IVF. Global bioethical discourse, while valuable, often reflects Western cultural assumptions that do not translate straightforwardly into African contexts. Nigerian and African scholars such as Oduyoye, Mbiti, Ilo, and Ezenweke have been pioneers in developing African theological ethics, and their work provides important resources for addressing the specific challenges posed by IVF in Benue State (Oduyoye 88; Mbiti 141; Ilo 47; Ezenweke 109). Investing in further scholarship in this area, and ensuring that its fruits are accessible to pastors, medical professionals, and ordinary Christians, is a crucial priority for the church and the academy alike. It must be stated that the ethical implications of IVF for Christian families in Benue State are complex, multi-dimensional, and urgently in need of sustained theological, pastoral, and scholarly attention. The analysis presented in this chapter has highlighted the ways in which IVF intersects with foundational Christian convictions about the sanctity of life, the nature of marriage and family, the responsibilities of stewardship, and the call to justice. It has also drawn attention to the emotional and spiritual challenges that IVF poses for individual couples and to the diverse and often inadequate ways in which Nigerian churches have responded. The path forward requires a collaborative effort among theologians, ethicists, medical professionals, pastors, and affected families to develop guidance that is faithful to Christian conviction, sensitive to cultural context, and compassionate toward those who suffer the pain of infertility.

Recommendations

- i. Churches in Benue State must urgently integrate bioethics into pastoral training, equipping clergy to offer theologically grounded, compassionate guidance to Christian couples navigating the morally complex terrain of IVF treatment.
- ii. Christian couples considering IVF should engage in intentional, prayerful discernment within their faith communities, seeking counsel from both spiritually mature advisors and qualified Christian medical professionals before making decisions with irreversible ethical and spiritual consequences.
- iii. The Church in Benue State must actively destigmatise adoption, championing it as a gospel-centred, noble alternative to IVF that reflects God's redemptive love and offers infertile couples a morally unambiguous pathway to parenthood.
- iv. Nigerian theological institutions, seminaries, and Christian medical organisations must collaborate to produce contextually relevant bioethical literature addressing assisted

reproduction, ensuring that Christian families in Benue State are not left to navigate life-defining IVF decisions without authoritative, locally grounded moral guidance.

Conclusion

The ethical implications of IVF for Christian families in Benue State are multi-dimensional and urgently in need of sustained theological, pastoral, and scholarly attention. The analysis presented in this chapter has highlighted the ways in which IVF intersects with foundational Christian convictions about the sanctity of life, the nature of marriage and family, the responsibilities of stewardship, and the call to justice. It has also drawn attention to the emotional and spiritual challenges that IVF poses for individual couples and to the diverse and often inadequate ways in which Nigerian churches have responded. The path forward requires a collaborative effort among theologians, ethicists, medical professionals, pastors, and affected families to develop guidance that is faithful to Christian conviction, sensitive to cultural context, and compassionate toward those who suffer the pain of infertility.

Works Cited

- Adekunle, Abiodun, and Oluwafemi Oluwafemi. *Assisted Reproductive Technology and the Nigerian Healthcare System: Policy, Practice and Prospects*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press, 2021.
- Akinwande, Samuel. *Faith, Medicine and Morality: The Anglican Church and Bioethics in Nigeria*. Abuja: Daystar Publishers, 2018.
- Atkinson, David, and David Field, eds. *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2016.
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. *Dignitatis Personae: On Certain Bioethical Questions*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2008.
- Dyer, Silke J., Nothemba Mokoena, and Christiaan Marinus Smit. "Psychosocial Responses to Infertility Treatment in a Resource-Poor Setting: A Qualitative Study." *Human Reproduction*, vol. 32, no. 6, 2017, pp. 1301-1308.
- Eze, Chukwuemeka. *Infertility, Faith and Family in Nigeria: A Pastoral Theological Perspective*. Enugu: SNAAP Press, 2019.
- Ezenweke, Emmanuel. *Religion, Culture and Reproductive Health in African Christianity*. Awka: Fab Anieh Publishers, 2017.
- Frame, John M. *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*. Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2008.
- George, Robert P., and Christopher Tollefsen. *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life*. 2nd ed. Princeton: Witherspoon Institute, 2011.
- Giwa-Osagie, Osato F. "Reproductive Health Services in Nigeria: Access, Cost and Equity." *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2020, pp. 14-26.
- Grenz, Stanley J. *Sexual Ethics: An Evangelical Perspective*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.
- Ikechebelu, Joseph I., and Hyacinth E. Onah. "Infertility in Nigeria: Burden, Causes and Management." *African Journal of Medical and Health Sciences*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2019, pp. 1-12.
- Ilo, Stan Chu. *The Church and Development in Africa: Aid and Development from the Perspective of Catholic Social Ethics*. 2nd ed. Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2020.
- Imhangbe, Osaze. *Grief, Faith and the African Church: Pastoral Responses to Reproductive Loss*. Benin City: Ethiope Publishing Corporation, 2021.
- Kilner, John F. *Dignity and Destiny: Humanity in the Image of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.

- Mbiti, John S. *African Religions and Philosophy*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1990.
- Meilaender, Gilbert. *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013.
- Nwachukwu, Dulue. *Pastoral Care in the Nigerian Church: Confronting Contemporary Challenges*. Lagos: CSS Bookshops, 2022.
- Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. *Introducing African Women's Theology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.
- Okafor, Chinedu. *Biblical Perspectives on Infertility and Barrenness in Nigeria*. Onitsha: Africana First Publishers, 2018.
- Ojo, Matthews A. *Pentecostalism, Health and Healing in Nigeria*. Ibadan: BookBuilders Editions Africa, 2021.
- Omale, John Ikya. "Infertility and Its Social Consequences Among Women in Benue State, Nigeria." *Nigerian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2020, pp. 45-63.
- Sandel, Michael J. *The Case Against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic Engineering*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Steptoe, Patrick, and Robert Edwards. "Birth After the Reimplantation of a Human Embryo." *The Lancet*, vol. 312, no. 8085, 1978, p. 366.
- Thatcher, Adrian. *God, Sex and Gender: An Introduction*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010.

List of Informant/Respondents

S/N	NAME	AGE	SEX	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF INTERVIEW	DATE OF INTERVIEW
1.	Obogo Michael	19	M	Student	St. Mark, Apir	26/3/2026
2.	Odey Joseph Bisong	27	M	Soldier	St. Augustine Cath Church, Nasme Barracks	26/3/2026
3.	Christiana Shang	41	F	Civil Servant	St. Francis Veterinary Layout, North Bank	26/3/2026
4.	Philomena Mba	31	F	Civil Servant	St. Mary Catholic Church, North Bank	26/3/2026
5.	Clementin a Phillip	28	F	Civil Servant	St. Augustine Catholic Church, Nasme Barracks	26/3/2026
6.	Rose Ama	45	F	Civil Servant	ST. Mary Catholic Church, North Bank	26/3/2026
7.	Ogbaji Catherine	56	F	Teacher	St. Michael Catholic Church, Yagba, North Bank	29/1/2026
8.	Esther Onoja	50	F	Lawyer	Catholic Youth Centre Parish, Makurdi	25/3/2026
9.	Omlenyi Douglas	36	M	Civil Servant	St. Michael Catholic Church, Yagba, North Bank	26/3/2026
10.	Yaakugh	52	F	Civil Servant	St. Michael Catholic	26/3/2026

	Nancy				Church, Yagba, North Bank	
11.	Zoho Msughter	36	M	Businessman	St. Michael Catholic Church, Yagba, North Bank	26/3/2026
12.	Ashwe Emmanuel	58	M	Farmer	St. Michael Catholic Church, Atoga	26/3/2026
13.	Ashwe Esther	50	F	Farmer	St. Peter & Paul, Tyogbada	26/3/2026
14.	Ashine David	20	M	Student	St. Mary Catholic Church, Achusa	26/3/2026
15.	Ashwe Josephine	26	F	Student	St. Mary Catholic Church, Achusa	26/3/2026
16.	Ekwote Esher	30	F	Businesswoman	St. Joseph, Nyiman	20/3/2026
17.	Anthony Agbo Ekwote	35	M	Businessman	St. Joseph, Nyiman	20/3/2026
18.	Ashwe Joy	18	F	Student	St. Thomas Catholic Church, Anum	20/3/2026
19.	Adibe Joy	25	F	Businesswoman	St. Joseph, Nyiman	20/3/2026
20.	Egemba Gabriel	37	M	Teacher	St. Mary Catholic Church, North Bank	27/3/2026
21.	Ortese Joseph	53	M	Teacher	Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Ise-Ikpam, Federal Housing Estate, North Bank	27/3/2026



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Oderinde, Michael A.; Olanipekun, Lateef O. & Ukutegbe, Samuel O. (2026). "Occupational Safety Culture and Programmes on Employees Performance in Lafarge Cement Industry." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 170-184.

Article

Open Access

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY CULTURE AND PROGRAMMES ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN LAFARGE CEMENT INDUSTRY

Michael Adekunle Oderinde¹, Lateef Okikiola Olanipekun² & Samuel O. Ukutegbe³

Department of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management, Lagos State University, Ojo,
Nigeria¹

Department of Human Resource Management & IT, Accra Institute of Technology Business School,
Accra Institute of Technology, Ghana²

Department of Educational Management, University of Ibadan, Oyo, State, Nigeria³

Corresponding Email: michael.oderinde@lasu.edu.ng

Abstract

The pertinence of work in employees' lives cannot be overestimated; as a result, the degree of safety mechanisms available for them at work goes a long way in affecting their level of performance. Non-compliance with occupational safety policies by manufacturing firms and employees places severe financial burdens on both parties and puts them at a very high risk, as accidents will become a recurring decimal. It was on the notion that the study principally investigated occupational safety culture and programmes as predictors of employees' performance in the Nigerian cement industry with the objective of examining the effect of safety culture on task performance and investigating the relationship between safety training programmes and adaptive performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria. The descriptive research design underpinned the study and a total of one hundred and seventy three respondents served as unit of analysis for the study through the multi-stage sampling technique. Findings provided that safety culture strongly and positively affect employee task performance with ($r^2 = .893$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) and there existed a significant correlation between safety training programmes and adaptive performance of employees with ($r = 0.735$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). In conclusion, committees should be inaugurated and saddled with the responsibilities of studying events and evolving trends in accidents that can portend dangers on employees' performance and initiate corrective measures.

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

Therefore, management of Lafarge Cement Ewekoro should consistently initiate policies for instilling safety disciplines and consciousness at work.

Keywords: Adaptive Performance, La Farge Cement Plc, Safety Culture, Safety Training Programmes and Task Performance.

Introduction

Employees' performance is vital for organisational sustainability, success and profitability. This is because employees spend more than eighty-five percent (85%) of the lives at workplace. This brings to fore that; recording high level of performance is largely dependent on organisation's safety culture and how well their employees are trained to imbibe this culture. According to Adekoya, Jayeoba and Fapohunda, (2022), complying with the necessary national safety procedures is a challenge being faced by managements of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. On this note, three cardinal features are attributed to organisations and these are employees' behavioral patterns, organisational safety culture, and training. Thus, how these three components are integrated reflects the safety compliance level of organisations (Olanipekun, Genty & Azeez, 2022). From the above submission, it can be stated that establishing a safety culture with stringent conditions may not raise the bar of attaining optimal performances of employees; until trainings are made available to educate employees (Akintayo, 2020). Safety culture can be considered to represent perceptions, values, attitude, behavioural conducts of both individuals and groups that serve as metrics for the evaluation of commitment towards health and safety management at work. Culture demonstrate the interactions between peoples' psychological nature and their disposition at work. According to Guldenmund (2020), safety culture assists in observing the efforts of members of an organisation by drawing their attention on how to improve safety measures on a daily basis while on the job. In the same vein, safety oriented culture is comprising all elements of an organisation's culture which affects the behaviours and attitudinal patterns associated with increment or reduction of risk (Leka, Jain & Lerouge, 2021). The perceptions of these scholars helps to direct employees' activities towards the understanding of risks, accidents, and prevention, from the dimension of adequately comprehending its necessary definitions, experiences, and perceptions on safety (Olanipekun & Jiboku, 2021).

Safety training programmes are crucial subsystem of modern safety management systems (Casey, Turner, Hu, & Bancroft, 2021) with the objective of rendering competence amongst employees to work effectively and stay safe. A recent meta-analysis of workplace safety interventions has shown that safety-training programmes improve both safety compliance and safety participation (Hutchinson, Luria, Pindek, & Spector, 2022). Crucially, the success of classroom-based training depends on the application of the lessons learned in the workplace (Ford, Bhatia, & Yelon, 2019). Safety training differs from conventional training, with these differences creating unique challenges that hamper the successful transfer of safety training. A study by Baldwin, Ford, and Blume (2019) indicated that trainees require the customisation of their training to fit their job situation, while Grossman and Salas (2011) observed that employees increasingly required mutable skills so that workers were capable of adapting to specific environments. The environment of work in the Nigerian manufacturing industry in the twenty first century has become more toxic than in recent years. These abnormalities ranges from constant exposure to dangerous chemicals, abnormal lightings and unpleasant substances, heavy machines and equipment built on unstandardised workplace layouts (Olanipekun et al., 2022). Furthermore, the

processes of work as well as other substances that are injurious which stems from the wrong application and usage of safety protecting equipment mechanism and the inappropriate utilisation of working tools. Most times, manufacturing environments are congested with manifold of activities that are concurrently occurring, which further culminates into risks that becomes unavoidable. Thus, Lilley, McNoe, Davie, De Graaf, and Driscoll, (2020) were of the view that the avoidance of these accidents and risks are vital at work; particularly in workplaces involving numerous amount of employees, a high-hazard work environment, and the potential for loss of life. Effective occupational safety culture and programmes enable both employees and their organisations to properly function and influence the desires of employees towards the fulfilment of goals. However, the 'softer' concerns management have in the aspect of occupational safety programmes has often been given little cognizance (Shamsuddin, Ani, Ismail & Ibrahim, 2020); hence, this study.

Objectives of the Study

This study was hinged on investigating occupational safety policies as predictor of employees' performance in Lafarge Cement Plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria. In specific terms, the study

- i. Examined the effect of safety culture on task performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria; and
- ii. Investigated the relationship between safety training programmes and adaptive performance in Lafarge cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses of the Study

H0₁: Safety culture does not affect task performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria

H0₂: Safety training programmes have no significant relationship with adaptive performance in Lafarge cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Occupational Safety Policies

Occupational safety policies are a globally recognised concept. Even though the definition of occupational health policies differently understood across various culture and climes, its primary rationale is to improve the condition of work and environment where employees carry out their daily activities. Comprehensively, Alli, (2008) described occupational safety policies as the science for anticipating, recognising, evaluating and controlling of hazards that arises from the work environment which may be toxic to the health and well-being of employees and its possible escalation towards immediate communities and the environment at large. Alli's opinion explains on a broad spectrum the intricacies of occupational health policies and its significance not just on the work environment but also on the larger society. Hazards arising in and from work environment has both current and future dimensions; thus, according to Germain, Droge, William & Christensen, (2001), they opined that every type of work, which follows a process, leads to a certain output or product; hence, preventing hazards and promoting employees' health becomes prerequisite for forward thinking firms.

Safety Culture

An organisation's safety culture will also influence employees' performance. A poor, purely reactive safety culture makes disruptions more likely, either through accidents or near-misses. These disruptions interrupt workflows, making it more challenging to maintain the

same level of performance throughout the workday. According to Yorio, Edwards and Hoeneveld (2019) conceptualized the idea of safety culture was raised after the 1986 Chernobyl incident. As stated by Fernández-Muñiz, Montes-Peón and Vázquez-Ordás, (2017) there is no universally accepted definition for safety culture as several interpretations have been assigned to safety culture by many researchers since its inception. Regardless of this, certain elements make it possible to constitute a definition for safety culture as a set of shared values, and members' safety perception, attitude and their behavior concerning safety in an organization as well as organizational policies, procedures, and practices pertinent to the enhancement of measures against possible risks and hazards being the priority. Cox and Flin, (2020) also highlighted the concept of safety culture by including collective beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of the workforce in the pursuit of safety.

Safety Training Programmes

Safety training programmes are developed with an aim of enabling workers acquire attitudes, knowledge and skills which helps them reduce the perceived risk of their jobs. Most workplace hazards are caused by incomplete or absent training and if an employee is not trained to their job properly in order to avoid falling victim to hazards, they are likely to become frustrated. When trained correctly on health and safety measures, an employee is likely to feel much less stress and more satisfied with their job. Sarmiento and Beale, (2019) found that job satisfaction tended to be higher where there is access to workplace training. Safety training programmes are aimed at protecting workers in any industry from damage caused by work, the accompanying education and insights that may lead to injuries, accidents and occupational diseases. These programmes include a set of instructions and laws within the workplace and must be adhered to by all. The goal of occupational safety and health programmes is to provide a safe working environment for all workers, customers, suppliers, visitors, the community around the workplace and all those affected by the work environment. (Sarmiento & Beale, 2019). It is clear that safe working conditions affect workers and performance as the right conditions create a safe working condition, which leads to the maintenance of the employees' safety (Badelake, 2012). Olanipekun, Genty, & Azeez, (2022) accentuated safety training programmes as a mechanism for discovering the accidents causes with the intention of reducing these accidents. Furthermore, it denotes a continuous process towards the enhancement of safety and it tries to minimize the effects of accidents. Safety training programmes are an integral part of the preventive program. Safety and health training is an essential element in maintaining a healthy and safe workplace and has been an integral component of occupational health and safety management. Safety training programmes provide employees with the basic theoretical and practical knowledge for the successful exercise of their occupation and their integration into the working environment (Christian, Bradley, Wallace & Burke, 2019). Safety training programmes should meet the needs of the workers. Safety training spells out the rules and provides information on potential hazards and how to avoid them.

Employee Performance

From the position of Razak and Ramlan (2018), performance as a concept infer both the quality and quantity derived from undertaking a task by an employee in the process of executing their functions via agreement in responsibilities being specified in their job description. As submitted by Al Mehrzi and Singh, (2016) performance delineates the level of success attained by an employee during a certain period tasks were undertaken and comparing such with different metrics, such as standards of work, pre-arranged or targets

criteria, which have been mutually agreed upon with their employers. Additionally, Yang, Lee, and Cheng, (2016) asserted that basically, performance is what employee does or does not. Ngozi and Obianju, (2015) perceive employee performance as the composition of employees' commitment, meeting of deadlines, achievements and product or job quality, responsibilities, operational efficiencies, positive work attitude, excellent customers' services, seldom dismissals, satisfaction on the job, development and growth, low rate of turnover, abilities, knowledge and skills engendered on harmonious working relationships among others.

Task Performance

This is a strand of employees' performance dimension that explains the effectiveness wherewith an employee can contribute to the activities of the organisation from the point of its core technical areas whether directly or by being a part of the process in the aspect of providing materials required (Ittner & Larcker, 2021). It is a dimension of employees' performance, which delineates the quantity and quality of work by the basic activities, which are inherent in the description of jobs and the employees to perform them (Aggarwal, Sadhna, Gupta, Mittal & Rastogi, 2020). It symbolises a situation that consists of main components of the work; which is carried out by the employees under the control of a manager. In addition, it is a situation that involves the fulfilment of the main obligations towards work and exhibition of related behaviours (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021). These behavioural patterns of the employees are expected to be in alignment and provide support the carrying out of the activities that are technical in the production process (Motowidlo, Borman & Schmit, 1997). Thus, related behaviours to task performance comprises elements such as planning, organising and prioritisation, showing an employees' level of responsibility, zeal for result-oriented and efficient task delivery (Nye, Ma & Wee, 2022).

Adaptive Performance

This represents the nature or employees to adapting their pattern of behaviour to a demand occasioned by a new situation or a changing environment, situation and events. According to Heinze and Heinze, (2020), it was bared that scholars of previous adaptive performance literature has been inconsistently described. Some scholars are of the view that adaptive performance refer to behaviour while other scholars perceive it as an act of willingness/ability to adapt to certain events or situations within the surroundings of work (Gordon, Demerouti, Le Blanc, Bakker, Bipp, & Verhagen, 2018). In the same vein, Lesener, Gusy, and Wolter, (2019) perceived adaptive performance as the ability to change cognitions by both individuals and employees by aligning their behaviours to a changing environment. However, scholars like Shahidan and Abdul Hamid, (2018) expressed their opinion and stated that being adaptive represents the modification of behaviour towards an organisation's changing environment. Going forward, they declared that adaptive behaviours is always is usually tilted towards maintaining performance to a certain level and minimising performance decrease due to change or intending change. From their position, it can be inferred that interpersonal and organisational changes serve as the requirements to actualising objectives.

Safety Culture and Task Performance

A good occupational safety policy fosters a sense of security and comfort and increases job satisfaction (Ria, Anis & Oci, 2022). Furthermore, Mamoria and Gankar (2021) argue that a comprehensive health program not only ensures good health of employees but also leads to a lowering rate of absenteeism and health insurance costs resulting in higher productivity

and improved morale. For instance, a wellness programme boosts employee morale and increases job performance since it promotes employee health by providing education on health issues and healthy lifestyles. Studies conducted in different sectors on occupational safety policies on employees' performance reported a positive relationship between the variables. For instance, Gyekye (2015) found a positive association between job satisfaction and safety climate. Workers who expressed more satisfaction at their posts had positive perceptions of safety climate and displayed greater emotional attachment, involvement and expressed stronger feelings of allegiance and loyalty to their organization. Sari (2022) asserted that among the key factors that affect employees' productivity and performance include management driven factors which include the development of organisation plans, shift-working, health and safety policies, including the provision of training, development of safe working practices and the adequate supply of protective clothing and equipment. In today's business circle, employees want their employers to offer work environments that are protected, safe, healthy and free of harm but many firms once viewed accidents and occupational diseases as by-products of work engagements and this ideology still persists and common in many industrial settings found in underdeveloped countries like Nigeria. In most developed nations of the world; this orthodox ideology has been replaced with the concept of putting in place prevention and control for minimising or eliminating risks.

Relationship between Safety Training Programmes and Adaptive Performance

Safety training programmes constitute an important organisational mechanism for developing employees' knowledge, skills, confidence and behavioural capabilities required to perform safely and effectively under changing workplace conditions. In industrial organisations such as Lafarge Cement Plc, Ewekoro, employees are routinely exposed to machinery, heavy equipment, production processes, dust, maintenance activities and other operational hazards. Consequently, safety training is expected not only to improve compliance with established safety procedures but also to enhance employees' capacity to adjust their behaviour when work conditions become unfamiliar, unpredictable or hazardous. Research on manufacturing organisations has demonstrated that workplace safety programmes, including safety training, are significantly associated with employee productivity and task accomplishment (Mutegi et al., 2023). Safety-specific research also supports the importance of training in developing workplace capabilities. Ofori et al. (2023), examining safety performance in Ghana's oil and gas industry, reported that safety training was the most significant contributor to safety performance and that its influence was mediated by safety knowledge and safety culture. Their findings suggest that training does not simply provide information; it can create knowledge and cultural conditions that enable employees to respond more effectively to workplace safety demands. Similarly, Hafiz and Mohd Adi (2023), in a study of manufacturing workers, found a positive relationship between safety training, workers' participation and safety performance. Their findings reinforce the argument that safety training can enhance employees' capabilities and engagement with safety-related activities.

Evidence from manufacturing organisations further strengthens the expected relationship. Mutegi, Joshua and Kinyua (2023) examined workplace safety programmes among manufacturing firms and found that safety training significantly influenced employee productivity, productive time, task accomplishment and value-added. The authors concluded that organisations seeking improved employee productivity should provide adequate and appropriate workplace safety programmes. Although productivity is conceptually different from adaptive performance, task accomplishment and productive

time are closely related to employees' ability to maintain effective performance under operational demands. The quality and design of training are also important considerations. Dalyan et al. (2024) emphasised that occupational health and safety training should be accompanied by appropriate measurement and evaluation techniques to determine whether intended learning and behavioural objectives have been achieved. Their study demonstrates that simply providing training does not necessarily guarantee improved safety outcomes; organisations need to evaluate whether employees have acquired and applied the competencies developed through training. This argument is particularly relevant to Lafarge Cement Plc because training programmes should ideally be practical, continuous and related to the specific hazards and operational circumstances encountered by employees.

Leadership-oriented safety training provides further evidence. Moon (2024) examined safety leadership training incorporating coaching in wood-processing companies and reported its relevance to safety performance and safety climate. This finding suggests that training can influence not only individual knowledge but also the broader organisational conditions within which employees perform their jobs. In a high-risk manufacturing environment, such organisational effects may create conditions that encourage employees to adapt their work practices appropriately when circumstances change. Recent evidence from Ghana's manufacturing sector also reinforces the importance of safety training. Odamé (2026) reported a significant positive relationship between safety training and safety performance among employees in large-scale manufacturing firms in Ghana. The study further found that safety training partially mediated the relationship between employer safety policies and safety performance, indicating that formal safety policies become more effective when translated into employee competencies through continuous training. Overall, the reviewed evidence suggests that safety training programmes can contribute to adaptive performance by improving employees' safety knowledge, competence, self-efficacy, problem-solving capacity and ability to respond to unexpected work situations. However, the existing literature has largely concentrated on safety performance, productivity, compliance and general employee performance, with relatively limited attention to adaptive performance as a distinct employee outcome, particularly within cement manufacturing in Nigeria. This creates a meaningful empirical gap for examining whether safety training programmes significantly relate to adaptive performance among employees of Lafarge Cement Plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Theories are body of ideas for explaining and analysing events; theory underlying this study is the Theory of reasoned action (TRA) by Ajzen & Fishbein, (2010). This theory served as the theoretical foundation for this study; the theory will help create a lucid understanding of the nexus between occupational health policies, environment safety standards and employee performance.

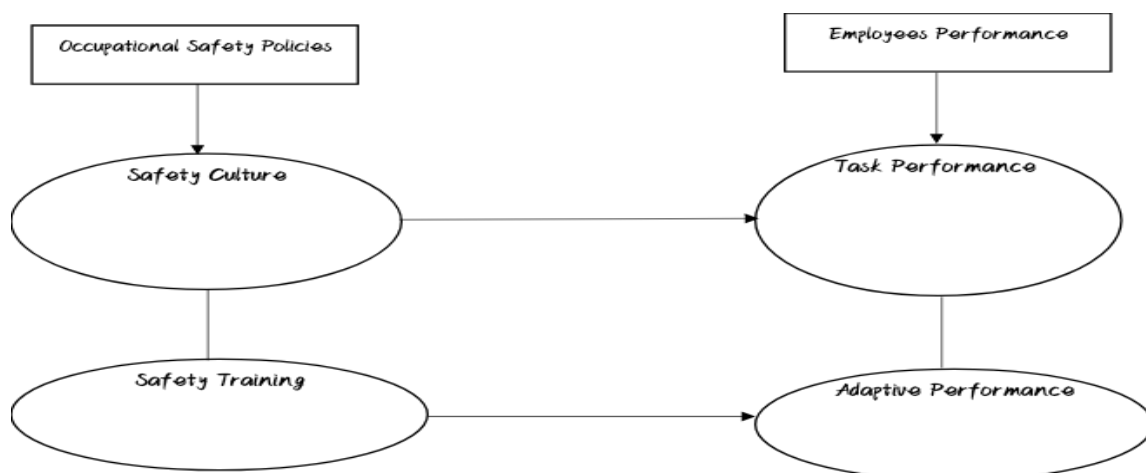
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

This submission of this theory is that the behavioural intention is the immediate determinant of behaviour and that all factors that influence a particular behaviour are mediated through intention. Intention is determined by two components: One, attitude toward the behavior, which consists of beliefs about the consequences of performing the behavior and the evaluation of those consequences; and two, subjective norms, which consist of normative beliefs about what salient others think and the individual's motivation

to comply with those wishes. This implies that the perception of employees towards the safety condition while at work is very crucial and these influence their performance level on the job. An investigation by Olanipekun, Genty and Azeez (2022) examined Occupational Health and Safety Standards of the Environment as Predictors of Employee Performance in the Nigerian Manufacturing Sector. Findings from the study provided that safety is a means for enhancing the performance of employees due to the degree of toxicity in the environment of many manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Another study on the effect of Occupational Health and Safety on Organisational safety culture on employee performance in Pamong Praja and Damkar Police Units South Bengkulu found occupational health and safety to have a significant influence on employee job performance (Bahari, Susena & Rahman, 2022).

In Ethiopian electric power corporation, another study was conducted on the effects of occupational health and safety strategies on the organizational performance. The study found occupational health and safety strategies have positive significant effect on organizational performance (Bitire & Chuma, 2022). Gatithi (2017) carried out a study in Kenya that sought to explore the degree of compliance with the health and safety regulations by manufacturing firms in Mombasa County. His study used a population that constituted 29 manufacturing firms in the County. His research employed survey design. Primary data was gathered by use of questionnaires. Both descriptive and factor analysis techniques were employed for data analysis. The findings showed that 100% of the respondents were largely cognizant of the pertinence of the OSHA, 2007. More than 69.9 percent of the respondents agreed that there was effectiveness in administration as well as implementation of the OSHA, 2007. Ebeloku, Akinbode and Sokefun, (2018) examined the effects of Occupational Hazards and their findings further provided that a significant difference exist between performance well trained employees on safety as compared to those uneducated. Study by Adekoya, Jayeoba and Fapohunda, (2022) examined Occupational Health and Safety practices and Employees Job Commitment in Dufil Nigeria Limited, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria, and findings revealed that commitments of employees' increment is based on the level of education received by employees to drive the safety process at work. Another study by Bankole and Ibrahim, (2012) which investigated perceived influence of health education on occupational health of factory workers in Lagos State Nigeria. Findings from the study proved that health education is a necessary training required for effective safety cultures and reducing occupational hazards in the construction industry.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Authors Schematic Model, (2026)

Fig 1: Conceptual framework showing occupational safety policies as a predictor of employees' performance.

The optimal performance of employee is of immense value to the organisation as it helps in increasing their profit margins, thus, if the necessary measures of safety are in place, employees feel secured on the job, and this will motivate them to work better. The absence of safety measures on the other hand will lead to low employee performance and increased turnover rate. The onus of the above framework opines that employees' performance is a product of how safe they are while carrying out their duties at work. This helps to understand why safety culture and safety training programmes of significant essence to employees' performance.

Methods

This section presents a detailed analysis of how the study was carried out. It provided and explained the methodology adopted in carrying out this study. It covered research design, study area and study population, sampling procedures, method of data collection/research instruments and method of data analysis. This study was descriptive in nature and according to Kothari and Garg, (2004), a descriptive research provides an accurate information on respondents, events. Therefore, this study employed survey research design in obtaining the required data for the study. The study area was Ewekoro plant of Lafarge Cement plc, Ogun State, Nigeria. This particular plant was selected due to the large number of employees. The population of the study was 425 regular staff. The study population consisted both male and female employees of the selected cement firm.

Table 1: Population of Employees in the selected Departments

S/N	DEPARTMENTS	POPULATION
1.	Marketing	75
2.	Procurement	66
3.	Factory I	139
4.	Works	58
5.	Factory II	87
	TOTAL	425

Source: Fieldwork, (2024)

The sample size for this study was determined by applying the Cochran sample size formula (1977) as cited in Salau (2017). The study employed Cochran formula to determine the sample size. Thus, the formula is stated below:

$$n = \frac{NZ^2pq}{d^2(N-1) + Z^2pq}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size

Z = Value for the selected alpha level e.g. 1.96 for a 95.0% desired confidence level.

P = Degree of variability (0.5) 0.9604

q = 1-p

d = Degree of accuracy (0.05)

$$n = \frac{425 (1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)}{(0.05)^2 (425 - 1) + (1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)} = 202.98 \text{ (Approximated: 203) respondents}$$

Thus, 203 was arrived at as the sample size for the study.

Based on the above calculation, the sample size for the study was 203 respondents. Although these departments are not the same in size and composition, thus, a proportion of the population was determined (see table 2), this representation was selected from each stratum using probability proportional to size (PPS) method of selection. Copies of questionnaires was then administered based on this proportion to each of the departments with consideration to equal number of respondents. The table below explains the distribution of questionnaires according to the selected departments.

Table 2: Distribution of selected departments and Sample Size for the Study

Probability proportional to size (PPS) method was utilised in selecting sample size of respondents from each organisation. PPS is a sample selection method where the probability of selection for a sampling unit is directly proportional to a size measure. This was done in order to have an equal sample size representation and adequacy of the respondents in each of the organisation. The formula used in achieving the representation was: $\text{Number of questionnaires} \times \text{population of each department} / \text{Grand total}$

Table 2: Sample Size Determination of each Department

S/N	DEPARTMENTS	POPULATION	PROPORTION	SAMPLE SIZE
1.	Marketing	75	$\frac{203(75)}{425}$	36
2.	Procurement	66	$\frac{203(66)}{425}$	32
3.	Factory I	139	$\frac{203(139)}{425}$	66
4.	Works	58	$\frac{203(58)}{425}$	28
5.	Factory II	87	$\frac{203(87)}{425}$	41
	TOTAL	425		203

Source: Researchers Framework, (2024)

This study was descriptive in nature. The purposive technique was used in selecting the study area. The stratified sampling technique was used in grouping the respondents according to their cadres and status of employment and finally, the simple random sampling technique was used in selecting respondents from all the departments from the group created with the stratified sampling method. Data for this study involved both primary and secondary data; primary data was obtained using a structured questionnaire while secondary data were sourced via journal articles, published/unpublished thesis, conference papers, textbooks and the World Wide Web (internet websites). The questionnaire was in two parts; part one which is also known as section A sought for the demographic information of the respondents while part two was designed based on the objectives of the study. In measuring safety culture, scale by Cox and Cheyne, (2000); Vinodkumar and Bhasi, (2010) were adopted with the reliability (0.896) and scale by Hahn & Murphy (2008) was used for safety training programmes while Pradhan and Jena (2017) was used for task and adaptive employees' performance with the reliability of 0.80 and 0.88 respectively. All items on the questionnaire were on a five-point Likert scale which ranged from (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

Validity of the questionnaire was tested using construct validity. This method involves using a panel of experts familiar with the construct. The experts examined the

items and decided what each specific item is intended to measure. The study used different experts in the field of Human Resource and Management to validate the questionnaire. The researcher selected a group of 30 employees from five (5) selected firms in Sango area of Ogun State for pilot study to test the reliability of the research instrument. This was achieved by first stratifying the individuals according to the nature of their employment status. The researcher also put into consideration gender equity of the individuals. It was expected that the reliability test result did not yield less than 0.70 co-efficient. All these were aimed at ensuring that the objectives of the study measure accurately what they intend to measure. The pilot study enabled the researcher get familiar with the research and its administration procedure and identified items that required modification. The result helped the researcher to correct inconsistencies arising from the instruments, which ensured that they measured what was intended. Data obtained from the study were thoroughly analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0). The hypotheses of the study were tested using regression and correlation analysis respectively.

Findings

This section presented and discussed the descriptive statistics of the data obtained for the study. Summary of the descriptive statistics of the data obtained are presented in the tables below:

Results

Hypothesis One

HO₁: Safety culture does not affect task performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Regression table showing the effect of safety culture on employees' task performance in in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.945 ^a	.893	.893	.448

a. **Predictors:** (Constant), Safety Culture

Table 4: Analysis of variance on safety culture does not affect task performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	286.577	1	286.577	1430.559	.000 ^b
	Residual	34.256	171	.200		
	Total	320.832	172			

a. **Dependent Variable:** Employees task Performance

b. **Predictors:** (Constant), Safety Culture

Table 5: Coefficients on safety culture does not affect task performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.394	.066		5.937	.000
	Safety Culture	.829	.022	.945	37.823	.000

a. **Dependent Variable:** Task Performance

The model summary presented how much safety culture influences employees' task performance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.893$, p-value < 0.05) illuminated that 89.3% variation in employees' task performance is accounted for by safety culture. This

indicated that safety culture as an indicator of occupational safety policies significantly affect employees' performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State.

Hypothesis Two

HO₂: Safety training programmes have no significant relationship with adaptive performance in Lafarge cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Table 6: Correlation table showing relationship between safety training programmes and adaptive performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria

		STR_PRG	APT_PRM
STR_PRG		1	.735**
	Pearson Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	173	173
APT_PRM		.735**	1
	Pearson Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	173	173

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

The bi-correlation table demonstrated above that there was a connection between safety training programmes and adaptive performance in Lafarge Cement plc, Ewekoro, Ogun State, Nigeria with ($r=0.735$, $p\text{-value}<0.05$). This explained that a strong and positive correlation exists between these variables.

Discussions

For hypothesis one, findings revealed a positive and significant effect of safety culture and task performance was established; this implies that an employees perceive that when their safety at the workplace is guaranteed, the tendency to optimize their performance will increase. This can be understood in the strong positive result displayed between safety culture and task performance ($R^2= .89.3$) as shown in table 3. Findings from the study substantiates the study of Mojapelo, Mafini and Dhurup, (2016) who found among employees in the steel industry, that when safety culture of an organisation is perceived to be satisfactory; optimal task performance will be achieved. Findings from the study also align with the result of Greepherson, (2013) whose study result revealed that occupational policies such as safety culture reasonably affects the tasks of employees and serve as a catalyst for boosting task performance. Hypothesis two which states that safety training programmes have no significant relationship with adaptive performance was rejected because, the findings indicated that safety training programmes greatly influence employees' adaptive performance and thus, there exist a strong correlation. For this reason, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Furthermore, the theory of reasoned action submitted that, when employees perceive that the required safety training programmes are regularly conducted to prevent accidents and ensure well-being at work; employees' adaptive performance will be enhanced. This finding also aligns with Amponsah-Tawiah and Mensah, (2016), whose study revealed that safety-training programmes of an organisation greatly influences employees' adaptive performance and increase their intention to stay. Finally, the study corroborates the opinion of Olanipekun, Genty and Azeez, (2022), who opines that when safety-training programmes are adequately facilitated and implemented; it will repose confidence in the employees.

Conclusion

From the study findings, it can be concluded that a committee should be established to handle issues bordering on trainings on employees' safety. Furthermore, this safety committee should be saddled with the responsibilities of studying events and evolving trends in accidents, which may pose danger to employees' performance at work and provide corrective measures, and proposing new and revised procedures for safety. This committee should also serve or act as a link between the firm and the health and safety enforcement agencies; they should as well assist in monitoring and evaluating safety policies of the firm and effect changes where necessary. To ensure a risk free environment, employees must be enjoined to wear their personal protective clothing and use the required equipment and tools needed for work; and make known any irregularity on the management's part. Employees should also reject the proposal to work in an unsafe environment because accidents place a huge burden on both employee and the firm; thus, efforts should be geared towards avoiding accidents and make the work terrain more habitable for work and employees to perform optimally. From the study outcome, the researchers recommended that: Management of Lafarge Cement Ewekoro should consistently initiate policies for instilling safety disciplines and consciousness at work. Employees of Lafarge Cement Ewekoro should be made to understand that safety and health practices is a dual responsibility of both management and employees, this will go a long way to ensuring a safe environment of work. Management should ensure proper dissemination of risk information; as this is vital in ensuring a safe and healthy working environment and also visitors, customers and clients who come to the factory must be well informed and orientated on the precautionary measures in order to prevent accidents and injuries and elements such as personal protective gadgets should be made available by management as a means of encouraging safety practices on employees.

References

- Adekoya, E.A., Jayeoba, F.I. & Fapohunda, T.M. (2022). Occupational Health and Safety practices and Employees Job Commitment in Dufil Nigeria Limited, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria, *Spectrum Journal of Innovation, Reforms and Development*, 8(2), pp.1-20.
- Akintayo, D. I. (2020). Working environment, workers' morale and perceived productivity in industrial organizations in Nigeria. *Education Research Journal*, 2(3): 87-93.
- Baldwin, E., Ford, H.S. & Blume, P.B. (2019). Psychosocial risks and work-related stress in developing countries: Health impact, priorities, barriers and solutions. *Int. J. Occup. Med. Environ. Health*, 2(3), pp. 225–238.
- Bankole, A.R. & Ibrahim, L.O. (2012). Perceived influence of health education on occupational health of factory workers in Lagos State Nigeria. *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*. 8 (1), pp.567-65.
- Dalyan, O., Dalyan, H., Pişkin, M., Öztürk, Ö. F., & Canpolat, E. (2024). The effect of alternative measurement and evaluation techniques on safety performance in employee training. *Sigma Journal of Engineering and Natural Sciences*, 42(4).
- Ebeloku, Al., Akinbode, J.O., & Sokefun, E.A. (2018). Effects of Occupational Hazards on Workers' Performance in Nigeria's Cement Industry. *E-Journal of International and Comparative Labour Studies*, Vol. 7(2), pp. 48-68.
- Ford, K.R., Bhatia, J & Yelon, S. (2019). Framework for Measuring Corporate Safety Culture and Its Impact on Construction Safety Performance. *J. Constr. Eng. Manag.* 13 (5), pp. 488-496.

- Hafiz, M. I. H., & Mohd Adi, M. N. (2023). Assessing safety training and workers' participation that affect safety performance in Eversendai Corporation Berhad. *Research in Management of Technology and Business*, 4(1), 668–684.
- Liu S., Nkrumah E.N.K., Akoto L.S., Gyabeng E., & Nkrumah E. (2020). The State of Occupational Health and Safety Management Frameworks (OHSMF) and Occupational Injuries and Accidents in the Ghanaian Oil and Gas Industry: Assessing the Mediating Role of Safety Knowledge. *BioMed Res. Int.* 4(3). pp. 211-223.
- Moon, K. (2024). Effect of a safety leadership training including coaching on safety performance and climate in wood-processing companies. *Safety and Health at Work*, 15(3), 310–316. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shaw.2024.05.005>
- Mutegi, T. M., Joshua, P. M., & Kinyua, J. M. (2023). Workplace safety and employee productivity of manufacturing firms in Kenya. *Cogent Business & Management*, 10(2), 2215569. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2023.2215569>
- Odame, C. (2026). Impact of employer safety policies on safety performance in Ghana's manufacturing sector: Mediated by safety training. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies and Social Sciences*, 3(3). <https://doi.org/10.55677/ijhrsss/05-2026-Vol03I03>
- Ofori, E. K., Aram, S. A., Saalidong, B. M., Gyimah, J., Niyonzima, P., Mintah, C., & Ahakwa, I. (2023). Exploring new antecedent metrics for safety performance in Ghana's oil and gas industry using partial least squares structural equation modelling. *Resources Policy*, 83, 103368. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2023.103368>
- Olanipekun L.O. & Jiboku, J.O. (2021). Occupational Health and Safety Standards and Employee Performance in Nigeria: A Theoretical Exposition. *Texas Journal of Medical Science*, 1 (1), 4-12.
- Olanipekun, L.O., Genty, K.I. & Azeez, R.O. (2022): Occupational Health and Environmental Safety Practices as Predictors of Employee Performance in the Nigerian Manufacturing Sector. *Pakistan Journal of Rehabilitation*, 11(2), pp. 141-152. DOI: 10.36283/pjr.zu.11.2/019.
- Pradhan, R.K & Jena, L.K., (2017). Employee Performance at Workplace: Conceptual Model and Empirical Validation, *Business Perspectives and Research*, 5(1), pp. 69-85.
- Priyadarshani, K.; Karunasena, G.; & Jayasuriya, S. (2013). Construction safety assessment framework for developing countries: A case study of Sri Lanka. *J. Constr. Dev. Ctries.* 2013, 18, 33–51.
- Razak, A. & Ramlan, R. (2018): Effect of leadership style, motivation and work discipline on employee performance in PT. ABC Makassar: *International Review of Management and Marketing*. 4(1). pp. 321-325.
- Sari, F.O. (2022). Effects of employee trainings on the occupational safety and health in accommodation sector. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1, 1865–1870.
- Sarmiento, R., & Beale, J. (2019). Determinants of performance amongst shop-floor employees. *Management Research News*, 30 (12), 915-927.
- Sembe, F., & Ayuo, A. (2017). Effect of Selected Occupational Health and Safety Management Practices on Job Satisfaction of Employees in University Campuses in Nakuru Town, Kenya. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 5(5), 70.
- Shahidan, A.N. & Abdul Hamid, S.N. (2018). Ahmad, F. Mediating influence of work engagement between person-environment fit and adaptive performance: A conceptual perspective in Malaysia public hospitals. *J. Bus. Soc. Rev. Emerg. Econ*, 4(1), pp. 17–26.
- Shahzadi, I. Javed A., Pirzada, S., Nasreen, & Khanam, F. (2014): Impact of employee

- motivation on employee performance. *European Journal of Business and Management*.
- Ulutasdemir, N., Kilic, M., Zeki, Ö., & Begendi, F. (2015). Effects of occupational health and safety on healthy lifestyle behaviors of workers employed in a private company in Turkey. *Annals of global health*, 81(4), 503-511.
- Unnikrishnan, S, Iqbal, R, Singh, A & Nimkar, M I (2014). Safety management practices in small and medium enterprises in India. *Safety and Health at Work*, 6: 46–55.
- Wang, M.; Sun, J.; Du, H. & Wang, C. (2018). Relations between Safety Climate, Awareness, and Behavior in the Chinese Construction Industry: A Hierarchical Linear Investigation. *Adv. Civil Eng.* 2018.
- Yang, Y., Lee, P.K.C., & Cheng, T.C.E. (2016). Continuous improvement competence, employee creativity, and new service development performance: *A frontline employee perspective. international journal of production economics*, 171, 275-288.
- Zulkifli, Z.; Yorio P.L., Edwards J., Hoeneveld D. (2019). Safety culture across cultures. *Saf. Sci.* ;1(2). Pp. 402–410.
- Yusuff, A. Q. Adegbite, R. A. Awotedu, O. L. & Akinosho, H. O. (2021). An empirical verification of occupational health hazards on sawmill workers. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 3(6), 511-517.

Conflict of interest declaration

The authors declare no conflicts of interest on the paper.

Funding information

There was no external funding for this paper.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to appreciate the immense contributions of Professors and Doctors in the Department of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management, Lagos State University for their dedication and tutelage. In addition, the authors give immense thanks to the Departmental Secretary and Mrs. Deborah Olanipekun for the typesetting of this manuscript.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Agyapong, Richard & Boachie, Christopher (2026). "The Moderating Role of Bank Size on the Relationship Between Banking Reforms and Banks' Financial Performance." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 185-194.

Article

Open Access

THE MODERATING ROLE OF BANK SIZE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BANKING REFORMS AND BANKS' FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Richard Agyapong¹ & Christopher Boachie²

Department of Business Administration, Accra Institute of Technology, Ghana¹

Department of Finance, Central University, Accra, Ghana²

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of banking reforms on banks' financial performance, with a particular focus on the moderating role of bank size. The research aims to determine whether the effect of banking reforms varies across banks of different sizes. Adopting a quantitative research approach, the study utilizes a causal research design and analyzes primary data collected through structured questionnaires from 1,000 respondents, comprising banking staff and financial officers from selected banks of varying sizes. Data analysis was performed using Smart PLS software to examine the direct effect of banking reforms on financial performance, as well as the moderating influence of bank size. The results indicate that banking reforms have a positive effect on banks' financial performance ($\beta = 0.153$), suggesting that structural improvements can enhance efficiency and profitability. More importantly, bank size significantly moderates this relationship ($\beta = 0.472$), implying that larger banks benefit more from reforms compared to smaller banks due to greater resource capacity and adaptability. These findings underscore the need to tailor reform strategies according to institutional size to maximize financial outcomes.

Keywords: Bank, Banking Reforms, Financial Performance, Bank Size, Financial Institution.

Introduction

Banking reforms have become a critical instrument in transforming the structural and operational frameworks of financial institutions, particularly within emerging and developing economies. These reforms are often implemented to enhance regulatory compliance, improve operational efficiency, strengthen risk management, and promote

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

financial system stability (Smith & Jones, 2024). Globally, reforms such as capital adequacy enforcement, the adoption of advanced technological systems, and compliance with international financial reporting standards have significantly shaped the performance landscape of banks. While the intended objective of these reforms is to reinforce the resilience and profitability of banks, their outcomes are often contingent on internal organizational factors chief among them being the size of the institution. The relationship between banking reforms and financial performance is complex and multidimensional. On one hand, reforms that enhance governance, transparency, and technological efficiency tend to drive profitability, reduce operational costs, and attract investor confidence (Brown et al., 2024). On the other hand, reforms can introduce compliance costs, restructure internal processes, and impose capital burdens particularly on smaller banks that may lack the resources and capacity to absorb such shocks. Therefore, the financial performance impact of reforms cannot be fully understood without examining the moderating effect of institutional characteristics such as bank size.

In Ghana, the banking sector has experienced major reforms, particularly during the 2017–2019 period, as part of a broader initiative by the Bank of Ghana to sanitize and stabilize the financial system. Key measures included the recapitalization of banks, consolidation of underperforming institutions, tighter regulatory oversight, and the enforcement of risk-based supervision (Mensah & Tetteh, 2024). While these interventions improved sector-wide performance indicators and boosted depositor confidence, they also led to operational and financial strain, particularly for small and medium-sized banks that struggled to meet the revised capital requirements and compliance demands. Large banks, by contrast, often possess greater financial buffers, advanced technological infrastructure, and diversified portfolios that allow them to adapt more efficiently to reform-driven changes. This asymmetry raises an important empirical question: *Does bank size moderate the impact of reforms on financial performance?* If so, what policy strategies are needed to ensure that reforms do not disproportionately disadvantage smaller institutions while benefiting larger ones? Additionally, reforms related to digital banking, anti-money laundering (AML) compliance, and Basel III implementation have created uneven performance outcomes across banks of different sizes (Ahmed et al., 2024). While larger banks typically leverage economies of scale to absorb the costs of reform, smaller banks face tighter margins and increased vulnerability to policy shocks. Understanding the differential effects of reform policies is critical for developing inclusive and effective banking sector strategies. In conclusion, while banking reforms are generally associated with improved financial system performance, their effect on individual banks varies depending on intrinsic institutional characteristics. Bank size, in particular, plays a pivotal moderating role in determining how reforms translate into financial outcomes. This study, therefore, seeks to empirically investigate the extent to which bank size influences the relationship between banking reforms and financial performance, with implications for reform design, financial regulation, and strategic banking policy—especially in developing economies such as Ghana.

Literature Review

Empirical research on the effects of banking reforms on financial performance demonstrates a complex and varied landscape shaped by both internal bank characteristics and the external regulatory environment. Banking reforms—implemented to strengthen financial stability, improve operational efficiency, and enhance regulatory compliance—have shown significant influence on key performance indicators such as profitability, asset quality,

liquidity, and capital adequacy. However, the extent and nature of these impacts often vary depending on contextual and structural factors, especially bank size. Several studies underscore that well-structured reforms can lead to improved financial outcomes for banks. For instance, Adeyemi et al. (2024) found that regulatory reforms in Nigeria—such as increased capital requirements and stricter corporate governance frameworks—positively influenced the return on assets (ROA) and return on equity (ROE) of banks. These benefits were more pronounced in large banks, which possessed the capital and infrastructure to adapt quickly and efficiently. Similarly, Sharma and Singh (2024), in a study on Indian banks, reported that the adoption of digital reforms improved operational efficiency and reduced transaction costs, contributing to higher profitability. Larger banks with robust technological capabilities were better positioned to leverage these reforms for competitive advantage.

Conversely, reforms can also present significant implementation challenges that negatively affect financial performance, especially for small and medium-sized banks. Mensah and Tetteh (2024) analyzed the Ghanaian banking sector's reforms between 2017 and 2019 and observed that while systemic risk was reduced, several smaller banks experienced severe financial strain due to increased compliance burdens and capital shortfalls. These findings suggest that reforms may produce asymmetric effects, where larger banks benefit more due to economies of scale, diversified portfolios, and better access to capital. The moderating role of bank size in reform-performance relationships has received growing attention in empirical literature. Johnson et al. (2024) argue that large banks often demonstrate greater resilience and adaptability to regulatory changes, owing to their resource endowment and risk management capabilities. In contrast, smaller banks may experience reduced profitability and growth due to limited operational flexibility and higher relative reform costs. This supports the argument that bank size serves as a key moderator in determining how reforms affect financial outcomes. Ahmed et al. (2024) highlight that differences in technological adoption and strategic agility further explain size-based disparities. Large banks are more likely to integrate reforms into their long-term growth strategies, whereas smaller institutions may respond reactively, leading to inefficiencies and underperformance. A study by Brown et al. (2024) across East African financial institutions reinforced this view, showing that while banking reforms enhanced the overall financial environment, the net benefits to individual banks varied significantly with size, structure, and technological readiness. Moreover, some studies suggest that reforms should be sensitive to institutional heterogeneity. Celerier et al. (2020) advocate for a differentiated reform strategy that accounts for variations in bank size, arguing that one-size-fits-all reforms may inadvertently undermine the competitiveness of smaller banks. Tailored regulatory frameworks, coupled with technical and financial support for small and medium banks, can help ensure more equitable reform outcomes. In conclusion, the empirical literature suggests that while banking reforms can enhance financial performance, their success is influenced by the structural characteristics of individual banks. Bank size, in particular, plays a crucial moderating role, shaping the ability of institutions to absorb, adapt to, and benefit from reforms. This highlights the importance of adopting reform strategies that are not only robust and forward-looking but also inclusive of the operational realities of banks of varying sizes. Further research is necessary to quantify this moderating effect and inform future policy design in developing economies like Ghana.

Theoretical Review

Two key theories underpin the relationship between banking reforms and banks' customers' psychological wellbeing in Ghana: the *Efficient Market Hypothesis* (EMH) and the *Agency*

Theory. These theories provide valuable insights into how banking reforms can influence the efficiency of banks through improved market functioning, regulatory oversight, and better governance structures.

Efficient Market Hypothesis

The Efficient Market Hypothesis (EMH), originally proposed by Fama (1970), posits that in a well-functioning and transparent market, asset prices fully reflect all available information. This implies that reforms which improve the flow of information, enforce regulatory standards, and promote competition contribute to greater market efficiency. Applied to the banking sector, EMH suggests that reforms—such as enhanced capital requirements, risk management protocols, and adoption of international financial standards—should improve banks' financial performance by eliminating inefficiencies and leveling the playing field (Bawumia, 2022). In the context of Ghana, the banking reforms implemented between 2017 and 2019 were aligned with the EMH framework. These reforms aimed to cleanse the sector of insolvent and poorly governed banks, strengthen capital buffers, and foster greater transparency and accountability (Owusu-Nantwi, 2023). By weeding out weak institutions and reinforcing regulatory supervision, these interventions promoted more competitive and efficient financial markets. Larger banks, endowed with more capital and advanced systems, were better positioned to harness these reforms, achieving improved performance metrics such as return on assets (ROA), return on equity (ROE), and non-performing loan ratios. Smaller banks, on the other hand, often lacked the scale and resource base to fully capitalize on the benefits of market efficiency, indicating a potential size-based moderation of reform outcomes (Aryeetey & Harrigan, 2022). Moreover, reforms that promote financial liberalization and technological innovation—core tenets of EMH—encourage competition and compel banks to improve their operational effectiveness. As Asongu and Odhiambo (2023) note, larger banks are typically better able to absorb the costs of regulatory compliance and invest in innovations, allowing them to outperform smaller banks in post-reform environments. This highlights bank size as a critical factor in determining the degree to which institutions benefit from market-enhancing reforms.

Agency Theory

Agency Theory, introduced by Jensen and Meckling (1976), explains the conflicts that arise between principals (shareholders) and agents (managers), especially when there is information asymmetry or misaligned interests. In the banking sector, poor governance practices and weak internal controls can lead to inefficient resource allocation, asset mismanagement, and deteriorating financial performance. Agency Theory thus provides a foundation for understanding how governance-related reforms improve managerial accountability and financial outcomes. Before Ghana's recent banking sector reforms, agency conflicts were rampant due to opaque ownership structures, inadequate risk management, and regulatory lapses (Mensah & Okyere, 2023). The reforms introduced by the Bank of Ghana—including enhanced corporate governance codes, mandatory risk committees, and board independence requirements—sought to realign managerial actions with shareholder interests (Ncube, 2021). These measures reduced moral hazard and agency costs, improving performance through enhanced decision-making, risk control, and transparency. However, the ability of banks to implement and benefit from these governance reforms varies significantly with institutional size. Larger banks often have more robust governance infrastructures and resources to meet compliance requirements efficiently. In contrast, smaller banks may struggle to meet reform mandates due to limited

human and capital resources (Ofori-Abebrese & Annim, 2023). This size-based disparity suggests that bank size can moderate the relationship between governance reforms and financial performance, with larger institutions more likely to achieve significant performance gains post-reform (Bawumia, 2022).

Methodology and Data

The research methodology adopted for this study, which investigates the moderating role of bank size on the relationship between banking reforms and banks' financial performance in Ghana, is grounded in the pragmatism research philosophy. Pragmatism advocates the use of methodologies best suited to solving real-world problems and answering specific research questions (Creswell & Clark, 2024). Accordingly, the study employed a quantitative research approach using a causal research design to examine both direct and moderating relationships among the key variables. Primary data served as the main source of evidence, collected through structured, closed-ended questionnaires targeting a broad range of banking sector stakeholders, including employees, managers, and investors. The study population comprised approximately 246,000 stakeholders drawn from commercial banks in Ghana, particularly focusing on both large and small banks such as Ghana Commercial Bank (a large bank) and Consolidated Bank Ghana (a medium-sized bank). These banks were selected to ensure variation in bank size to enable robust moderation analysis. The sampling frame covered stakeholders across three economically active regions in Ghana—Greater Accra, Ashanti, and Eastern Regions—with data sourced from the Bank of Ghana (2024). A sample of 2,500 respondents was obtained after cleaning and validating responses from an initial distribution of 4,000 questionnaires, yielding a 70% response rate. Purposive sampling was used to select banks and participants with relevant exposure to banking reforms, while snowball sampling helped in reaching additional qualified respondents, such as senior bank officers and long-term customers, who had witnessed pre- and post-reform conditions. Data were analyzed using Smart PLS 4, which allowed for the testing of measurement and structural models, including the moderation effect of bank size on the relationship between banking reforms and financial performance. The analysis involved path modeling and interaction effects to understand whether the size of a bank strengthens or weakens the influence of reforms on financial performance metrics (Hair et al., 2024). This methodological design ensures a rigorous, stakeholder-informed, and statistically robust assessment of how bank size conditions the financial outcomes of reform policies in Ghana's banking sector.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of Direct Effects

In addressing the effect of banking reforms on banks' financial performance, the study revealed that banking reforms exert a statistically significant positive impact on key dimensions of financial performance, including profitability, operational efficiency, and asset quality. Among these dimensions, profitability was found to be the most strongly influenced by banking reforms ($\beta = 0.472$), followed by operational efficiency ($\beta = 0.441$), and asset quality ($\beta = 0.409$), respectively. Furthermore, bank size was found to significantly moderate the relationship between banking reforms and financial performance. Specifically, the interaction effect showed that larger banks benefited more from reforms in terms of profitability and efficiency improvements, while smaller banks experienced a relatively weaker but still positive effect. This indicates that the effectiveness of banking reforms is partially contingent on the scale of the institution implementing them. These results

underscore the importance of considering institutional size when evaluating the impact of sector-wide policy changes. The detailed statistical outcomes are presented in Figure 1 and Table 1 of the study.

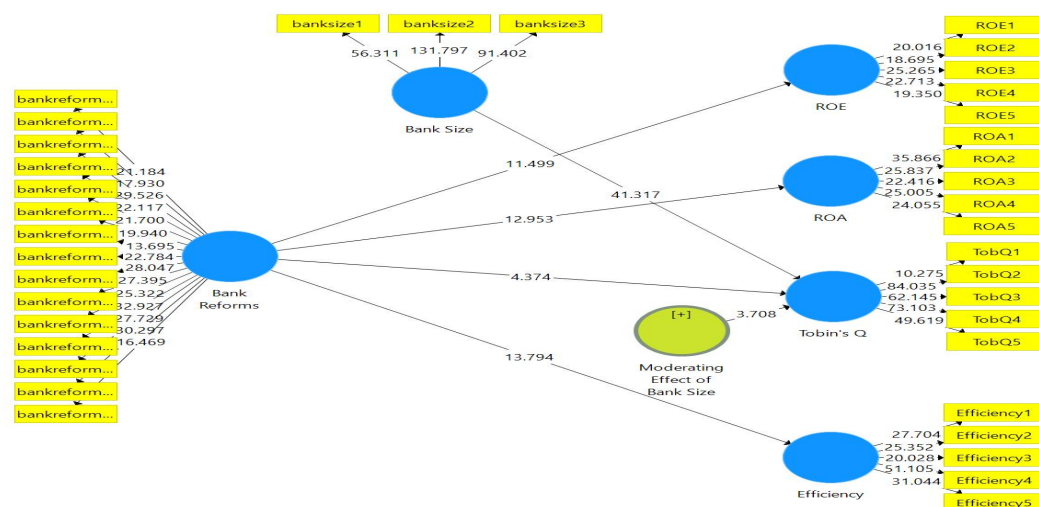


Figure 1

Table 1 Regression Analysis

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)
Bank Reforms -> Bank Efficiency	0.491	0.495	0.033
Bank Reforms -> ROA	0.101	0.102	0.020
Bank Reforms -> ROE	0.107	0.108	0.041
Bank Reforms -> Tobin's Q	0.132	0.134	0.024
Bank Size -> ROA	0.873	0.873	0.015
Bank Size -> ROE	0.426	0.423	0.035
Bank Size -> Tobin's Q	0.794	0.794	0.018
Moderating Effect of Bank Size -> ROE	<u>-0.064</u>	<u>-0.072</u>	<u>0.033</u>

Discussion of Results

The findings reveal a nuanced relationship between banking reforms and banks' financial performance, highlighting the critical role of bank size as a moderating factor. The direct effect of banking reforms on financial performance was found to be positive but relatively modest ($\beta = 0.064$), suggesting that while reforms are generally intended to enhance stability and operational standards, their effectiveness varies across institutions. This aligns

with empirical literature that emphasizes how reforms, such as recapitalization, mergers, and regulatory tightening, can yield uneven outcomes depending on internal capacities (Mensah & Tetteh, 2024). Crucially, bank size emerged as a significant moderating variable, with larger banks experiencing a stronger positive impact from reforms compared to smaller banks. The interaction effect revealed that bank size amplifies the relationship between reforms and financial performance, particularly in dimensions such as profitability, cost efficiency, and risk management capacity. This may be attributed to the fact that larger banks typically possess better technological infrastructure, diversified portfolios, and stronger capital buffers, allowing them to absorb and implement reforms more effectively. In contrast, smaller banks often lack the scale and internal resilience to adjust swiftly, which may dilute the intended benefits of reforms or, in some cases, introduce operational strain.

This moderating role supports the findings of Ahmed et al. (2024), who noted that institutional characteristics such as asset base, branch network, and customer volume often condition how reforms translate into performance outcomes. Larger institutions are not only better positioned to comply with stringent regulatory requirements but are also more likely to leverage reforms as opportunities for strategic restructuring and innovation. Interestingly, while the reforms were broadly beneficial, the performance gains were not uniform across all banks. This disparity signals that reform policies must be sensitive to structural heterogeneities within the banking sector. One-size-fits-all reforms may risk overburdening smaller banks, thereby inadvertently reducing their competitiveness or long-term viability. Moreover, the aggregation of multiple performance indicators into a composite index allowed for a more holistic assessment of banking reforms. Although reforms aim to promote systemic resilience, their success ultimately depends on internal bank capabilities—chief among them, institutional size. In conclusion, the study underscores that banking reforms positively influence financial performance, but the magnitude of this effect is significantly conditioned by bank size. Policymakers should adopt a tiered reform implementation strategy, offering tailored support for smaller banks while promoting innovation and expansion among larger ones. Regulators and stakeholders must also ensure that reforms enhance sector-wide stability without disproportionately disadvantaging less-resourced institutions.

Conclusion

The study examined the impact of banking reforms on banks' financial performance, with a specific focus on the moderating role of bank size. The findings indicated that while banking reforms have a generally positive effect on financial performance, the magnitude and significance of this effect are influenced by the size of the bank. Larger banks were found to benefit more substantially from reforms due to their greater capacity for compliance, innovation, and operational efficiency. In contrast, smaller banks exhibited more modest or variable gains, highlighting structural limitations in fully leveraging reform initiatives. The moderating effect of bank size underscores the importance of contextual and institutional factors in policy outcomes. It suggests that the effectiveness of banking reforms is not uniform across the sector but is shaped by internal capacities such as resource base, technological infrastructure, and organizational flexibility. These findings call attention to the need for differentiated reform strategies that consider the heterogeneous nature of banks in Ghana. The study concludes that while banking reforms are vital for promoting systemic stability and improving financial performance, their success is significantly moderated by institutional characteristics—especially size. Policymakers should, therefore, adopt a tailored approach in implementing reforms, ensuring that smaller banks receive the

necessary support to adapt and thrive, while larger institutions continue to innovate and lead sector-wide transformation.

Recommendation of the Study

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations can be made;

- i. **Enhance Customer Communication and Engagement:** Banks should establish robust communication strategies to inform customers about the purpose, benefits, and implementation of reforms. Clear and transparent communication reduces uncertainty and anxiety, fostering trust and enhancing customers' psychological well-being. Engagement programs such as regular updates, Q&A sessions, and customer feedback mechanisms can further bridge the gap between reforms and customer satisfaction (2024).
- ii. **Promote Financial Literacy Initiatives:** Given the positive effect of financial literacy on customers' psychological well-being, banks and policymakers should prioritize financial education programs. These initiatives should focus on improving customers' understanding of financial products, market trends, and the implications of banking reforms, enabling them to make informed decisions and adapt to changes effectively (2024).
- iii. **Implement Customer-Centric Banking Reforms:** Reforms should be designed with a focus on customer needs and preferences. Policymakers must assess the potential psychological and emotional impact on customers before introducing reforms. Conducting pre-implementation surveys and pilot programs can help identify and mitigate adverse effects, ensuring that reforms improve customer experiences (2024).
- iv. **Introduce Gender-Inclusive Policies:** Although gender was not a significant moderating factor in this study, banks should still promote inclusive policies that cater to diverse customer demographics. Tailored financial products and services for different genders and age groups can create a more personalized banking experience, contributing to psychological well-being (2024).

Strengthen Support Systems for Transition Periods

Banks should provide additional support to customers during the transition phases of reforms. This includes offering counseling services, helplines, and tailored financial advice to help customers navigate changes. Such proactive measures reduce stress and enhance the overall psychological resilience of customers during periods of uncertainty (2024).

Limitations

This study has several limitations. The use of a purely quantitative approach may limit the depth of understanding, as qualitative insights from stakeholders were not captured. The geographical focus on only three regions in Ghana restricts the generalizability of the findings, excluding other regions with potentially different banking experiences. Self-reported data from respondents may introduce biases, affecting result accuracy.

References

- Adams, M., & Biekpe, N. (2024). Financial Inclusion and the Efficiency of Banks in Ghana. *Journal of African Economies*.
- Akpan, E. S., & Nyong, M. O. (2022). The Impact of Banking Reforms on the Financial Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Development Review*.
- Aryeetey, E., & Harrigan, J. (2022). Financial Sector Reforms in Ghana: Achievements and Challenges. *African Economic History*.

- Asongu, S., & Odhiambo, N. M. (2023). Financial Deepening and Efficiency in African Banks: The Role of Reforms. *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*.
- Bawumia, M. (2022). Basel Frameworks and Risk Management in Ghanaian Banks. *Banking and Finance Quarterly*.
- Jensen, M. C., & Meckling, W. H. (1976). Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs, and Ownership Structure. *Journal of Financial Economics*.
- Mensah, K., & Okyere, P. (2023). Governance Reforms in the Ghanaian Banking Sector: A Critical Review. *Journal of West African Studies*.
- Ncube, M. (2021). Corporate Governance Reforms in African Banks: Lessons from Ghana. *African Journal of Governance and Development*.
- Ofori-Abebrese, G., & Annim, S. (2023). The Bank of Ghana's Capitalization Reforms: Impact on Bank Efficiency and Stability. *Ghanaian Journal of Economics*.
- Owusu-Nantwi, V. (2023). Foreign Investment and the Performance of Ghanaian Banks. *Ghana Economic Policy Review*.
- Adams, M., & Biekpe, N. (2024). Financial Inclusion and the Efficiency of Banks in Ghana. *Journal of African Economies*.
- Akpan, E. S., & Nyong, M. O. (2022). The Impact of Banking Reforms on the Financial Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Development Review*.
- Aryeetey, E., & Harrigan, J. (2022). Financial Sector Reforms in Ghana: Achievements and Challenges. *African Economic History*.
- Asongu, S., & Odhiambo, N. M. (2023). Financial Deepening and Efficiency in African Banks: The Role of Reforms. *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*.
- Bawumia, M. (2022). Basel Frameworks and Risk Management in Ghanaian Banks. *Banking and Finance Quarterly*.
- Ghana Statistical Service (GSS). (2024). Economic Indicators. Accra: GSS.
- Mensah, K., & Okyere, P. (2023). Governance Reforms in the Ghanaian Banking Sector: A Critical Review. *Journal of West African Studies*.
- Ncube, M. (2021). Corporate Governance Reforms in African Banks: Lessons from Ghana. *African Journal of Governance and Development*.
- Ofori-Abebrese, G., & Annim, S. (2023). The Bank of Ghana's Capitalization Reforms: Impact on Bank Efficiency and Stability. *Ghanaian Journal of Economics*.
- Owusu-Nantwi, V. (2023). Foreign Investment and the Performance of Ghanaian Banks. *Ghana Economic Policy Review*.
- Adams, M., & Biekpe, N. (2024). Financial Inclusion and the Efficiency of Banks in Ghana. *Journal of African Economies*.
- Aikins, S. (2022). Small and Medium Enterprises and Banking Efficiency in Ghana. *Ghanaian Financial Review*.
- Akpan, E. S., & Nyong, M. O. (2022). The Impact of Banking Reforms on the Financial Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Development Review*.
- Anaman, K. (2023). Long-Term Financing and Financial Literacy in Ghana. *West African Financial Studies*.
- Aryeetey, E., & Harrigan, J. (2022). Financial Sector Reforms in Ghana: Achievements and Challenges. *African Economic History*.
- Asongu, S., & Odhiambo, N. M. (2023). Financial Deepening and Efficiency in African Banks: The Role of Reforms. *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*.
- Bawumia, M. (2022). Basel Frameworks and Risk Management in Ghanaian Banks. *Banking and Finance Quarterly*.

- Bank of Ghana. (2024). Annual Banking Sector Report. Accra: Bank of Ghana.
- Ebo Turkson, F. (2023). The Effect of the Bank of Ghana's Clean-Up Exercise on Efficiency in the Banking Sector. *Ghana Economic Review*.
- Kusi, M. (2021). The Role of Banking Reforms in Strengthening Financial Institutions in Ghana. *Journal of Financial Transformation*.
- Mensah, K., & Okyere, P. (2023). Governance Reforms in the Ghanaian Banking Sector: A Critical Review. *Journal of West African Studies*.
- Ncube, M. (2021). Corporate Governance Reforms in African Banks: Lessons from Ghana. *African Journal of Governance and Development*.
- Ofori-Abebrese, G., & Annim, S. (2023). The Bank of Ghana's Capitalization Reforms: Impact on Bank Efficiency and Stability. *Ghanaian Journal of Economics*.
- Osei-Assibey, E. (2020). Financial Liberalization and Economic Growth in Ghana: The Role of Banking Sector Reforms. *Ghana Journal of Development Studies*.
- Owusu-Nantwi, V. (2023). Foreign Investment and the Performance of Ghanaian Banks. *Ghana Economic Policy Review*.
- Sarpong, D., & Quartey, P. (2021). The Impact of the Banking Act 2004 on Ghana's Financial Sector. *International Journal of Finance and Policy Analysis*.
- Teye, I. (2022). External Shocks and Efficiency in Ghana's Banking Sector: A Macroeconomic Perspective. *African Journal of Macroeconomic Research*.

Conflict of interest declaration: There are no conflicts of interest to declare. All data collected were solely for academic purposes, and no external parties influenced the research process or outcomes.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Yusuf, Akinjide I. (2026). "Modern-Day Technology and Examination Malpractice: Implications for Education Output in Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 195-204.

Article

Open Access

MODERN-DAY TECHNOLOGY AND EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION OUTPUT IN NIGERIA

Akinjide Isaac Yusuf

Department of Educational Management, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria

Corresponding Email: yakinjideisaac@gmail.com

Abstract

The proliferation of modern technology in the educational systems of Nigeria, and its use for examination malpractice have created a double-edged sword in relation to the integrity of the exams, and consequently on educational output. This paper adopted the conceptual, desk review method is used in this paper, with 12 peer reviewed and institutional sources analyzed from 2022 to 2026 to explore the nexus between modern technologies, examination malpractices and education production in Nigeria. The paper drew on the theories of Technology Acceptance Model and General Deterrence Theory, and reviewed the concepts of education output, modern-day technology and examination malpractice, highlighting the effects of technology on education output, implications of examination malpractice on the credibility of Nigerian certificates and quality of human capital produced, and the proposed technology-based control measures such as AI-assisted proctoring, biometric authentication and reform of policies that can enhance the integrity of examinations. In order to mitigate some of the historical examination malpractices like question leakage, impersonation and collusion, Examination Bodies and Tertiary Institutions are utilizing tools such as computer-based testing (CBT), biometric verification, closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance, and artificial-intelligence (AI) analytics. At the same time, the same technological environment, especially the Internet, smartphones, messaging apps and generative AI chatbots like ChatGPT, have provided new and more complex opportunities for cheating that are less easily identifiable through traditional methods of test supervision. The paper concluded that technology neither has a positive nor a negative impact on the output of education; it is just that the impact is positive or negative as it has been

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

deliberately regulated, funded and incorporated into the examination administration in Nigeria.

Keywords: Modern-day Technology, Examination Malpractice, Education Output, Nigeria.

Introduction

Exams are still the main tool for the Nigerian education system to certify competence, distribute opportunity, and communicate the quality of its human capital to employers, higher education institutions and the international community. However, the credibility of this certification has been continually compromised by examination malpractice. In contemporary time, examination malpractices seemed to be enhanced by technological tools, in past examination malpractices. Malpractice in Nigeria used to be very simple, ranging from the smuggling of written notes into examination hall to impersonation and alteration of the results. The rise of the Global System for Mobile communication (GSM), and more recently, smartphones, social media, and generative artificial intelligence, has also changed the nature of malpractice, making it more hidden, more networked, and a lot harder for the classic invigilator to detect (Danmole, 2023). It is paradoxical that the same technological trend that has provided new avenues for cheating has also provided new tools to examination bodies to prevent and detect cheating. The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) introduced computer-based testing (CBT) in Nigeria and both the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and the National Examinations Council (NECO) are moving toward full CBT administration, with the Federal Government setting 2026 as the target year for the switch (Zakariya *et al.*, 2026). Other instruments of deterrence and detection include experimental use of biometric verification, closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance, secure digital question banks, and artificial-intelligence based analytics in institutions (Galadima & Jae, 2025). Meanwhile, the proliferation of new and emerging technologies like ChatGPT has created a fresh and controversial field of academic dishonesty where the distinction between using technology to help and outright plagiarism is increasingly blurred (Bin-Nashwan *et al.*, 2023; Cotton *et al.*, 2024).

This dual nature of contemporary technology as an enabler of malpractices and a device of control has direct implications for Nigeria's output of education broadly construed as the quality, competence and credibility of the students and graduates of the system. If not detected, certificates lose the ability to indicate competence, thus reducing the confidence of employers, the labour market, and the international credibility of Nigerian qualifications (Ekpenyong & George, 2023). Conversely, with conscious and well-resourced technology implementation, it can help to restore integrity to the assessment process and thus enhance the credibility of the output of the educational process (Alarape, 2024; Sarumi, 2022). The following objectives were set in this paper: (i) to review the concepts of education output, modern-day technology and examination malpractice in the Nigerian context; (ii) to examine the impacts of modern-day technology on education output in Nigeria; (iii) to analyse the implications of examination malpractice on education output; and (iv) to propose technology-based control measures that can help to preserve the integrity of examination and hence education output. It follows a conceptual, desk-review approach with a summary of 12 relevant sources published between 2022 and 2026, it is structured for the ease of the policy makers, examination boards, and administrators of academic institutions interested in getting evidence-based insights on the technology-academic integrity nexus in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is grounded in two theoretical frameworks, which complement each other: the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and General Deterrence Theory. The Technology Acceptance Model offers an understanding of the factors that affect people's attitudes toward technology and their intention to adopt and use technology in a positive way: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. In Nigeria, the use of tools like computer-based testing (CBT) is met with some resistance and support, which can be explained using TAM in that context. The results of a phenomenological investigation by Zakariya *et al.* (2026) on undergraduate perceptions of computer-based testing (CBT) in Nigerian higher education environments, did not only provide direct empirical support for TAM but also indicated that students' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use of the technology were strongly associated with their attitudes towards it, as well as their behavioural intention to use it, and even their CBT-related anxiety itself.

General Deterrence Theory, however, assumes that the undesirable behaviour of examination malpractice is deterred when the potential for discovery and punishment is high, severe and immediate. Technological interventions like biometric verification, CCTV surveillance, and AI-powered audit trails function primarily on the deterrence principle: by making candidates' decisions to cheat riskier, the hope is that they will reconsider their actions before they do so again (Galadima & Jae, 2025). Together, the two theories provide a coherent framework for this paper. TAM provides an understanding of the contexts in which technology-based examination reforms are likely to be accepted and implemented as intended, and the deterrence theory provides an explanation of how the technologies are supposed to reduce malpractice once they are introduced. If either of these conditions applies, if technology is thought to be unusable, or if detection is not believed then the expected benefits for education output are not likely to occur. The integrated framework is used as a guide for analysis of the impact of technology, the implications of the examination malpractices and possible control measures.

Conceptual Review

Education Output

Education output is the measurable and qualitative results of an education system, such as the competence, employability and productivity of its graduates, the credibility of the certificates and credentials it releases and its overall contribution to national human-capital development. Sarumi (2022) investigated the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in the implementation of basic education in Lagos State and reported that ICT is an important instrument for ensuring the quality of the services provided in education and that the output of education is not only the number of enrolled learners or the number of certificates issued, but the quality of what they are learning and how they are being learned. In Nigeria, so often, when the education output is poor, the certification process itself, in this particular instance the examination process, is not a reliable method for sifting competent candidates from those who make it through the cracks by engaging in examination malpractice.

Modern-Day Technology

In the context of this paper, modern-day technology means the spectrum of digital technologies and systems that have transformed the manner in which examinations are delivered, tracked, and in a few instances, perverted. Administering and controlling this are also supported by computer-based testing platforms, biometric verification systems, CCTV

surveillance, secure digital question banks, online proctoring software, and AI-based analytics and audit trails (Galadima & Jae, 2025). On the hazard side, the modern-day era brings with its internet-enabled smart phones, messaging and social media apps, and even generative AI tools like ChatGPT which increases candidates' ability to access unauthorized resources, send messages with hidden messages, or produce written responses that aren't based on the text being tested (Rane *et al.*, 2024). This double inventory of tools makes it clear that "modern" technology can't be regarded as a positive or negative force in the administration of exams, depending on which side of the administration versus circumvention fence it sits on.

Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractice is defined as any dishonest or unauthorized action by any candidate, invigilator or other person involved in the examination process which is designed to give the candidate an unfair advantage in the examination. Reviewing malpractice in Senior secondary school mathematics examination, Ekpenyong and George (2023) categorised the malpractice to include impersonation, access to unauthorised materials and examination by unauthorised communication while on the other hand Danmole (2023) noted that technological advancement itself is a cause of the malpractice, especially with the continuous advancement of technology. It has become easier for candidates to access unauthorised materials or communicate during examinations. In more recent times, the definition of malpractice has evolved to include malpractice via AI: Both Bin-Nashwan *et al.* (2023) and Cotton *et al.* (2024) cite examples of new forms of academic dishonesty related to the use of generative AI tools, such as AI-generated answers that are hard to tell apart from students' own work, which effectively muddy the waters between proper use of technology and ethical violations.

Empirical Review

Apart from the conceptual papers cited above, there are now an increasing number of empirical, data-based studies that have investigated the link between modern-day technology and examination malpractices in Nigeria and in similar West African settings. Based on the thematic classification, the ten studies reviewed are grouped thematically, with the first ten articles centered on technology-based control instruments, the second ten covering the prevalence and perception of malpractice among students and the third ten considering the overall relationship between ICT and quality in education. A survey of 1,200 federal university undergraduates in the South-Western region of Nigeria by Alarape (2024) on technology-based control tools revealed that the computer-based testing (CBT) was highly effective in the control of examination malpractice (87.5%) and highly effective in reviving quality control (73.6%) however the study showed that the persistent challenges and constraints of CBT was inadequate facilitation conditions and network failure. Zakariya *et al.* (2026) engaged in a methodologically different study to investigate the perceptions of Nigerian undergraduates on CBT, using the TAM theory framework, the study revealed that perceived usefulness and ease of use had a significant influence on the attitudes and behavioural intentions of students, and anxiety and perceived ease of use were also significant predictors of students' attitudes toward CBT, which is a direct empirical support for the TAM theory in the context of assessing learners in Nigeria.

It is essential to note that there were differences in the effectiveness of the perception among the students, however, this might be a good deterrent in the fight against examination malpractice. As Aguele *et al.* (2025) found that when they surveyed 456

respondents across study centres of the National Open University of Nigeria, e-registration and biometric authentication were perceived as effective, while the SMS/internet tracking device and CCTV were perceived as comparatively less effective in curbing examination malpractice. Such observation makes it difficult to assume that all ICT tools will be equally effective. In keeping with this, Akeke and Atah (2022) studied the use of CCTVs in the monitoring of business education administration in Nigerian tertiary institutions and found that while CCTVs were appreciated for its ability to facilitate the monitoring during the social distancing measures, the effectiveness of the CCTVs was hampered by poor coverage and maintenance. Adegboye *et al.* (2023) found that in their investigation of biometric verification and examination security in Nigerian Universities, that biometric systems stopped impersonation but needed constant investment in infrastructure and administration to be effective, a pattern that has been established that technology's deterrent effect depends not on its use but on institutional investment.

Oguche *et al.* (2023) surveyed a multi-stage sample of 257 senior secondary students from a population of 2,573 students in the six education zones of Kogi State to find out the prevalence and perception of malpractice among them. Findings revealed that question-paper leakage and "sex-for-marks" arrangements were the most common form of malpractice with students' pursuit of certificate as the most prominent reason. Kumo *et al.* (2023), who surveyed 380 SS students from North-Central Nigeria, using the Impact of Examination Malpractice on Academic Performance instrument and analysed the data by ANOVA and t-test, concluded that examination malpractice was perceived to negatively affect academic performance among male and female students, in both rural and urban locations, as well as public and private schools. Using descriptive and chi-square analysis, Adeosun *et al.* (2023) in there study of 100 students from three secondary schools in Abeokuta North, Ogun State found that all the students studied knew about examination malpractice, half had personally engaged in it, and an overwhelming majority agreed that secured storage of examination materials and more sanctions were effective in controlling examination malpractice. The findings of Dadzie *et al.* (2022) who conducted a comparative study of West Africa, involving 280 teachers and 370 students in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana, using multivariate analysis of variance revealing that the strategies adopted before the exams significantly reduced malpractice as compared to the post-exam strategies, which has direct relevance to the sequence of technology-based interventions in Nigeria.

Finally, on the wider issue of ICT and education quality, Sarumi (2022) looked at the relationship between the integration of ICT into basic education implementation in Lagos State and the quality-of-service delivery in education. The study revealed that integration of ICT was significantly correlated with improved quality of service delivery in education, thereby adding empirical evidence for the benefits of ICT in education output beyond examination security. All of these 10 empirical studies converge to the same conclusion: technology-based interventions, such as CBT, biometric authentication, and CCTV, are generally seen by students, teachers, and administrators as effective strategies to deter examination malpractice, but the effectiveness of these technologies depends on the infrastructure, maintenance, and consistent implementation of these technologies, not on their adoption alone. The second pattern is methodological; the reviewed studies are mostly based on perception data (self-reported) collected using structured questionnaires, whereas only a few use malpractice-incidence data objectively gathered by independent sources, and the geographic scope of studies is mostly in the south-western and north-central parts of Nigeria, with comparatively less attention to the northern and south-eastern regions of

Nigeria. Insights into these patterns and gaps lead to the conceptual synthesis that follows in the rest of this paper.

Effect of Modern-Day Technology on Education Output in Nigeria

The effects of modern-day technology on output of education in Nigeria can be understood as a two-way process. There are positive developments, however, which have been identified based on the use of technology for improving the efficiency, security, and fairness of assessment. In a study of undergraduates from federal universities in southwestern Nigeria, Alarape (2024) reported high ratings for the use of computer-based testing to prevent examination malpractice and to rejuvenate the quality control in exams compared to the paper-and-pencil-based testing method, which was rated highly susceptible to examination malpractice. The authors of Zakariya *et al* (2026) also concluded that the usefulness of CBT influenced Nigerian undergraduates' behavioural intention to engage constructively with the technology-based assessment; as such, the use of technology in assessment can improve the integrity and perceived legitimacy of the education output, where it is well implemented. In a more systemic context, Sarumi (2022) reported that the integration of ICT positively and significantly enhanced the quality of basic education services delivery in Lagos State, lending support to the belief that ICT, if well resourced, enhances rather than hinders education output.

There are also avenues for the dilution of education output with the same technological wave, as its negative side. As mobile and Internet-enabled devices have become ubiquitous, it has become far easier for candidates to obtain unauthorised information and/or communicate during exams (Danmole, 2023). However, more recently, generative AI has become a force that is even more disruptive: Bin-Nashwan *et al.* (2023) stated that academic integrity is "hanging in the balance" with the use of tools such as ChatGPT in academic settings, and Cotton *et al.* (2024) reported that universities struggle to detect the use of generative AI in coursework and examination responses. Examining academic integrity in African higher education, Guadu *et al.* (2026) warned that the risks of academic malpractice using AI are disproportionately borne by institutions that are least adequate in their ability to address the issue, particularly in many parts of Nigeria, which have inadequate policies, digital literacy, and institutional oversight. Thus, modern day technology will influence education output in Nigeria in a net way, which depends on the quality of the implementation of the technology and not on the technology itself. Technology enhances education output, when infrastructure, funding, policy, and enforcement are good, as documented by Alarape (2024) and Zakariya *et al.* (2026). Where technology is advancing faster than infrastructure and policy implementation, as Guadu *et al.* (2026) and Danmole (2023) have highlighted are typical scenarios in much of Nigeria and the rest of the African higher-education sector, the same technology is a means of destroying the output of education.

Implications of Examination Malpractice on Education Output in Nigeria

Examination malpractice has wide-ranging consequences on the output of education in Nigeria, which have nothing to do with the malpracticing individual candidate but the entire educational system. The first implication is that the certificate is undermined: if there is no way to detect malpractice, the certificate itself would no longer be an effective indicator of competence. The unchecked malpractice affects the fairness of academic assessment process and gives rise to an imbalance in the playing field between candidates who are genuine and those who are not in the process of assessment (Ekpenyong and George, 2023).

Given such ugly development, examination malpractice reduces the confidence of the public and employers in Nigerian qualifications in general, not just the affected certificates. The second implication is related to the gap between the level of competence awarded and the level of capability in the workforce. In order to mitigate examination malpractices in public secondary schools in Delta State, Ayodele (2023) examined the strategies being used and the findings indicated an increasing concern among the various stakeholders on the current trend of malpractices in examination. The findings pointed to a generation of certificate holders whose documents are not matched with their actual skill and knowledge and the direct implications on productivity, job performance, and national development. This worry is compounded when generative AI is employed to circumvent real reading and learning: As students use this in ways that replace actual critical engagement with the course material, they may emerge from their studies with some minimal exposure to reading and thinking, while in the labour market, they may experience much greater challenges in writing and critical thinking, and with a lack of actual experience in the process.

The third implication is the institutional and reputational one. Ongoing or significant malpractice cases erode the reputation of the institution or exam provider in Nigeria and beyond, making it harder to get foreign recognition for the country's qualifications and confidence in the academic credentialing system in general (Danmole, 2023). Lastly, malpractice creates a "chilling effect" or self-reinforcing systemic cost; each occurrence of malpractice erodes the deterrence of future cohorts, as squandered effort due to malpractice demonstrates the low perceived risk of dishonesty to future candidates, directly predicted by the General Deterrence Theory behind the theoretical framework of this paper. When left unchecked, examination malpractices tends to accumulate over time, slowly undermining the very production of education for which the system was created and intended to certify and protect.

Control Measures of Using Modern-Day Technology for Education Output in Nigeria

Because of the dual nature of the technology of today and the deterrent and detective effect discussed above, it is important that control measures are carefully planned to maximise the deterrent and detective potential of the technology whilst minimising the opportunities it provides for malpractice. Computer-based testing is the oldest of these measures. In addition to the administrative advantage, CBT has been proven to stop malpractices that are common with paper and pencil examinations such as question leakage, script substitution and alteration of results, which has led to its growth and adoption by JAMB in administering exams and the planned introduction of full CBT administration of WAEC and NECO school exams. The second type of measures are biometric and surveillance technology measures. Jae and Galadima (2025) highlighted the use of biometric verification, CCTV surveillance, secure digital question management, online proctoring, AI-based analytics and audit trail in Nigerian tertiary institutions. These measures have bolstered deterrence, enhanced security, made traceability of malpractice incidents easier, and minimized human error in invigilation, albeit with challenges arising in terms of cost, infrastructural gaps, privacy, and uneven technical capacity. In particular, biometric authentication directly tackles one of the most prevalent malpractices mentioned by Ekpenyog and George (2023), which is direct impersonation, to ensure that the candidate sitting for an examination is the candidate who took the time to apply for it.

The third and newer issue is about the rulemaking of AI-powered risks in particular. Cotton *et al.* (2024) suggested redesigning assessments to make them less susceptible to AI-generated answers, while also implementing explicit institutional policies regarding AI

content creation and teachers' use and understanding of it, and Rane *et al.* (2024) highlighted the need to use a combination of strategies as complementary rather than standalone: assessment redesign, training in AI literacy, and tools to detect AI content. However, Guadu *et al.* (2026) warned against purely relying on detection technology and suggests a more holistic strategy that considers clear institutional policy, AI-literacy education for staff and students, and regional cooperation between African higher-education institutions, to establish common standards for acceptable AI use in assessment. Last, the effectiveness of any technology-based control programme relies on the ability to fill up the infrastructural and policy voids that are consistently highlighted in the literature. At the post-examination stage, strategies used to curb malpractice are much less effective compared to those used at the pre-examination stage, as pointed out by Dadzie *et al.* (2022), suggesting that it is necessary to deploy strategies that span the entire examination lifecycle and not focus on the point of testing. In the areas of basic education ICT delivery, basic conditions that enable the above technology measures to work as intended and ultimately safeguard Nigeria's education output remain: reliable electricity supply, broadband connectivity, appropriate funding of ICT infrastructure, and sustained investment in staff and candidate digital literacy (Sarumi, 2022).

Conclusion

The present paper has examined the relationship between modern day technology, examination malpractice and education output in Nigeria using conceptual review that was based on Technology Acceptance Model and General Deterrence Theory. The evidence also shows that technology today is not a black or white phenomenon, and the technological environment which has made exam malpractice possible and even more sophisticated via Internet connected devices and generative Artificial Intelligence, has also provided examination bodies and institutions with effective technologies that can ensure the integrity of the examination, such as computer-based testing, biometric verification, CCTV surveillance, and AI-based analysis. The consequences for the output of education are serious where malpractice is left unchecked: certificates are diminished in value, over time the gap between certified competence and what the workforce is capable of increases, reputational damage to the institutions, and a vicious circle of low deterrence. However, as the literature reviewed indicates, technology-based control measures, when intentionally applied, adequately funded, supported by appropriate policy and investments in digital-literacy, can have a significant impact on the credibility of the Nigerian examination systems and the quality of the output of examination system. It is therefore the clear inference of this paper that the outcome of the modern technology on the output of education in Nigeria cannot be preordained by the technology itself, but rather depends on the deliberate and consistent use of the technology with regard to the regulation, resourcing, and integration of the technology into the framework of the examination administration of education.

Recommendations

- i. Examination bodies at all levels (WAEC, NECO, JAMB, and tertiary institutions) should accelerate and adequately fund the transition to computer-based testing, ensuring reliable electricity and broadband infrastructure at all designated centres before rollout.
- ii. Institutions should adopt biometric verification and CCTV surveillance as standard features of examination administration, with dedicated budget lines for maintenance, given that infrastructural neglect has repeatedly undermined the effectiveness of these tools.

- iii. Regulatory and institutional authorities should develop explicit, clearly communicated policies on the acceptable use of generative AI in coursework and examinations, rather than relying solely on detection technology after the fact.
- iv. Assessment design should be reviewed and, where necessary, restructured to reduce vulnerability to AI-generated responses, including greater use of applied, contextualised, and orally defended assessment components.
- v. Digital-literacy and AI-literacy training should be extended to both staff and candidates, recognising that the effectiveness of any technological control measure depends on users' perceived ease of use and usefulness, consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model.
- vi. Enforcement and sanctioning mechanisms should be strengthened and made visible across the full examination lifecycle, from pre-examination security to post-examination result verification, to sustain the deterrent effect of technology-based controls.
- vii. Nigerian examination bodies and higher-education institutions should pursue regional and continental collaboration on shared standards for AI governance in assessment, building on models emerging elsewhere in African higher education.

References

- Adegboye, F., Okafor, J., & Ibrahim, S. (2023). Biometric verification and examination security in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Digital Learning and Assessment*, 22(3), 78–92.
- Adeosun, K. G., Chinaguh, E., Aliyu, M., & Matthew, T. U. (2023). Perception of examination malpractices among students in selected secondary schools in Abeokuta North Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities, Social Science and Creative Arts*, 18(1), 77-91.
- Aguele, L. I., Ibhafidon, H. E., & Ayonote, W. E. (2025). Information and communication technology utilization and examination integrity: Evidence from the National Open University of Nigeria. *AAU Journal of Business Educators*, 5(2), 1-9.
- Akeke, M. M., & Atah, C. A. (2022). Utilization of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) systems for effective and sustainable administration of business education in Nigerian tertiary institutions in the era of social distancing. *Noble International Journal of Social Sciences Research*, 7(4), 94–102.
- Alarape, A. A. (2024). Perceived effectiveness of computer-based test in curbing examination malpractices and revitalizing quality control by undergraduates of federal universities in southwestern Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(5), 2408-2417.
- Ayodele, J. A. (2023). Effectiveness strategies for curbing examination malpractice in public secondary schools in Delta State: Educator's perception. *UNIZIK Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 16(3), 55-79.
- Bin-Nashwan, S. A., Sadallah, M., & Bouteraa, M. (2023). Use of ChatGPT in academia: Academic integrity hangs in the balance. *Technology in Society*, 75, Article 102370. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2023.102370>
- Cotton, D. R., Cotton, P. A., & Shipway, J. R. (2024). Chatting and cheating: Ensuring academic integrity in the era of ChatGPT. *Innovations in education and teaching international*, 61(2), 228-239.
- Dadzie, J., & Ahorsu-Walker, J. (2022). Strategies for curbing examination malpractices: A mediating role of gender. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 6(11), 379-385.

- Danmole, B. (2023, June 14). The menace of examination malpractices amongst young people in Nigeria. HEDA Resource Centre. <https://hedang.org/the-menace-of-examination-malpractices-amongst-young-people-in-nigeria-article-by-mrs-barakah-danmole/>
- Ekpenyong, L. R., & George, N. R. (2023). Examination malpractices in senior secondary school mathematics: Types, causes, and solution. *International Journal of Research in Education and Sustainable Development*, 3(11).
- Galadima, F. I., & Jae, T. (2025). Deployment of technologies in curtailing examination malpractices in Nigeria tertiary education. *Multi-Disciplinary Research and Development Journal International*, 2(3), 139–147. <https://doi.org/10.59795/m.v2i3.194>
- Guadu, Z., *et al.* (2026). Academic integrity in the age of AI: Challenges and strategies for African higher education. *Discover Education*, 5, Article 21.
- Kumo, G. B., Abalaka, A. H., & Odili, A. C. (2023). The impact of examination malpractice on academic performance as perceived by secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria. *Sokoto Educational Review*, 22(1), 49–57.
- Oguche, E. T., Ahmadu, Y., & Usman, Z. S. (2023). Forms, factors, consequences and control of examination malpractices among senior secondary school students in Kogi State: Implications for guidance. *International Journal of Education and Evaluation*, 9(8), 57–87.
- Rane, N. L., Paramesha, M., & Desai, P. (2024). Artificial intelligence, ChatGPT, and the new cheating dilemma: Strategies for academic integrity. In *Artificial intelligence and industry in society 5.0* (pp. 1–23). Deep Science Publishing.
- Sarumi, F. R. (2022). Assessing the role of Information Communication Technology on basic education implementation in Lagos-State, Nigeria. *African Renaissance*, 19(si1), 71–85.
- Zakariya, Y. F., Alotaibi, S. B., Alrashood, J. S., & Alrosaa, T. M. (2026). Computer-based testing in higher education: a phenomenology investigation into undergraduate students' perspectives through the technology acceptance model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 17, 1602964. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1602964>



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Alabi, Tope & Atureta, Ruth O. (2026). "Issues and Constraints to the Health Seeking Behaviour Among the Elderly in Abuja, Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 205-217.

Article

Open Access

ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS TO THE HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE ELDERLY IN ABUJA, NIGERIA

Tope Alabi ¹ & Ruth Oreun Atureta ²

Department of Sociology, University of Abuja, Abuja, Nigeria ^{1 & 2}

Corresponding Email: topealabi@uniabuja.edu.ng ¹

Abstract

Many societies across the world usually regard the elderly as a special component and as a valuable resource due to their custodian of societal wisdom and wealth of experience. Thus, many societies play high premium on the welfare of these elderly people. Therefore, this study examined Health seeking behaviour among the elderly in the FCT, identify the hinderances in health seeking behaviour among the elderly in FCT and proffer solution. The Survey Research Design was used and Data was collected using Questionnaire and Key Informant Interview. 376 respondents were used for this study and guided by the Anderson Behavioural model theory. Result showed that funding remains the major factor hindering the elderly from seeking professional health care services across communities in FCT, accessibility to the health care facilities was also a notable factor, coupled with lack of transportation. Unfortunately, these factors were yet to be addressed by the government and policy makers. The study therefore recommended that the government should partner with the media to provide awareness and the need to rely on orthodox medical solution, government should make health care facility available and affordable, provide centers well equipped and staffed mainly for the elderlies, this will also minimize long wait in hospitals, government should also give waver of services to the elderlies when they visit these facilities

Keywords: Health Seeking System, Health Seeking Behavior, The Elderly, Constraint, Abuja.

Introduction

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

The elderly sub-group of the general society is a particularly vulnerable demographic, with a wide range of issues affecting them from psychological and social issues to medical issues. In addition to numerous other medical issues, the elderly are more likely to acquire respiratory, gastrointestinal, mental, and cardiovascular ailments, and Uchendu, Ilesanmi, and Olumide (2022) beside poverty, unemployment, abuse, stigmatization, loneliness, and depression as other issues facing the elderly. The World Health Organization (2018) observed that the population of the elderly aged 60 years and above is at the increasing rate globally. United Nation's population profile (2015), shows that there were 6.5 million Nigerian elderly 60 years and above in 2015 and the number is expected to increase to 12 millions in year 2025. According to Paul (2011), the delivery of health care to the older adults has been recognized to be more complex than that of younger adults. The complex needs have implication for future health care delivery to the geriatric population, Specifically in Nigeria, where the number of elderly citizens has been on the increase and their health needs receiving popular recognition. Findings on elderly health issues can be used to guide the formulation of comprehensive health services and health education policies and intervention programed for elderly men and women in Nigeria, (World Health Organization 2013). Health care services are a major component towards providing quality living, it is a common problem that such services has posed a great challenges on the health seeking behaviour of the Elderly individual in Nigeria. Today the lack of awareness of health care services has posed a threat on the health of the aged, inadequate and poor health care facility management are some of the factors affecting the Health seeking behaviour of the Elderly towards practice and utilization particularly those, residing in rural areas aid poor implementation of National Health Policy. The elderly, being considered the most vulnerable group of individuals, face a myriad of problems varying from medical problems to psychological and social problems. The elderly are more predisposed to developing cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, gastrointestinal diseases, and mental illnesses among many other medical problems. In addition, other problems of the elderly include poverty, unemployment, abuse, stigmatization, isolation, and depression among others.

Health-seeking behaviour is defined as a sequence of remedial actions that individuals undertake to rectify perceived ill-health. Today, it has become a tool for understanding how people engaged with the health-care systems in their respective sociocultural, economic, and demographic circumstances.^[6] Majority of the aged persons have associated illnesses such as hypertension, diabetes, joint pains/arthritis, kidney infections, cancers, and tuberculosis that take a long time to treat which particularly affect their health-seeking behaviour. Elderly individuals are found to have patronized traditional healers, consult Christian/Islamic clerics, resorted to self-medication using local herbs, or visit chemist shops whenever they are sick instead of seeking orthodox care.^[7] A study revealed that more than two-thirds (68.8%) of the respondents had never visited health facilities for more than twelve months, not even for medical checkups.^[8] Some of the reasons for not patronizing orthodox health facilities include the cost of orthodox health-care services, cultural beliefs, availability, and a distance of the health facilities among others. Several studies have also documented an association between certain sociodemographic and socioeconomic variables and health-care-seeking behavioural practices.

Statement of Problem

Study has shown that 5.9 million, or 3.1%, of Nigeria's 200 million citizens are over 65 years of age Tanyi, Pelser, & Mbah,(2018), and according to Agyemang–Duah, Authur–Holmes,

Adei, and Peprah (2020), the number of senior people is predicted to increase by 3.2% every year and continue to do so gradually in the future. Also, Latunji and Akinyemi (2018) notes that, Nigeria, the most populated country in Africa, has one of the fastest-growing senior populations in the area. Furthermore, the World Health Organization's 2017 statistics indicated that the proportion of Nigerians aged 60 and beyond is already on the rise. Regretfully, these elderly people are coping with a range of health conditions, including high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, arthritis, joint pain, tuberculosis, kidney infections, cancer, vision impairment, and general body weakness (Adebusoye, Ladipo, Owoaje & Ogunbode, 2011; Saba, 2016). Many of these illnesses require ongoing care, which means that patients must visit hospitals frequently. In more severe situations, patients may require specialized care (Cadmus, Abebusoye, Olowookere, Oluwatosin, Owoaje & Alonge, 2017; Baral & Sapkota, 2018; Irwan, Kato, kitaoke, Kido, Taniguichi & Shogenji, 2016).

However, the elderly population in Nigeria is especially susceptible to fluctuations in their patterns of seeking treatment, which might include both excessive and insufficient use of medical services. According to Farrow (2010), older people are perceived as being reliant on their family or heads of households, which is so true in Nigeria and FCT. Indeed, treatment for adults and the elderly with chronic diseases may come from a variety of providers in a variety of places, but the organization of this care is frequently flawed (Elliott, Stolee, Boscart, Giangregorio & Heckman, 2018) especially in Nigeria. Instead of obtaining conventional medical care, elderly people in Nigeria are reported to have visited pharmacies, seek advice from Christian or Islamic clerics, self-medicated with local medicines, and patronized traditional healers (Saba, 2016; Latuni, et al, 2018).

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to find out the healthcare options and the general pattern of health seeking behaviours among the elderly in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria, with a view to offering solutions to associated problems. Specific objectives are:

- i. Identity the health seeking behaviour among the elderly in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.
- ii. To examine the hinderances to health seeking behaviour among the elderly in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.
- iii. To proffer policy options for behavioural change for the elderly in FCT.

Conceptual Review

Health-Seeking Behaviour

A "decision or an action taken by an individual to maintain, attain, or regain good health and prevent illness" as conceptualized by Bhat and Kumar (2016). The explanation provided for health seeking behaviour was that it is a process that a person goes through to regain their health as a result of problems or health challenges they are facing. According to Samuel and Philip (2019), health-seeking behaviour occurs when a person can adequately control his physical, biological, and social surroundings while maintaining good health. It is a set of remedial actions people do in response to perceived health conditions (WHO, 2017). Recently, it is considered to be a method for researching how individuals, especially the elderly, engage with the health care systems within their own sociocultural, economic, and demographic contexts (Richelle, 2015). Health-seeking behaviour has also been considered as any action or inaction undertaken by individuals who perceive themselves to have a health problem or to be ill for the purpose of finding an appropriate remedy (Olenja, 2004). Illness behavior or sick-term behaviour are other terms for the behavior of seeking health. The act of pursuing health is positioned within the larger framework of health behaviour,

which includes actions done to prevent illness, keep one's health in good condition, and handle any deviation from one's optimal state of health (MacKian, 2003). Prior to engaging in health-seeking activity, people make decisions that are further influenced by their own behaviour, that of their households, community norms and expectations, and the traits and actions of healthcare providers (Ihaji, Gerald & Ogwuche, 2014). Any action made by people who believe they have a health issue or are ill with the intention of locating a suitable treatment is, therefore, what is referred to as health or care seeking behaviour (Editorial Health Seeking Behavior in Context, 2023). In this study, health-seeking behaviour is considered, in line with Richelle's (2015) definition, to be a method for researching how individuals, especially the elderly, engage with the health care systems within their own sociocultural, economic, and demographic contexts.

Elderly

The elderly in majority of the developing countries currently are classified as people 65 years of age and above as defined by World Health Organization (2012). According to UN definition, an elderly is 60 years of age and above in the Western world and 50 years in poor or developing countries. (UNFPA, 2012). The word elderly is synonymous with aging according to Samuel & Philip (2019). Aging is a process that causes an individual to undergo physical, biochemical and physiological changes that lead to decline in their aptitude and capacity for bodily activities, Samuel & Philip (2012).

Constraints Faced by the Elderly in Seeking Professional Healthcare Services

Regular drug stockouts, high service costs, and a long commute to medical facilities were shown to be hindrances to professional health-seeking behaviors in a study done in Uganda's Wakiso District (Chukwuneke, Ezeonu, Onyire, Ezeonu, Ifebunandu & Umeora, 2012). However, the study was not detailed on methodology used, which is a major gap filled by the current study. Gil (2020) discovered the following when studying the relationship between several wellness qualities and health-seeking behavior among Western Ontario's community-dwelling older persons. He used 99 people in his investigation, 33 were males and 66 women were chosen at random. For the analysis, SPSS version 26 was employed. He found that there was no connection between an elderly person's physical function and their behaviour in seeking health care. There was a strong correlation between the behaviour of seeking health care and knowledge of available community resources. He also found that there was no variation in the health-seeking behavior of senior citizens according to their gender or age. He came to the conclusion that awareness of the resources provided in the community constituted the foundation for health-seeking behavior. The researcher's current study covered the gap left by the restricted number of respondents in this research, which prevents it from being generalized.

In their study, Bashadu, *et al.* (2021) examined the predictors of health-seeking behaviour and self-reported morbidity in a geriatric community in Western Ethiopia. A multi-stage systematic sample strategy was used to recruit 779 participants. Two key components of the semi structured questionnaire and a face to face interview were conducted at their residence and a survey on their health and demographics. For coding, SPSS version 21 was utilized, and 584 research participants exhibited subpar health-seeking behaviors. The research findings indicated that the behaviour of individuals seeking health care was different in rural and urban settings. The study also showed that those who were financially reliant exhibit poorer health-seeking behaviours. About 34% of women reported being unable to make decisions about their health due to a lack of economic autonomy.

Either the spouse or the caregiver must make the decision on their behalf. They came to the conclusion that an individual's home, income, line of work, and access to insurance policies influence the health-seeking behaviour of the elderly. The present study aims to address the cultural issue that was not examined in this investigation.

Theoretical Consideration

Anderson's Behavioural Model

This model explains utilization of health services using predisposing factors such as age, gender, education & social status, enabling factors such as one's income, location, family / social support, health insurance & transportation and need factors such as perceived severity of the illness, symptoms and the general condition of the individual, Anderson, (1995). According to Tile (2018), Anderson's Belief Model (1961) is predicated on an individual's character, mindset, and surroundings. A person's perspective is influenced by their age, gender, marital status, and family size (Tile, 2018). He also underlined that a person's behaviour in seeking medical attention is influenced by their financial situation, educational attainment, cultural views, the location of the sick person, and the accessibility and availability of health care facilities. Lederle, Tempes and Bitzer (2021) claimed that Anderson's Behavioural Model is predicated on families' use of health care, which is impacted by factors such as age, educational attainment, financial stability, hospital condition based on location, activity, and acceptability of services provided. They also emphasized how the results of therapy for past clients influence the loyalty of present and potential clients.

According to Tile (2018), the primary determinants of health seeking behaviour in Anderson's Behavioural Model are education and financial status, despite the fact that treatment outcomes and the impression of illness play a crucial role in this regard. He also noted that a person's behaviour in seeking health care is influenced by his or her work. Tile (2018) stated that educated people tend to visit modern facilities based on their exposure and location, but village labourers and peasant farmers, such as blacksmiths, goldsmiths, palm wine tappers, and businessmen and women in the village, prefer traditional herbalists. This theory was chosen for the study because it discusses health-seeking behaviour, the different factors that influence it, the obstacles and limitations it faces, the impact of location on it, and how modern and traditional medicine are used depending on a person's location and educational attainment. The theory also discusses the influence that people, friends, and families have on their decision to seek medical attention. This influence is based on a number of factors, including education, illness awareness, social standing, community culture, financial commitment, facility location, and medical services provided because it incorporates the principles that the researcher outlined in the objective, this theory is all-inclusive. Andersen's behavioural model of health services consumption has been criticized for failing to take psychosocial or cultural aspects into account (SCISPACE, n.d). While some articles critique the model for a variety of reasons, others emphasize the approach's value for qualitative data. Furthermore, the model has been evaluated on older White and African-American persons' intentions to use long-term services and supports (LTSS), but not on their actual use of LTSS (SCISPACE, n.d). It's possible that the model underrepresents the variables connected to the real use of health care by various racial/ethnic groupings. Furthermore, because older and different models are being used, applying the model in healthcare usage research may make comparative studies more difficult.

Methodology

The study adopted survey research design with the use of questionnaire instrument and key informant interview guide for the collection of primary data. This design enabled the researcher to obtain a fair representation of the population with factual information concerning the health seeking behaviour of the elderly across the six area councils of the FCT being the capital of Nigeria, with a good representation of her citizens. From the National Population Census FCT, 2006 as cited by Togonu and Akinyemi (2013) the total population was 1,405,201 with an estimate of the elderly as 33,438. However, the National Bureau of Statistics' (2021) estimate shows that the FCT has a total of 506,493 elderly population, which was taken as the target population of this study. The sample size in this research project is 384. The sample size was determined by using acceptable statistical formula provided by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) as shown below:

Formula

$$S = \frac{x^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + x^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where

S = The required sample size

N = The given population size = 506,493

P = Population proportion=0.5

d = The degree of accuracy=0.5

x^2 = Table value of chi-square for 1d.f=3.841

Application

$$S = \frac{3.841 \times 506,493 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)(506,493 - 1) + 3.841 \times 0.5 (1 - 0.5)}$$

$$S = 384$$

The study adopted multi-stage sampling technique to select the elderlies across the six area councils of the FCT, Nigeria.

Stage 1 involved a purposive selection of the FCT due to the high number of the elderlies living across the six area councils.

Stage 2 has to do with the selection of the Clusters/Primary Sampling Unit (PSU), leveraging on the Enumeration Areas demarcated by the National Population Commission (NPC) during the National Population and Housing Census of 2006. The PSU were selected using Probability Proportionate to size (PPS). While the Secondary sampling Unit was the Households located in the Clusters/PSU and were selected by Systematic random Sampling.

Stage 3 involved the selection of elderlies within the households through convenience sampling technique. The choice of convenience sampling is not only because the researcher focus on the elderlies that can be access with the greatest ease, but because of factors like availability of the elderlies at a specific moment and those who show interest in taking part in the study.

At the end of selection the following number were used as respondents from the 6 area councils: Abaji – 68, AMAC – 80, Bwari – 65, Gwagwalada – 60, Kuje 53 and Kwali – 50. A total of twelve (12) informants were purposively chosen from the six (6) area councils of the FCT. Each of the area councils was represented by two (2) informants, who were medical experts heading primary health care centre, and a community leader. Probing was conducted during the interview based on pre-formulated questions. The SPSS (Statistical

Package for Social Sciences) version 23 program was used to enter the data and perform the necessary analysis. The simple percentage statistical technique was used to analyze the data, and the statistical tests of the correlations between and among the study's variables was determined. The hypotheses were tested using Chi-square statistical technique, and the Phi coefficient was used to test the level of relationships.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Responses on the last time that the elderly seek medical attention in FCT

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below one month	104	27.7
Between 2 to three months	219	58.2
I can't remember	53	14.1
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 1 confirms the qualitative information that the elderly across FCT area councils are not proactive(based on distance, financial constraints and unresponsive support from care givers) about seeking medical attention since majority (58.2%) of the respondent have sought medical attention between 2 to 3 months ago, which is not enough going by their level of vulnerability to illness and diseases. This implies that the elderly has not been getting enough healthcare services as they should over the years in the FCT. The qualitative data buttressed the findings above. Majority of the community leaders interviewed noted that most elders do not like to seek medical services, especially in the orthodox medical institutions due to one reason or the other. A community leader from Gwagwalada notes:

To be sincere, our elders seem not to like to go to hospital for treatment. My own mother is aged, and each time I told her to prepare let us go for medical checkup she will tell me that she is alright. She does not believe in routine medical check and that is not so nice. The last time she was able to follow me was when she suffered migraine headache three months ago, and I had to beg her before she accepted to go with me. (CL 2)

I can tell you categorically that most of our elders do not like to go for orthodox medical services, so they do not like to go for medical checkup. Many of them rely on traditional medicine, and that does not need much diagnostic equipment to discover an illness; so, they go for the medicine only at the time that they have signs of illness. (CL 6)

The data shows that the elderly do not enjoy seeking medical healthcare, especially in the orthodox system for some reasons that need to be adequately unearthed and addressed.

Table 2: Responses on where the elderly visited when they last sought healthcare services in FCT

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Clinic	103	27.4
Doctor's private practice	15	4.0
Traditional healer	90	23.7
Spiritualist	81	21.5
Over-The-Counter Drugs (OTC)	86	23.4
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 2 shows that the elderly across communities in the FCT, though do not like to go for medical checkup regularly, do prefer clinics to other health facilities when they decide to seek medical attention. A sizable number of the respondents visited clinics (27.4%) when they last went for medical healthcare services. However, 90, of the respondents went to

traditional healers or herbalists (23.7%), others use over-the-counter-drugs (23.4%), and many visited spiritualists (21.5%) when they last sought medical attention is a worrying trend that need not be ignored since many of those facilities are not certified. This implies that despite the fact the elderly prefer orthodox medical institutions, a sizable number of them still go for alternative healthcare services when it comes to seeking medical attention which may not be unconnected to the issue of accessibility and affordability of the various medical services by which they go for the ones they can easily access and or afford. The qualitative information confirms the above discovery as a community leader from Bwari area council notes:

No one can rule out the fact that the elders would love to patronize the orthodox medical institutions, but in reality that is not what they do. Many of them still go to herbalist for medical checkup or visit prophet and Imams for diagnosis and treatment. I think, they prefer where they can be able to afford, not that they are unaware of the efficacy of the orthodox medical system when compared to the alternative healthcare services. (CL 1)

A medical officer interviewed from Kwali General Hospital in Kwali area council states *this*

One thing I have carefully observed since I was posted to place since early last year is that, the elders do not patronize this health facility like they do in Asokoro where I am coming from. Even when they do, we usually admit very older people from 80 years who hardly take decision by themselves. I feel strongly that many elderlies in this community prefer alternative health care facilities to this orthodox system, which is not too good because it is here that you can find certified medical practitioners necessary to handle the health challenges facing the elderly. (MO 5)

This qualitative information indicates that the alternative healthcare services is still very significant in the eyes of the elderly when it comes to seeking medical attention despite the level of civilization and improvement in the professional, orthodox medical services over the years.

Constraints faced by the elderly in accessing professional healthcare services in FCT

This section presents data in relation to the challenges facing the elderly when it comes to accessing professional health care services in FCT.

Table 3: Responses whether respondents have ever declined to seek professional help due to lack of fund in FCT

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	244	64.9
No	132	35.1
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 3 reveals that the elderly's major barrier to seeking professional medical services as discovered in tables 2 and 3 barrier of seeking professional medical service is attributed to financial constraint, linked to inability to foot bills. An overwhelming 64.9% of the respondents noted that they have declined to seek professional healthcare in the FCT because of lack of fund. This implies that the professional medical solutions are available but the elderly are unable to afford the charges imposed, which is one major reason why they

might have been consulting unprofessional healthcare service providers. Qualitative data supported the information retrieved above. Majority of the informants noted that money to pay medical charges of professional healthcare service providers is a major factor that discourages the elderly from seeking professional medical solutions in the FCT. A community leader interviewed from Kuje area council states:

You can't talk of professional healthcare services for the elderly and not put the issue of funds into consideration. Many of the elderly in this community have no source of income. Some of them are pensioners that have not been paid for many years. It is not all of them that have well-to-do family members to carter for their health needs. So, most of the times, they do not think of seeking professional help at all when they are seek because they know they have no means to fund the bills that will follow. (CL 4)

A medical officer interviewed from Gwagwalada also buttressed the above findings. In his words:

I have had occasion to interact with some elderly to know what really is their complain about utilizing this facility and there are two major complains. The first is the issue of money. Many of them told me that our charges are high, but I wonder how. This is because this is government facility and we do not charge them much. They only get drugs and pay for bed and few other services. I think, the problem is the high level of poverty among the elderly, which is not even uncommon to them. Another complain is about the attitude of our nurses. Some of them complained of being disrespected, and we are working on that. (MO 2)

This revelation is vital in this study since Nigeria is currently the poverty capital in the world and the elderly are more vulnerable. It implies that until the poverty situation is addressed, resistance to professional healthcare services, especially by the elderly, will continue.

Table 4: Responses if respondents were once denied professional healthcare due to accessibility in FCT

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	208	55.3
No	168	44.7
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 4 reveals that access to professional healthcare services is another major barrier to receiving professional help by the elderly in the FCT. Majority (55.3%) of the respondents stated that they have been denied professional healthcare service in FCT because they lack access. The implication of this is that as long as many of the elderly in FCT are located in rural communities, they will continue to have difficulty experiencing professional healthcare services. The above information was buttressed by majority of the informants interviewed, as they noted that access to orthodox healthcare facility is a major barrier to the elderly's need and utilization of professional health care services. A medical officer from Abaji notes:

I don't think the elderly do not like professional healthcare services that we offer them here. Many of them have no means to get to us here; that I am sure. Many of the elderly people live in remote places that they cannot even have access to vehicles to bring them down to this place, and facilities are not located in those remote places. Even if you send healthcare expert to such places, they will not like to go. (MO 6)

Table 5: Respondents' opinion on how long it takes for them to get to the nearest healthcare centre in their locations in FCT

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 30 minutes	82	21.8
Between 30 minutes to 1 hour	107	28.5
Between 1 hour to 2 hours	158	42.0
Above 2 hours	29	7.7
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 5 shows that the elderly across rural communities in the six area councils of the FCT are not having it easy accessing professional healthcare services due to distance and inadequate transportation facility, as seen in (42.0%) of the respondents taken 1 to 2 hours before they can access the nearest healthcare centre to their locations. The implication of this is that many elderly people may have suffered severe damages before they get to the closest healthcare facility, and that would discourage many others from bothering to seek professional help, but rely on alternative healthcare services that are readily available and located closer to them irrespective of the consequences.

Table 6: Respondents' means of transportation to the nearest health centre in FCT

Means	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Vehicle	114	30.3
Tricycle	207	55.1
Trekking	55	14.6
Total	376	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 6 shows that, not only are the elderly having it hard to access professional healthcare facilities across communities in the FCT, but they have no reliable means of transportation to those locations since majority of the respondents noted that they use tricycle to get to the nearest health care centre. The implication of this is that, many elders whose health are very fragile might not have been taken to hospital for treatment because they cannot possibly afford the tricycle means of transportation and cannot trek due to distance / their fragile health, to the healthcare centres. This can be discouraging.

Discussion of Major Findings

The objective of this study was to examine the hinderances to health seeking behaviour among the elderly in FCT. The study discovered that fund remains the major factor hindering the elderly from seeking professional healthcare services across communities in the FCT. The situation is so severe that some 64.9% had declined to seek professional help healthcare in the FCT because of lack of fund in the past. Apart from declining to seeking professional health care for lack of funds, majority (55.3%) of the elderly were found to have been denied professional healthcare service in FCT because they lack access. Many of the elderly people live in remote places that will take between 1 to 2 hours before they can get to orthodox health care facility, and more pathetic is that many of them can only get to such facility by the means of tricycles. The above discovery confirms the result of earlier study in which regular drug stockouts, high service costs, and a long commute to medical facilities were shown to be hindrances to professional health-seeking behaviors (Chukwuneke, Ezeonu, Onyire, Ezeonu, Ifebunandu & Umeora, 2012). According to Anderson's theory, age of d elderly, location, accessibility & financial constraints will definitely influence. HBM, perceived vulnerability or proneness to complications due to the delicacy of the age of the

elderly will definitely influence the decision to utilize the best possible healthcare both for emergencies or routine checks; hence, the distance to the orthodox health facility may discourage the elderly from using the professional healthcare solutions and depend on the available ones that are nearby to be able to meet up with their health emergencies. To proffer policy for behavioural change, the study observed that no palpable measure have been put in place for the elderly to receive health care services across the communities, which agrees with Tanye, Andre and Mbah (2018) that one of Nigeria's biggest problem in the face of the nations rapid demographic shift is creating policies and selecting staff who can address the complex requirements of the nations aging population as well as its current social priorities.

Conclusion and recommendation

In line with objectives of study, it discovers many hinderances to elderly's desire to seek professional healthcare services across the six area councils of the FCT. The first constraint is the inability of the elderly to foot medical bills or pay for charges of professional healthcare providers in FCT. Many elderly like to be treated by private Doctors or in private clinics, but they do not have the means to foot the bills, so they opt for alternative healthcare services. Another constraint faced by the elderly is the location of the health facilities run by professionals. Primary health centres and tertiary healthcare service providers are located in city centres which are difficult for the elders that live in rural communities to access. More pathetic is that there are not viable means of transportation to those health facility in city centres; the most significant and affordable means of transportation to those facilities is tricycle which is not convenience for the elderly to travel with. Some of the elders would have to travel for between 1 to 2 hours before accessing healthcare centres run by professionals, and traveling with tricycle may complicate their health situation, hence the rely on alternative healthcare services located nearer to them.

The government should partner with the media, both private and public, to embark on enlightenment campaign about the need for the elderly to rely on orthodox medical solutions, detailing the efficacies of the orthodox system and the danger of relying on non-certified alternative healthcare services. Such programmes should be run on regular basis using television, radio and social medial platforms on regular basis. This will help family members, friends and community to make informed decisions concerning their Government should make health care centers accessible & affordable. Provide health centers, well equipped & staffed strictly for the elderlies, this will also minimize wait in hospitals. Government should also subsidize health service rendered to the elderlies and make transportation available to commute the health care centers

References

- Anderson, R,M.(1995). Revisiting the behavioural model and access to medical care: Does it matter? *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour* ,36(1), 1-10
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0009.2005:00428>.
- Adebusoye LA., Ladipo, MM., Owoaje, ET. & Ogunbode AM. (2011). Morbidity pattern amongst elderly patients presenting at a primary care clinic in Nigeria. *Africa J Prim Health Care Fam Med*. 3(1):211.
- Adewoye, K.R., Aremu, S.K., Ekpo, D.S., Akanbi, S.A. Ibrahim, T. (2021) Health Seeking Behavioural Practices of the Elderly in Rural Community of Ekiti State, South-western Nigeria. *Research Square*; DOI: 10.21203/rs.3.rs-1149361/v1.

- Alabi, T & Atureta, R.O (2026) Nature of Health Seeking Behaviour Among the Elderly in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
- Anderson, R. M. (1968). A behavioural Model of Families Use of Health Services. Centre for Health Administration Studies, University of Chicago
- Baral, R & Sapkota, P. (2018). Health Seeking Behaviour among Elderly People of Barar Bharatpur Municipality of Chitwan District, Nepal. *Journal of College of Medical Sciences – Nepal*, Vol. 14, No. 3 207 – 218.
- Berlu, X; Siyu M. Teckiang, T; Anne, Y; Danana, G; Qiushi; F (2020) Belief and use of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Shanghai Older Adults: A Cross Sectional Study. *BMC Complementary Medicine and Therapies* <https://doi.org/10.1186/S/2906-020-02910-x>
- Cadmus, EO., Adebuseye, LA., Olowookere, OO., Oluwatosin, OG., Owoaje, ET. & Alonge, TO. (2017). A descriptive study of the morbidity pattern of older persons presenting at a Geriatric Centre in Southwestern Nigeria. *Niger J Clin Pract.* 20(7):873-878.
- Chukwuneke, F.N., Ezeonu, C.T., Onyire, B.N., Ezeonu, P.O., Ifebunandu, N. and Umeora, M.C. (2012) Health Seeking Behaviour and Access to Health Care Facilities at the Primary Level in Nigeria: Our Experience. *Ebonyi Medical Journal*, 11, 51-57
- Editorial Health Seeking Behaviour in Context. 2023. Available from: <http://www.ajol.info/index.php/eamj/article/viewFile/8689/1927> .
- Farrow, FL. (2010). Overutilization and Underutilization of Preventive Services in Elderly populations: a Conundrum. *Marquette Elders Advis.* 12:103.
- Feyisa, B. B., Deyaso, S. F., & Tefera, G. M. (2020). Self-Reported Morbidity and Health-Seeking Behavior and its Predictors Among a Geriatric Population in Western Ethiopia: Community-Based Cross-Sectional Study. *International journal of general medicine*, 13, 1381–1393. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10539927/>
- Ihaji, E., Gerald, EU. & Ogwuche, CH. (2014). Educational level, sex and church affiliation on health-seeking behaviour among parishioners in Makurdi metropolis of Benue state. *JEPER*.1:311–6. 7.
- Irwan, AM., Kato, M., Kitaoka, K., Kido, T., Taniguchi, Y. & Shogenji, M. (2016). Self-care practices and health-seeking behavior among older persons in a developing country: Theories-based research. *Int J Nurs Sci.* 3:11-23.
- Latunji, OO. & Akinyemi, OO. (2018). Factors Influencing Health-Seeking Behaviour among Civil Servants in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Ann Ibd Pg Med.* 16(1): 52-60.
- MacKian S. (2003). A review of health seeking behaviour: problems and prospects. *Health Systems Development Programme.*
- National Bureau of Statistics (2021). Statistical Report on Women and Men in Nigeria, 2020. Available at: file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/2020_ReportWomenMen_August2021.pdf
- Neal, A. (2023). Healthcare Definitions & Types. Study.Com. Available at: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/health-care-definition-overview.html>
- Richelle, J. (2015). Health seeking behaviour. Available at <https://wiki.ubc.ca/index.php?title=>
- Saba, M. (2016). Health seeking behaviour among the aged in Niger State, Nigeria. Open access institutional repository at Ahmadu Bello University. 3.

- Samuel M. M. & Philip, A. A. (2019) Nature of Health Care Seeking Behaviour Among the Elderly/Aged in Kokona Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. *Journal of Good Governance and Sustainable Development in Africa*, Vol. 5(i); 71 – 85.
- Tanyi, P.L., André, P. and Mbah, P. (2018). Care of the elderly in Nigeria: Implications for policy. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311886.2018.1555201>
- Teo, K., Churchill, R., Riadi, I., Kervin, L., Wister, A. V., & Cosco, T. D. (2022). Help-Seeking Behaviors Among Older Adults: A Scoping Review. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 41(5), 1500-1510.
- Tile, W. S. (2018). Medical Sociology: 'Impact on Human Health Care Delivery System and Utilization. Inaugural Lecture Committee: University of Abuja.
- Uchendu OC, Ilesanmi OS, Olumide AE. (2013). Factors influencing the choice of health care United Nations (2012) UNFPA report. <https://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2012/UNFPA-Report-Chapter1.pdf>
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)(2012). Aging in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and a Challenge: New York. Available at <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/ageing-twenty-first-century>
- Joao P M, (2013). Basic definition of gerontology, university of Liverpool, England. Kaplan. M., Kiernan N.E., and James L. (2006). Intergenerational family conversations and decision making about eating healthfully. 38: p. 298-306.
- Kaur, S. (2009), Interventions that can Reduce Inappropriate Prescribing in the Elderly: a Systematic review. *Drugs Aging*. 26(12): p. 1013-28
- Okoye, U. O. (2012). Family Care-Giving for Ageing Parents in Nigeria: Gender Differences, Cultural Imperatives and the Role of Education. *International Journal of Education and Ageing* 2 (2), 139-154



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Anayo, Raphael O. (2026). "Machiavelli's Conception Of Political Order And Its Relevance To Contemporary African States." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 218-228.

Article

Open Access

MACHIAVELLI'S CONCEPTION OF POLITICAL ORDER AND ITS RELEVANCE TO CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN STATES

Raphael Onyeji Anayo

Directorate of General Studies, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria

ORCID: 0009-0007-0989-3035

Corresponding Email: raphaelonyeji@gmail.com

Abstract

This article looks into Niccolò Machiavelli's ideas about political order and how they relate to modern African nations. This article therefore illustrates that this perspective is still pertinent to today's African states, where issues like weak institutions, corruption, leadership failures, political unrest, and disputed elections continue to hinder effective governance. It also highlights that Machiavelli's focus on managing political conflict through institutions provides a valuable lens for examining the dynamics of political competition, freedom, and stability in African contexts. This posits that Machiavelli's view of political order goes beyond just maintaining government authority or quelling political disputes. In his key works, especially *The Prince and Discourses on Livy*, he suggested that political order relies on strong institutions, wise leadership, the balancing of competing political interests, and the nurturing of environments where political communities can thrive. However, achieving political order in contemporary Africa faces numerous challenges, such as fragile institutions, patronage systems, socioeconomic disparities, corruption, electoral fraud, and a lack of accountability. The article concludes therefore that Machiavelli's political insights can serve as a helpful analytical tool for enhancing political order in Africa, especially when thoughtfully adapted to fit today's constitutional and democratic realities.

Keywords: Machiavelli, Political Order, Political Conflict, Institutions, Leadership, Corruption, African States, Democracy.

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

Introduction

The issue of political order is a key topic in political philosophy. Every political community faces the challenge of figuring out how to establish, maintain, and ensure a stable authority that allows for collective living. This becomes even more crucial in societies where political institutions are shaky, competition is fierce, and the legitimacy of those in power is often questioned. So, it's not just about how political power is gained; it's also about how to organize political authority in a way that makes coexistence possible. Niccolò Machiavelli (1409-1527) holds a significant spot in the history of political thought due to his deep engagement with this issue. Writing during the politically tumultuous times of Renaissance Italy, Machiavelli was focused on what it takes for states to survive, institutions to last, and communities to avoid falling apart. His ideas are often linked to themes of power, manipulation, coercion, and the harsh realities of political necessity. However, this view doesn't fully capture his understanding of political order. In works like the *Discourses on Livy*, Machiavelli offers a richer perspective where institutions, political participation, conflict, liberty, and civic engagement are crucial for the survival of a political community. Machiavelli's insights remain relevant today as he challenges us to see politics not just through the lens of idealistic views of human behaviour. Political actors are driven by a mix of competing interests, ambitions, fears, and desires. Therefore, political institutions need to be crafted with these complexities in mind. A political community that tries to ignore ambition doesn't make it disappear; instead, it risks letting ambition run wild outside of any institutional framework. From this standpoint, achieving political order means creating systems that can effectively manage these competing interests. This insight is incredibly important for modern African nations. Since achieving independence, many African countries have made remarkable progress in areas like constitutional development, electoral politics, regional integration, and democratic governance. Yet, the continent is still grappled with significant challenges, such as institutional weaknesses, corruption, political instability, electoral disputes, executive overreach, socioeconomic inequalities, and the concentration of political power. The African Union's Agenda 2063 emphasizes democratic governance, the rule of law, robust institutions, and transformative leadership as essential goals for the continent.

At the same time, citizens across Africa are demonstrating strong support for democratic governance, even while expressing frustration with the performance of various political institutions. For example, a survey by Afrobarometer conducted across 39 African nations found that 66 percent of respondents preferred democracy over any other form of government, but only 37 percent felt satisfied with how democracy operates in their countries. The report links this dissatisfaction to issues like corruption, weak accountability, flawed electoral processes, and a culture of impunity. These findings suggest that the challenge for many African states isn't a rejection of political order or democracy itself, but rather the struggle to establish institutions that can deliver effective, accountable, and legitimate governance. This article explores Machiavelli's perspectives on political order and assesses their relevance for today's African states. It argues that Machiavelli provides a useful framework for understanding political order as a product of institutional capacity, effective leadership, the management of political conflict, and the control of corruption. The article doesn't suggest that contemporary African states should simply mimic Machiavelli's political ideas. Instead, his insights are employed as analytical tools to gain a deeper understanding of the current landscape. The discussion unfolds across seven sections. After this introduction, the second section delves into Machiavelli's view on political order. The

third section looks at political conflict, institutions, and the concept of liberty. In the fourth section, we explore political leadership, the idea of virtù, and the issue of corruption. The fifth section serves as the heart of the article, focusing on how Machiavelli's ideas about political order apply to modern African states. The sixth section highlights the key factors that hinder political order in these contemporary contexts. Finally, the last section wraps up the argument, bringing everything together.

Machiavelli's Conception of Political Order

Machiavelli's view of political order came from his clear break with political theories that start with an idealized vision of humans and society. He based his approach on what he calls the "effectual truth" of political life. This means that political analysis should kick off with how people actually act, rather than what we think they should do. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli pointed out that rulers who try to act virtuously in every situation might end up jeopardizing their own power, since political realities often demand choices that traditional morality would frown upon (Machiavelli 1998). However, this political realism doesn't imply that Machiavelli saw political order as just arbitrary control. Instead, he believed that political institutions and leaders need to effectively navigate the complexities of ambition, conflict, self-interest, fear, and competition. A political system that can't handle these dynamics is at risk of becoming unstable. In *The Prince*, the survival of the state is a key political issue. Machiavelli consistently questioned how rulers can gain, keep, and secure their political power. Political authority must be strong enough to prevent chaos and fend off external threats. Without solid authority, laws can't be enforced reliably, and political institutions can't operate effectively. Thus, the state needs political power that can ensure security. Yet, Machiavelli's idea of order evolves further in the *Discourses on Livy*. While *The Prince* focused heavily on gaining and maintaining political power, the *Discourses* shifted its attention to republican institutions, civic engagement, liberty, and the long-term stability of political communities. This shows that for Machiavelli, political order isn't just about subjects obeying their rulers.

The difference between security and liberty is crucial to understand. A political community might feel secure under a strong government, but that doesn't necessarily mean its citizens enjoy true political freedom. Machiavelli's preference for a republican system highlights a richer vision of political order, where citizens actively engage in political life and various social forces are woven into the fabric of institutional arrangements. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* echoes this by pointing out Machiavelli's distinction between a basic order focused on security and a more comprehensive constitutional order that emphasizes liberty and political participation. For Machiavelli, laws and institutions are of great significance. Political institutions create consistent ways for authority to be exercised and for political disagreements to be resolved. A political community can't rely forever on the personal traits of a ruler. Even a wise and brave leader can't ensure the stability of a political order if the state's institutions are fragile. This idea is particularly clear in Machiavelli's analysis of Rome. The Roman Republic thrived not because there was no conflict, but because political strife was integrated into its institutional framework. The ambitions of the powerful and the people's desire to avoid oppression could be channeled through these institutions. In this sense, maintaining order didn't mean eradicating disagreement; it meant organizing it. Thus, political order in Machiavelli's view is inherently dynamic. It must adapt to ever-changing political landscapes. An institution that works well in one situation might falter in another. Both political leaders and citizens need to be able to recognize these shifts and respond accordingly. This ability is closely tied to Machiavelli's

idea of virtù, which encompasses not just moral integrity but also political skill, prudence, and courage. Machiavelli's conception of political order can consequently be understood through four connected elements: effective political authority, institutional capacity, the regulation of political conflict, and political adaptability. Order requires authority capable of enforcing law; institutions capable of regulating political interests; mechanisms capable of accommodating conflict; and leadership capable of responding to changing circumstances. Political order is thus neither pure coercion nor passive stability. It is an organised condition in which political forces are sufficiently regulated to prevent the destruction of the political community.

Political Conflict, Institution and Liberty

One of the key ideas that Machiavelli brought to the table in political thought is his perspective on political conflict. While traditional views often see conflict as a sign that political organization has failed, Machiavelli flipped that notion on its head. In his work, the *Discourses*, he points out that the clashes between the Roman nobility and the plebeians actually played a crucial role in shaping Roman liberty. So, rather than viewing the famous struggle between the "great" and the "people" as merely a threat to political stability, we should see it as something more complex. Machiavelli made a clear distinction between harmful conflict and conflict that is managed through established institutions. Conflict turns dangerous when political players can't or won't pursue their goals through legitimate means. However, when institutions offer recognized pathways for different interests to be voiced, conflict can actually breathe life into the political landscape instead of tearing it apart. This idea lies back to Machiavelli's insights into the varying political aspirations of different social groups. The elite often seek to dominate, while the common people mainly wish to avoid being dominated. This clash of desires creates tension, but it can also lay the groundwork for political checks and balances. If one group holds unchecked power, the risk of domination rises. Yet, if competing factions can keep each other in check through laws and institutional frameworks, it can ultimately enhance political freedom.

The Roman tribunes serve as a significant example of how institutional mechanisms can represent plebeian interests, effectively turning social conflict into a vital part of republican governance. Rather than eradicating conflict, it was structured into an institutional framework. The takeaway here isn't that political societies should aim for a state of constant harmony, but rather that they should develop institutions that allow for disagreements to happen without tearing apart the political community. This has crucial implications for our understanding of liberty. Machiavellian liberty goes beyond just the absence of government interference; it encompasses the ability of citizens to engage in public matters and to stand against oppression. A political system that enforces obedience while sidelining citizens from meaningful participation may seem stable on the surface, but it falls short of true republican liberty. Thus, institutions play a pivotal role in balancing conflict and order. Strong institutions don't wipe out political competition; instead, they lay down the rules that govern how that competition unfolds. Legislatures, courts, electoral bodies, political parties, local governments, civil society organizations, and independent media all serve as channels through which political interests can be expressed and debated. This institutional perspective sheds light on why Machiavelli is far more complex than the typical portrayal of him as a cold-hearted political strategist. While he acknowledges the importance of power, he also warns about the perils of unchecked authority. A ruler who wipes out all opposition might achieve a fleeting sense of peace, but in doing so, they risk undermining the very institutions that are crucial for lasting political stability.

Political order, then, hinges on finding a balance between authority and contestation. Authority is essential because a political community needs enforceable rules to function. On the flip side, contestation is vital since unchecked authority can easily slip into tyranny. Institutions serve as the framework that allows these two elements to coexist harmoniously.

The implications of this argument for modern political theory are significant. Democracy shouldn't be seen merely as the absence of conflict. Instead, it encompasses elections, legislative debates, judicial reviews, opposition politics, public critique, and activism within civil society—all of which are forms of political contestation. The real challenge lies in ensuring that this contestation is kept within institutional boundaries. Machiavelli's impact lies in reshaping our understanding of political order. It's not just about a calm political atmosphere. A society that's politically engaged can have significant disagreements yet still maintain institutional stability. On the flip side, a society might seem peaceful because dissent is stifled, but it could be hiding deep instability just below the surface. In a more robust sense, political order demands institutions that can turn conflict into legitimate political competition. This perspective is especially crucial when we look at modern African states.

Political Leadership, Virtù and Corruption

Political leadership plays a crucial role in Machiavelli's view of political order. If political leaders lack the ability or willingness to support institutions, those institutions simply can't function properly. However, Machiavelli also recognized that institutions can't rely solely on the character of individual rulers for the long haul. The connection between leadership and institutions is a two-way street: skilled leaders can build and reinforce institutions, while robust institutions can help keep harmful leadership in check. At the heart of this relationship is Machiavelli's idea of *virtù*. It's important to note that *virtù* doesn't mean virtue in the traditional Christian or moral sense. Instead, it refers to the traits that allow political figures to effectively navigate their circumstances. This includes qualities like prudence, courage, decisiveness, strategic thinking, adaptability, and the ability to spot both opportunities and threats. Political leadership demands the skill to act decisively even when the situation is uncertain. This perspective is particularly relevant for today's states, as political order often hinges on leadership choices made during crises. Leaders may face challenges like political violence, economic troubles, institutional conflicts, social rifts, or threats to constitutional governance. Being an effective leader goes beyond just being popular; it requires the ability to make decisions that protect both institutions and the political community as a whole. Yet, Machiavelli also offered insights into the risks of political leadership becoming too personal. When rulers start to equate the state with themselves, institutions can slowly turn into tools for personal gain. Public offices might transform into ways to reward political loyalty, and political competition can shift from a debate over public policies to a battle for access to state resources.

This issue is deeply tied to Machiavelli's thoughts on corruption. Corruption isn't just about individual dishonesty; it signifies a more profound decline within the political community, where personal interests overshadow public institutions and civic duty. When both citizens and political leaders stop valuing the common political framework, it leaves institutions open to manipulation. So, corruption has an institutional aspect to it. A corrupt political system isn't just filled with corrupt individuals; its very structure can create incentives that push political actors to chase personal gain. Laws might be enforced selectively, public resources could be allocated based on political loyalty, and public offices may turn into tools for patronage. Restoring political order, therefore, goes beyond just

swapping out individual officeholders. It calls for institutional reforms that can shift the incentives fueling corruption. Political leaders need to operate under institutional constraints, public officials must be held accountable, and citizens should have real ways to challenge abuses of power. Machiavelli's insights highlight a crucial link between leadership, institutions, and political order. While effective leadership is essential, relying solely on personal rule can be perilous. Political capability is important, but it should focus on upholding institutions rather than turning them into means of personal control. Political order thrives best when leadership and institutional frameworks support each other instead of working against one another.

Relevance of Machiavelli's Political Order to Contemporary African States

Machiavelli's ideas about political order are especially pertinent to today's African states, where many political issues revolve around the dynamics of authority, institutions, political conflict, leadership, and corruption. However, it's important to note that his insights shouldn't be seen as a blueprint for replicating Renaissance political practices. Instead, their true value lies in the analytical lens they offer for understanding how political order can be built and maintained. To start, Machiavelli's focus on the importance of effective institutions resonates strongly with African nations. While political constitutions may lay out frameworks for legislatures, courts, electoral commissions, local governments, and other bodies, simply having these institutions on paper doesn't ensure they function well. For political order to thrive, we need institutions that can operate independently and reliably. Machiavelli taught us that political stability hinges not just on having laws but on the ability to enforce them effectively. This aligns with the goals set forth by the African Union. Agenda 2063 emphasizes the need for capable institutions, transformative leadership, democratic governance, justice, and the rule of law as key components of Africa's envisioned political landscape. Machiavelli's political philosophy underscores the significance of these aims, illustrating that political order cannot rely solely on constitutional promises without the necessary institutional strength to back them up. Furthermore, Machiavelli's views on managing political conflict are relevant to the democratic landscape in Africa. In diverse societies, political disagreements are inevitable. Various ethnic, religious, economic, regional, generational, and ideological groups will vie for political power. Therefore, the goal of political order shouldn't be to eradicate these disagreements. Instead, we should aim to integrate them into legitimate political institutions. This becomes particularly crucial in states where political rivalry can turn intensely personal. When elections are seen as life-or-death battles, where winning means gaining unfettered access to power and losing could mean being cut off from state resources, political competition can become quite destabilizing. Machiavelli's insights suggest that we need to reshape political competition into a process that is both predictable and legitimate.

So, competitive elections, independent electoral bodies, effective legislatures, judicial review, the freedom to associate, and peaceful opposition aren't threats to political stability. When they work as they should, they actually help maintain political order. They provide competing groups with legitimate ways to pursue their political goals and lessen the temptation to achieve those goals through unconstitutional means. Additionally, Machiavelli's views on political ambition and elite control are particularly relevant to the challenges posed by political elites in modern African states. Political elites are naturally driven to seek influence, resources, and power. The real issue isn't the existence of political ambition; it's that political institutions might not be doing enough to keep it in check. A well-functioning constitutional framework should ensure that political ambition is channeled into

legitimate public competition. Tools like term limits, transparent political financing, parliamentary oversight, judicial independence, independent electoral commissions, and a free press can all act as safeguards against the rise of unchecked political power. These ties back to Machiavelli's idea that political systems need to stop any one group from gaining enough power to take over the whole political landscape. In today's African nations, this doesn't mean we have to recreate the Roman constitution. Instead, it calls for creating checks and balances that fit within the framework of modern constitutional democracy. Moreover, Machiavelli's thoughts on corruption and the decline of institutions are highly relevant to the political climate in Africa. When public institutions fall into the hands of private interests, the state's legitimacy and effectiveness take a hit. People might start seeing public office as a way to enrich themselves rather than serve the community. This shift erodes trust in the government and makes citizens less inclined to support public institutions. Thus, the need for accountability goes beyond just ethical concerns. It's a fundamental aspect of maintaining political order. When public officials are aware that their power is subject to legal and institutional oversight, they have fewer chances to misuse public authority for personal gain. Recent evidence backs up this connection. Findings from Afrobarometer show that while support for democracy remains relatively strong in the surveyed countries, there's a notable level of dissatisfaction with how democracy is functioning. Issues like corruption, lack of accountability, subpar elections, and impunity are among the top concerns. Machiavelli's insights shed light on the challenges that can undermine democratic satisfaction. His framework illustrates how failures in political institutions can pose serious threats to the stability of a political system. When these institutions falter in regulating power, citizens may start to lose faith in the entire political structure.

Moreover, Machiavelli's ideas about political leadership are still incredibly relevant today. African nations need leaders who can rise above narrow personal, ethnic, regional, or party interests. True political leadership involves the ability to uphold institutions, even when those institutions might limit the immediate benefits for those in power. This is where Machiavelli's notion of *virtù* comes into play. Effective leaders must embody qualities like prudence, adaptability, courage, and the wisdom to differentiate between short-term political gains and the long-term welfare of the community. A leader who prioritizes personal power by dismantling institutions for quick wins may end up undermining the state in the long run. The key takeaway for modern African leaders isn't to adopt a Machiavellian approach in the sense of being manipulative or ruthless. Instead, it's about assessing political leadership based on its ability to uphold and enhance the institutions that are vital for maintaining political order. Lastly, Machiavelli's views on the balance between order and liberty are crucial for democratic governance in Africa. It's important to remember that political stability shouldn't come at the expense of political freedom. A government that stifles opposition, limits political engagement, or undermines independent institutions might achieve a superficial sense of calm, but that calm could very well be a sign of repression rather than true political order. Machiavelli's ideas are incredibly relevant for Nigeria and other African nations facing political and institutional instability. Take Nigeria, for instance; it has a constitutional democracy with a range of formal political accountability institutions; but how effective are these institutions when it comes to actual practice? The challenge isn't just about creating new institutions; it's about strengthening the ones we already have so they can truly fulfill their constitutional roles.

This ineffectiveness of political institutions resonates throughout the African

continent as well. African nations are remarkably diverse, each boasting its own unique history, political systems, economies, social structures, and democratic experiences. It wouldn't be fair to generalize the entire continent with a single political perspective. Yet, Machiavelli's core insight remains relevant: a stable political order hinges on institutions that can manage political interests and prevent the dangerous concentration of power that threatens the political community. In essence, Machiavelli's perspective on political order can be boiled down to a crucial idea: African political stability doesn't hinge on eradicating political conflict or unchecked competition. Instead, it requires institutions capable of transforming conflict and competition into legitimate, predictable, and constructive political processes. This might just be the most vital lesson that Machiavelli's political philosophy offers to modern Africa. The relevance of Machiavelli's conception therefore, isn't about offering a one-size-fits-all political blueprint but rather about inspiring a thoughtful exploration of how political power and institutional order interact. When political ambition is kept in check by robust institutions, conflict can be directed through legitimate channels, leadership can prioritize the public good, and corruption can be curbed. In such an environment, political order is much more likely to thrive. On the flip side, when these elements are missing, political authority becomes vulnerable.

Limiting Factors to Political Order in Contemporary African States

While Machiavelli's ideas on political order offer some valuable insights, the reality in contemporary African states presents unique challenges that can hinder the establishment and upkeep of political order. These challenges vary across the continent, and it's important not to pin African political issues on a single cause. However, there are several recurring themes that warrant special attention. First up is institutional fragility. You might find that political institutions exist on paper, but they often lack the necessary resources, independence, professional expertise, or political autonomy to function effectively. As a result, courts, legislatures, electoral bodies, public administrations, and regulatory agencies may struggle to enforce rules consistently. When these institutions can't fulfill their constitutional roles, political actors are more likely to sidestep them. This fragility also breeds uncertainty. Citizens may be left wondering if legal rules will be applied fairly, while political elites might decide that personal connections and influence matter more than following formal procedures. This unpredictability undermines the stability that political order relies on. The second key factor is the prevalence of patronage and personalized politics. In environments where access to state resources is closely tied to political loyalty, competition can devolve into a battle for control over these resources. Political parties may turn into tools for elite mobilization rather than platforms for presenting diverse policy ideas. Consequently, public appointments might be swayed more by political loyalty than by actual competence. Such arrangements can really undermine the process of institutionalization because personal loyalty often takes precedence over loyalty to the rules laid out in the constitution. This can make political transitions particularly shaky, as changes in government might be seen as shifts in who gets access to economic and political opportunities.

The third factor at play is corruption. Corruption chips away at political order by eroding trust in public institutions and misdirecting public resources from their intended uses. It can also lead to unequal access to political power, where wealthy individuals and organized groups gain advantages that regular citizens simply don't have. So, corruption has effects that go beyond just economic inefficiency. It can seriously damage the legitimacy of political institutions. When people frequently encounter bribery, a lack of accountability, selective enforcement, or the misuse of public resources, they may start to view state institutions as

tools for private gain rather than as representatives of public authority. The fourth factor is electoral manipulation and the challenges that come with contested political transitions. Elections are meant to be peaceful ways to determine who holds political power. However, when electoral institutions lack credibility or the processes are seen as unfair, elections can actually heighten political instability instead of resolving it. Disputed election results can really shake people's trust in constitutional politics and push political players to look for ways outside the established system. The real issue isn't the competition itself; it's the lack of reliable methods to manage that competition effectively. Next up is the fifth factor: socioeconomic inequality and poverty. You can't completely separate political order from the living conditions of citizens. When inequality runs rampant, it can spark political grievances, erode trust in institutions, and create an environment where political elites can easily rally vulnerable groups through patronage or appeals based on identity. Poverty can also limit citizens' ability to engage in political life. Those who are struggling to meet their basic needs might find themselves more susceptible to political incentives and less capable of holding public officials accountable. So, for a stable political order, we need not just effective political institutions but also social conditions that allow for genuine citizenship.

The sixth factor is weak accountability. Political institutions become fragile when public officials can wield power without proper oversight. Accountability goes beyond just having elections every few years. Legislatures, courts, oversight agencies, journalists, civil society groups, and citizens all need real chances to examine and question public authority. The significance of accountability is evident in current African public opinion. According to Afrobarometer's 2024 flagship findings, citizens still back democratic ideals but are worried about how political institutions are performing, especially regarding accountability and the integrity of elections. This points to the fact that to strengthen political order, we need to focus not just on the democratic framework but also on how well accountability institutions are functioning. The seventh factor to consider is the political and social fragmentation present in Africa. The continent is home to a rich tapestry of ethnic, linguistic, religious, regional, and socioeconomic diversity. While diversity itself isn't inherently a threat to political stability, it can become a challenge when political institutions fail to create inclusive ways to manage these differences. Additionally, when political elites exploit social identities for their own gain, it exacerbates the situation. The solution isn't to erase this diversity but rather to build political institutions that can effectively handle it. Approaches like federalism, decentralization, power-sharing, inclusive political representation, constitutional rights, and independent institutions can offer peaceful avenues for managing these differences when applied appropriately. Moreover, a weak commitment to constitutional rules is a significant barrier to political order. The stability of a political system relies on the belief that political actors will adhere to the established rules regarding how power is obtained and exercised. When constitutional provisions are twisted to prolong political tenure, suppress opposition, or weaken institutional checks, it undermines the credibility of the constitutional framework. These challenges highlight that the political order in modern African states can't be understood just by looking at the quality of individual leaders. Factors like institutional strength, socioeconomic conditions, electoral processes, and constitutional integrity all play a crucial role in shaping political outcomes. To achieve lasting political order, there needs to be a comprehensive effort towards strengthening institutions, ensuring accountable leadership, fostering credible political competition, and promoting social inclusion. It's important to note that these factors shouldn't be seen as universal traits of all African nations. The continent is incredibly diverse, showcasing examples of strong institutions,

peaceful political transitions, democratic growth, and efficient public administration. The goal of highlighting these factors is more about diagnosis than stereotypes; they point to recurring issues that can undermine political stability when they become deeply rooted.

Conclusion

In this article, we've explored Machiavelli's views on political order and how they relate to modern African states. We've argued that Machiavelli's perspective is much more nuanced than the common perception of him as just a proponent of ruthless power. While the importance of political authority and law enforcement is clear in his work, especially in *The Prince*, his *Discourses on Livy* present a wider view that includes institutions, political conflict, civic engagement, freedom, and the fight against corruption as key elements for the longevity of political communities. We've demonstrated that Machiavelli doesn't see political conflict as inherently at odds with political order. When managed properly, conflict can actually enhance political freedom by preventing any one group from dominating and ensuring that various interests have legitimate channels for expression. This understanding is particularly relevant for today's African states, where political competition shouldn't be viewed as a threat to order just because it leads to disagreements. The main challenge is to make sure that these disagreements occur within trustworthy political and constitutional frameworks. Thus, Machiavelli's relevance to contemporary Africa primarily lies in his focus on institutional strength, the management of political ambition, effective leadership, and the interplay between political order and freedom. These themes resonate significantly with current issues facing the continent. At the same time, the quest for political order in modern African nations faces significant hurdles, including weak institutions, corruption, patronage politics, electoral fraud, socioeconomic disparities, lack of accountability, political fragmentation, and a failure to adhere to constitutional norms. It's important to recognize that these issues shouldn't be seen as universal traits of African politics, but rather as persistent challenges that can undermine political institutions when they become deeply rooted.

The main point of the article is that achieving lasting political order goes beyond just having a stable government. A state might silence opposition and create a temporary sense of calm, but that doesn't equate to true political order. For a strong political order to exist, there needs to be institutions that can wield authority while still being held in check by the law; political competition that allows for disagreement without leading to chaos; leaders who can adapt to changing situations without turning public institutions into tools for personal gain; and citizens who can engage meaningfully in the political process. While Machiavelli's political theories can't fully explain contemporary African democracy due to the vastly different historical and political backdrop from which they arose, his insights into power, institutions, conflict, leadership, and corruption still hold significant relevance. When thoughtfully adapted rather than rigidly applied, his ideas offer a valuable framework for understanding how African states can turn political competition into stable institutions and transform political authority into a legitimate and lasting order. The key takeaway is not that African nations need stronger rulers, but rather that they need political institutions robust enough to manage power, flexible enough to allow for legitimate conflict, and accountable enough to maintain a shared public order within the political community.

References

- African Union. 2015. *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*. Addis Ababa: African Union.
- Afrobarometer. 2024. *African Insights 2024: Democracy at Risk – The People's Perspective*.

- Accra: Afrobarometer.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. 1998. *The Prince*. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. 1996. *Discourses on Livy*. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. 1988. *The Art of War*. Translated by Christopher Lynch. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Pettit, Philip. 1997. *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Pocock, J. G. A. 1975. *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Skinner, Quentin. 2002. *Visions of Politics, Volume II: Renaissance Virtues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skinner, Quentin. 1978. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume I: The Renaissance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Viroli, Maurizio. 1998. *Machiavelli*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 4 (September, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: August 21, 2026 Accepted: September 14, 2026 Published: September 30, 2026

Citation: Nkana, Nsikan-Abasi S. & Peters, Prospect I. (2026). "Television Coverage and Citizen Attitude Towards the State of Emergency in Rivers State, Nigeria." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (4): 229-244.

Article

Open Access

TELEVISION COVERAGE AND CITIZEN ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

Nsikan-Abasi Sam Nkana ¹ & Prospect Isobeye Peters ²

Department of Broadcasting, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, University of Uyo, Nigeria ^{1 & 2}

Corresponding Email: nnsikanabasi@yahoo.com ¹

Abstract

This study examined television coverage of the 2025 state of emergency in Rivers State, Nigeria, and its influence on citizens' attitudes and guided by the Framing theory and Uses and Gratifications theory. Adopting a mixed-methods design, the study combined a descriptive survey of 399 residents of Rivers State, selected through multistage sampling across Port Harcourt, Obio-Akpor and Bonny. The content analysis involved 40 television reports on the emergency, drawn from Channels Television (14 reports) and Rivers State Television, RSTV (26 reports), broadcast between 18 March and 17 September 2025. Structured questionnaire data were analysed using frequency distributions, percentages and mean scores with an average mean of 2.50. Findings showed that both stations gave the emergency extensive and sustained coverage (grand mean of 2.99), and that residents were highly exposed to this coverage (grand mean of 2.98), relying on television as a primary source of information, with 47.4 percent watching television news daily. Coverage moderately shaped citizens' understanding of the crisis (grand mean of 2.80) and was generally perceived as credible (grand mean of 2.71). However, respondents felt the coverage lacked balance across competing viewpoints, and the item was rejected at 2.45 mean. The coverage also produced measurable emotional and psychological effects with a grand mean of 2.84, heightening awareness, concern and anxiety, without correspondingly building confidence in government's handling of the crisis. It also revealed that television framing emphasised on security and the restoration of order (grand mean of 2.72) and encouraged compliance with directives, but did not translate into increased political support

Copyright © 2026 By JPPSS. Publishers: Omega Books

This is an open access article which permits unrestricted use provided the work is properly cited.

for the emergency measures. Both hypotheses were accepted, confirming significant relationships between exposure and attitude, and between framing and support. The study concludes that, for Rivers State residents television functions primarily as an information and sense-making resource rather than a persuasive instrument for political consent. It recommends greater balance, transparency, and conflict-sensitivity in future crisis broadcasting.

Keywords: Television Coverage, Citizens Attitude, State of Emergency, Framing, Crisis Communication.

Introduction

Television remains one of the most influential mass communication platforms, shaping public understanding of political and social events through its combination of audio, visual and narrative elements (McQuail, 2010). Its real-time reporting capability positions it as the preferred medium for crisis coverage (Norris, 2010), while its dramatic visuals, expert commentary and live field reporting can evoke strong emotional responses that shape political attitudes (Gross & Brewer, 2007). A state of emergency is among the most consequential declarations a democratic government can make. It alters civil liberties, increases security presence and disrupts everyday routines for affected communities, making the manner in which it is communicated central to how citizens judge its legitimacy and necessity (Patterson, 2013). Rivers State, given its economic significance as a major oil-producing state and its history of socio-political tension, offers a particularly instructive context for examining this dynamic. When a state of emergency is declared, residents depend on trusted media sources, chief among them television, to interpret events, and the framing, tone and prominence of coverage can shape whether audiences perceive government intervention as protective or as an overreach (Tamuno, 2011; Entman, 1993). In a media environment where political affiliation and selective exposure influence which channels citizens trust (Stroud, 2008), understanding how coverage from a private national broadcaster and a state-owned regional broadcaster jointly shaped public attitude is of direct relevance to both media practice and crisis governance in Nigeria.

The State of Emergency in Rivers State

The state of emergency declared in Rivers State in March 2025 was the culmination of a prolonged political crisis that began shortly after the inauguration of Governor Siminalayi Fubara in 2023. A political disagreement between Fubara and his predecessor, Nyesom Wike, produced divisions within the Rivers State House of Assembly, legislative deadlock, impeachment threats and judicial interventions that raised concerns about governance and political stability (Reuters, 2025; Associated Press, 2025). The crisis deepened following the destruction of the Rivers State House of Assembly complex in December 2023, which remained so more than a year after, and a Supreme Court ruling of 28 February 2025 which found that constitutional governance in the state had effectively broken down. Rivers State's strategic position in the oil-producing Niger Delta added a security dimension, as rising incidents of pipeline vandalism were linked by security analysts to the weakened coordination that accompanied the political impasse. In response, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu declared a state of emergency on 18 March 2025 pursuant to Section 305 of the 1999 Constitution, suspending Governor Fubara, Deputy Governor Ngozi Odu and members of the House of Assembly for an initial six months, while retired Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas was appointed Sole Administrator. In his national broadcast, the President argued that the cumulative effect of political paralysis, constitutional violations and security threats

endangered both Nigeria's democratic order and its economic stability (Tinubu, Presidential Address, 2025). Emergency rule was lifted on 17 September 2025 following reported reconciliation among the key political actors, restoring Governor Fubara and the House of Assembly to office.

Profile of Channels Television

Channels Television is one of Nigeria's leading independently owned broadcast stations, established in 1995 by veteran journalist John Momoh during Nigeria's transition toward democratic governance and growing calls for press freedom. Unlike stations built around entertainment programming, Channels adopted a news-centred model anchored on accuracy, balance and ethical reporting, which helped it build credibility in a media environment often criticised for sensationalism and political interference (Oso, 2012). Headquartered in Lagos with correspondent bureaux across Nigeria and in international locations, the station operates a 24-hour news and current affairs service and has repeatedly won the Nigerian Media Merit Award for Television Station of the Year, reflecting its standing as a benchmark for professional broadcast journalism in Nigeria (Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2017).

Profile of Rivers State Television (RSTV)

Rivers State Television is a state-owned station operating from Port Harcourt on UHF channel 22, established under the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation created by Edict No. 8 of 1973 to inform, educate and promote cultural identity in the region (Sika, 2005). Commencing transmission in 1985 and upgrading its reach in 1991, RSTV's signal extends across Rivers State and into neighbouring states, and its programming is also carried on GOtv's free-to-air platform. As a public service broadcaster, RSTV's mandate extends beyond entertainment to civic engagement and the dissemination of government information, positioning it as a central channel through which the Sole Administrator's activities and messaging reached residents during the emergency period (Asemah, 2011; Ire, 2025).

Statement of the Research Problem

Despite television's centrality as a source of political information in Nigeria, empirical evidence on how citizens interpreted media coverage of the State of Emergency in Rivers State remains limited. Existing works on the crisis has examined newspaper framing (Ayara, Amadi, Dike & Njoku, 2025) and media workers' self-assessments of their own peace-journalism practice (Eguruze, Akarika & Mboho, 2025), but neither directly measures how television audiences in Rivers State understood, trusted, or emotionally responded to coverage of the emergency, nor whether such coverage translated into support for the government's intervention. This gap matters because sensational visuals, repetitive breaking news and politically inflected framing can heighten fear, anxiety or distrust among viewers even as coverage informs them (Nabi, 2003; Holman, Garfin & Silver, 2014), and because stories of political polarisation in Rivers State may intensify these effects. Therefore, to what extent did television coverage affect citizens' attitude towards the state of emergency in Rivers State?

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives were to: (i) determine the extent of television coverage of the state of emergency in Rivers State; (ii) examine the extent to which citizens were exposed to this coverage; (iii) determine the extent to which the coverage influenced citizens' attitudes toward the declaration; (iv) find out citizens' perceptions of the credibility of the television

reports; (v) find out the emotional and psychological effects of the coverage on residents; and (vi) identify the relationship between television framing and citizens' level of support for government emergency measures.

Research Questions

The following questions are pertinent for this study: (i) What was the extent of television coverage of the state of emergency in Rivers State? (ii) To what extent were citizens exposed to the coverage? (iii) To what extent did the coverage influence citizens' attitude towards the declaration? (iv) How did the citizens perceive the credibility of the reports? (v) What were the emotional and psychological effects of the coverage on residents? (vi) What is the relationship between television framing and citizens' level of support for government emergency measures?

Significance of the Study

The study is significant to government and policy makers seeking to design clearer, more transparent crisis communication strategies capable of enhancing public trust and reducing misinformation. It is significant to media practitioners, offering empirical evidence on how reporting style, framing and tone shape audiences' emotional and psychological responses, which can inform more responsible and ethical crisis reporting. For scholars and students of mass communication and political communication, the study contributes context-specific evidence from Rivers State. Finally, it is significant to the general public, since highlighting how coverage shapes attitude and emotion during emergencies promotes media literacy and more critical engagement with televised information.

Delimitations of the study

The study was delimited to two television stations, Channels Television and Rivers State Television (RSTV), and to adult regular television viewers resident in Rivers State during the period of the emergency (18 March to 17 September 2025). The findings are therefore most directly generalisable to Rivers State and could be extended cautiously to other Nigerian states with different media ecologies.

Review of Related Literature

This section situates the study within existing scholarship on television as a mass medium, citizen attitude formation, and the nature of states of emergency, before reviewing empirical work on the emotional, framing, credibility, agenda-setting and government-relations dimensions of crisis coverage, related studies on the Rivers State crisis specifically, and the two theories anchoring the study.

- i. **Television Coverage:** Television combines audio and visual elements to reach large audiences effectively, enhancing message retention and rendering complex political developments accessible to the general public (McQuail, 2010). In Nigeria, where literacy levels and access to alternative media vary widely, television remains a primary information source, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas, and its capacity for immediate, real-time dissemination positions it as the preferred medium for reporting political crises (Norris, 2010). Beyond information delivery, television functions as a socialising agent that transmits political norms and can frame government action as either legitimate or controversial (McQuail, 2010), while its persuasive power stems from its ability to combine images, sound and narrative in ways that evoke emotional attention and recall (Gross & Brewer, 2007). Nigeria's expanding broadcast networks and satellite penetration have widened television's reach (Akinfeleye, 2008), even as

regulatory oversight by bodies such as the National Broadcasting Commission and the commercial pressures of a competitive industry can both constrain and distort crisis reporting (Umechukwu, 2004).

- ii. **Citizen Attitude:** Citizen attitude refers to the opinions, beliefs, perceptions and evaluations individuals hold regarding political issues and government action, shaped by both cognitive engagement with information and the affective, emotional responses that information generates (Lee, 2020; Ajzen, 2020). Media exposure is among the most significant influences on attitude formation in modern societies: through repeated exposure to news reports and discussion, citizens develop perceptions that shape how they evaluate political actors and interventions (Lee, 2020). In this study, citizen attitude denotes the opinions, feelings and evaluations held by Rivers State residents concerning the declaration of the state of emergency and its presentation on television, manifesting as support, opposition, trust, concern or fear regarding the measures adopted.
- iii. **State of Emergency:** A state of emergency is a legal mechanism allowing governments to exercise extraordinary powers to address threats to national security, public order or political stability, intended in democratic contexts to be temporary and constitutionally constrained (Ferejohn & Pasquino, 2004). Because such measures typically limit civil liberties, their acceptance depends heavily on citizens' perception of necessity, proportionality and legal grounding (Gross & Ní Aoláin, 2006). Public trust in government institutions is a key determinant of attitudes toward emergency measures, and television plays a central role in shaping that trust by informing citizens of the reasons for, and expected outcomes of, an emergency declaration (Norris, 2010). Historical grievances and political affiliation further mediate how citizens in politically tense contexts such as Rivers State interpret emergency declarations (Tamuno, 2011), making responsible, contextualising coverage particularly consequential.
- iv. **Emotional and Psychological Effects of Media Exposure:** Audiovisual media exposure carries measurable emotional and psychological consequences. Repeated exposure to threatening information can heighten perceived risk and vulnerability (Witte, 1992), and extensive coverage of traumatic or unsettling events has been linked to acute stress reactions (Holman, Garfin & Silver, 2014). At the same time, sustained exposure can also produce desensitisation, in which initial fear gives way to habituation over the course of prolonged coverage (Oliver & Woolley, 2010). Framing mediates these emotional effects: coverage emphasising security and resilience tends to reassure viewers, while coverage emphasising chaos or blame heightens anxiety (Entman, 1993), and these emotional responses interact with cognitive appraisal to shape citizens' judgements about the necessity and legitimacy of government intervention (Slovic, 2000).
- v. **Media Framing in Television Reporting:** Framing refers to the selection and emphasis of particular aspects of an issue to promote a specific interpretation (Entman, 1993). In television, framing operates through language, visuals, source selection and story structure, and can alter audience opinion even where the underlying facts remain constant (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Frames commonly identified in crisis coverage include conflict, human interest, responsibility and security frames (Iyengar, 1991); during a state of emergency, dominant security framing tends to foreground the seriousness of the situation, while responsibility framing assigns credit or blame to political actors. Because audiences are more receptive to frames consistent with pre-existing beliefs (Druckman, 2004), framing effects are moderated by citizens' prior trust in government and in the broadcaster itself.

- vi. **Media Credibility and Public Trust:** Credibility, which incorporates accuracy, reliability and lack of bias, is central to whether televised crisis information translates into public compliance (Meyer, 1988). Audiences evaluate credibility along dimensions of accuracy, professionalism, objectivity and transparency of sourcing (McQuail, 2010; Coombs, 2015), and perceived bias or political alignment, a persistent concern in Nigeria's polarised media landscape, can erode public confidence even when factual accuracy is otherwise high (Hanitzsch et al., 2018). Because state-owned and privately owned broadcasters often occupy different positions in this credibility landscape, comparing their coverage offers useful insight into how ownership shapes both content and audience trust.
- vii. **Crisis and Emergency Communication, and Agenda-Setting:** Effective crisis communication reduces uncertainty, guides public behaviour and maintains trust between authorities and citizens (Coombs, 2015). Television's immediacy makes it a primary channel for such communication, but its effectiveness depends on the timeliness, clarity and consistency of the information conveyed (Covello, 2010). Television additionally performs an agenda-setting function: by repeatedly emphasising an issue, broadcasters increase its perceived importance to audiences, independent of whether opinions about the issue shift (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). During the Rivers State emergency, the intensity and duration of coverage across both stations plausibly ensured that governance and security issues remained highly salient in public discourse, even where coverage did not directly alter political allegiance.
- viii. **Television, Government-Media Relations and Political Legitimacy:** Government-media relations are characterised by mutual dependence: governments rely on media to disseminate information while media rely on government access for credible reporting (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). State-owned broadcasters often align coverage with official narratives, emphasising stability and government responsiveness, while privately owned broadcasters retain greater latitude for critical or investigative reporting (Folarin, 2002). This dynamic bears directly on political legitimacy: citizens' perception that government action is lawful, effective and justified is shaped by how television frames enforcement, transparency and accountability (Norris, 2010; Easton, 1965). Coverage that conveys organised, responsive governance tends to strengthen perceived legitimacy, while opaque or inconsistent coverage can erode it, a distinction directly relevant to comparing Channels Television's national vantage point with RSTV's position as an organ of the state government under emergency administration.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Ayara, Amadi, Dike and Njoku (2025) examined how The Guardian, Punch and Vanguard covered the Rivers State political crisis between October 2023 and October 2024, finding out that Conflict/Power framing dominated Peace/Resolution framing across 312 sampled editions. Anchored on Conflict Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory, the study demonstrated newspapers' tendency to foreground elite competition. However, being confined to print media does not examine broadcast coverage or link content patterns to audience attitudes, a gap the present study addresses by focusing on television and measured citizen response. Eguruze, Akarika and Mboho (2025), surveying 320 media workers using Agenda-Setting and Peace Journalism theories, found that while some coverage of the 2025 crisis supported peacebuilding through collaboration with civil society, a substantial share, 78 percent by respondent estimate, was sensationalised rather than conflict-sensitive, reflecting structural weaknesses including limited peace-journalism training and political intimidation of

journalists. The study offers valuable insight into production-side constraints but does not explore how audiences interpreted the resulting coverage. Hanwa, Nuhu, Muhammad and Abdulkadir (2025) investigated audience perception of broadcast coverage of security agitation in Kaduna State using a descriptive survey of 364 respondents, finding generally positive perceptions of broadcast media's contribution to public safety awareness. The study is useful for establishing that Nigerian audiences broadly value security-related broadcast coverage, but it addresses security agitation rather than a formally declared state of emergency and does not link perception to specific attitudinal outcomes such as compliance or political support.

Opeyemi, Eke and Ofome (2025) examined public perceptions of President Tinubu's emergency declaration in Rivers State through qualitative interviews with communication experts, political analysts, journalists and members of the public, anchored in Situational Crisis Communication Theory. They found that government's own communication strategy was predominantly reactive, limiting public confidence and complicating efforts to counter misinformation. Because the study centres on government public relations rather than independent television coverage, and relies on expert testimony rather than direct audience measurement, it leaves open the question this study investigates: how television coverage itself, independent of government messaging, shaped citizen attitude. Collectively, these studies establish that the Rivers State crisis received substantial print, broadcast-worker and government-communication attention, and that Nigerian audiences generally value security-related broadcast coverage, but none directly measures the relationship between television content and citizen attitude toward the emergency specifically. This is the gap the present study fills.

Theoretical Framework

- i. **Framing Theory:** Introduced by Goffman (1974) and adapted to media studies by Entman (1993), Framing Theory holds that individuals interpret reality through cognitive frames, and that media select and emphasise particular aspects of events to promote a specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation or treatment recommendation. Episodic frames, which focus on discrete events, tend to generate stronger emotional reactions than thematic frames, which situate events within broader context (Iyengar, 1991). Thus, the framing of government and institutional actors as competent or coercive, shapes legitimacy perceptions directly (Reese, 2007). Framing Theory is directly relevant here because it explains how the same underlying facts, the declaration, administration and lifting of emergency rule, could be rendered by Channels Television and RSTV in ways that differently foregrounded security necessity, political conflict or administrative competence, with consequences for how citizens interpreted the crisis.
- ii. **Uses and Gratifications Theory:** Developed by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974), building on earlier work by Herzog in the 1940s, Uses and Gratifications Theory shifts attention from what media do to people toward what people do with media, treating audiences as active participants who select media to satisfy cognitive, affective, social-integrative, personal-integrative and tension-release needs (Ruggiero, 2000). During a crisis, several needs typically dominate, as citizens actively turn to television for updates on security measures and legal directives (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985). This theory accounts for the high levels of exposure recorded in this study as the product of active audience choice rather than passive media exposure, and because differing

gratifications are sought, help explain why the same coverage could simultaneously inform, reassure and unsettle different viewers.

Methodology

Research Design: The study adopted a mixed-method research design combining content analysis and a descriptive survey. This approach was chosen because the study sought to examine both the content of television coverage and citizens' attitudinal responses to it; content analysis systematically identified patterns of coverage, framing, tone and prominence, while the descriptive survey collected quantitative data on residents' perceptions and attitudes. Mixed-methods designs are considered suitable for studies integrating media content with audience response (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Population of the Study

The population comprised two groups. For content analysis, the population consisted of all news reports, bulletins, current affairs programmes and special broadcasts relating to the state of emergency aired by Channels Television and Rivers State Television (RSTV) during the six-month emergency period (18 March to 17 September 2025); based on the monitoring schedule of the two stations over this 184-day period, an estimated 368 relevant items constituted the population. For the survey, the population consisted of 4,120,000 adult residents of Rivers State aged 18 and above who are exposed to television news and eligible to form opinions on governance issues.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

For content analysis, the study adopted a census of all retrievable reports available through the stations' official digital archives, websites and social media platforms during the study period, yielding 40 usable items: 14 from Channels Television and 26 from RSTV. For the survey, sample size of 399 was determined using the Taro Yamane (1973) formula for finite populations. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed: the researcher purposively selected three urban centres, Port Harcourt, Obio-Akpor and Bonny, for their high concentration of television viewers and accessibility, then selected individual respondents within households using simple random sampling to ensure proportional representation of gender, age and socio-economic background.

Instrument for Data Collection

The main instrument was a structured questionnaire, the Television Coverage and Citizens' Attitudes Questionnaire (TCCAQ), divided into two sections: Section A collected demographic information (age, gender, education, occupation, senatorial district and frequency of watching television news), while Section B measured extent of coverage, exposure, influence on attitudes, perceived credibility, and emotional/psychological effects using items structured on a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was self-administered with the assistance of trained research assistants.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

The questionnaire copies were submitted to experts in Mass Communication and research methodology for critical evaluation. Their observations regarding relevance, clarity, appropriateness and comprehensiveness were incorporated into the final instrument. In Reliability of the Research Instrument a pilot study was conducted with 30 respondents from urban communities not included in the main sample. The resulting data were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha reliability testing using SPSS version 25. The analysis produced a reliability

coefficient of 0.95, indicating that the instrument demonstrated acceptable consistency, and therefore reliable.

Content Analysis Coding Procedure

Each of the 40 sampled television items was coded with the unit of analysis, covering individual news stories, bulletin items, feature reports, interviews, discussion segments or current-affairs items relating to the emergency. Coding captured identification variables (station, and type of programme: news bulletin, current affairs programme, interview, special report/documentary, or discussion programme); extent-of-coverage variables (length of story, categorised as under 2 minutes, 2–5 minutes, or over 5 minutes; and frequency of mention); prominence variables (placement within the bulletin, from lead story to end segment; and visual prominence, rated high, moderate or low); the dominant frame employed (security, political conflict, responsibility, human interest, economic consequences, peace/conflict-resolution, etc); overall tone (positive/supportive, neutral/balanced, or negative/critical); the categories of source quoted (government officials, security agencies, political party representatives, community leaders, civil society organisations, legal experts, ordinary citizens, or traditional rulers); and the story's directional stance toward the emergency measures (supportive, neutral, or critical) alongside its main substantive focus (security and law enforcement, political developments, governance issues, public reactions, economic implications, human rights concerns, etc). This coding scheme allowed the qualitative pattern, notably the contrast between Channels Television's multi-actor, chronologically structured coverage and RSTV's administrator-centred emphasis, to be traced systematically rather than impressionistically.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher and trained assistants administered the questionnaire directly to respondents, explaining the purpose of the study to ensure informed consent and assuring participants of anonymity and confidentiality. Completed questionnaires were retrieved immediately or within one week to minimise loss or incomplete responses.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage and mean, to summarise responses and describe exposure, perceived credibility and attitude. An average mean of 2.50 was used to determine acceptance or rejection of each item and construct, consistent with a four-point Likert scale.

Questionnaire Data Presentation and Analysis

i. Extent of Television coverage of the State of Emergency

Table 2. Extent of Television Coverage of the State of Emergency

Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
Television stations provided frequent reports	145 (580)	158 (474)	61 (122)	35 (35)	3.03	Accept
News received prominent attention	139 (556)	164 (492)	58 (116)	58 (38)	3.01	Accept
Stations provided regular updates	148 (592)	155 (465)	59 (118)	37 (37)	3.04	Accept
Reports offered detailed explanations	128 (512)	149 (447)	77 (154)	45 (45)	2.90	Accept
Discussions/programmes extensively covered the issue	136 (544)	153 (459)	69 (138)	41 (41)	2.96	Accept

All five items measuring extent of coverage exceeded the average mean of 2.50 and were accepted. This pattern suggests that television prioritised frequency and prominence of coverage over depth of contextual explanation.

Table 3. Exposure to Television Coverage of the State of Emergency

Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
Frequently watched relevant television programmes	141 (564)	156 (468)	64 (128)	38 (38)	3.00	Accept
Followed television updates regularly	149 (596)	151 (453)	61 (122)	38 (38)	3.03	Accept
Spent considerable time watching reports	126 (504)	163 (489)	70 (140)	40 (40)	2.94	Accept
Watched more television than usual	132 (528)	155 (465)	72 (144)	40 (40)	2.95	Accept
Television was a major source of information	144 (576)	149 (447)	65 (130)	41 (41)	2.99	Accept

Exposure was similarly high across all five items. Respondents most strongly agreed they followed television updates regularly (3.03) and relied on television as a major information source (2.99), consistent with active, need-driven media use during the crisis period.

Table 4. Influence of Television Coverage on Citizens' Attitudes

Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
Coverage influenced my opinion about the state of emergency	138 (522)	156 (468)	67 (134)	38 (38)	2.99	Accept
Television information affected my perception of government's actions	134 (536)	161 (483)	65 (130)	39 (39)	2.98	Accept
Reports shaped my understanding of the reasons for the emergency	145 (580)	153 (459)	62 (124)	39 (39)	3.01	Accept
My attitude changed after watching television coverage	95 (380)	102 (306)	131 (262)	71 (71)	2.55	Accept
Coverage influenced my level of support or opposition	79 (316)	101 (303)	140 (280)	79 (79)	2.45	Reject

Four of the five items were accepted as their rate of agreement was above an average of 2.50. Television most strongly shaped respondents' understanding of the reasons for the declaration. Critically, the item asking whether coverage influenced respondents' level of support or opposition to the emergency was rejected (mean = 2.45), indicating that television shaped comprehension of events more than it shaped political allegiance.

Table 5. Perceived Credibility of Television Reports

Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
Reports were accurate and reliable	121 (484)	168 (504)	69 (138)	41 (41)	2.92	Accept
Journalists reported the emergency objectively	83 (332)	112 (336)	127 (254)	77 (77)	2.50	Accept
Coverage presented balanced views on the emergency	74 (296)	105 (315)	138 (276)	82 (82)	2.43	Reject
I trust the information provided by television stations	125 (500)	162 (486)	71 (142)	41 (41)	2.93	Accept
Sources cited in reports were credible and verifiable	112 (448)	145 (435)	90 (180)	52 (52)	2.79	Accept

Four of the five items on Table 5 were accepted, being above 2.5 average mean and confirmed the credibility of television reports on the emergency. However, the claim that coverage presented balanced views across competing perspectives (mean = 2.43), was rejected.

Table 6. Emotional and Psychological Effects of Television Coverage

Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
Coverage made me feel more informed about events	151 (604)	162 (486)	52 (104)	34 (34)	3.08	Accept
Reports created feelings of anxiety or fear	102 (408)	139 (417)	98 (196)	60 (60)	2.71	Accept
Coverage increased my concern about security and governance	144 (576)	154 (462)	63 (126)	38 (38)	3.01	Accept

Reports influenced my discussions with others	138 (552)	159 (477)	65 (130)	37 (37)	3.00	Accept
Coverage gave me confidence in government's ability to manage the situation	72 (288)	101 (202)	144 (288)	82 (82)	2.41	Reject

Four of the five items were accepted as shown on Table 6. This means that emotional and psychological effects on residents were above average. The item asking whether coverage gave respondents confidence in government's ability to manage the situation was rejected (mean = 2.41), the lowest mean recorded in the entire study.

Table 7. Television Framing and Support for Government Emergency Measures

Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	D (3)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
Reports presented the emergency primarily as a security measure	149 (596)	154 (462)	58 (116)	38 (38)	3.04	Accept
Coverage emphasised government's responsibility to restore order	142 (568)	157 (471)	61 (122)	39 (39)	3.01	Accept
Reports highlighted benefits of the emergency more than drawbacks	88 (352)	104 (312)	136 (272)	71 (71)	2.52	Accept
Presentation increased my support for government actions	75 (300)	98 (294)	145 (290)	81 (81)	2.42	Reject
Framing influenced my willingness to comply with directives	91 (364)	117 (351)	126 (252)	65 (65)	2.59	Accept

Four of the five items were accepted on the table. The statement on whether the manner of presentation increased respondents' personal support for government actions was rejected (mean = 2.42). This distinguishes shaped understanding from political endorsement.

Presentation of Content Analysis Data

The content analysis traced how each station covered the emergency across its full six-month duration. Data from Channels Television and Rivers State Television (RSTV) are hereby presented and analysed.

Table 8. Sample of Channels Television Stories on the Rivers State Emergency

S/N	Story Title	Date
1	Tinubu Declares State of Emergency in Rivers, Suspends Fubara	18 Mar 2025
2	What Really Led to State of Emergency in Rivers State?	18 Mar 2025
3	Reactions Trail Fubara's Removal, State of Emergency	19 Mar 2025
4	Senate Approves Emergency Rule in Rivers	20 Mar 2025
5	National Assembly Backs Rivers Emergency Rule	Mar 2025
6	Coalition of Lecturers Backs Tinubu's State of Emergency in Rivers	24 Apr 2025
7	Stakeholders Debate as State of Emergency Remains Three Months On	20 Jun 2025
8	Tinubu Meets Fubara, Wike, Rivers Assembly Members	Jun 2025
9	Wike, Fubara Speak After Reconciliation Meeting	Jun 2025
10	Rivers People Not Happy but Waiting for End of State of Emergency	22 Jul 2025
11	Rivers LG Elections Conducted Under Emergency Administration	Aug 2025
12	Fubara, Amaewhule Resume as Tinubu Ends Emergency Rule in Rivers	17 Sep 2025
13	End of Rivers Emergency Rule a Breath of Fresh Air	17 Sep 2025
14	Tinubu Ends Emergency Rule in Rivers	17 Sep 2025

Channels Television's 14 sampled reports are presented on Table 8. The coverage opened with the declaration itself and its immediate political reactions, including legislative and stakeholder responses. The reported reconciliation efforts between Fubara and Wike, as well as the Rivers Assembly in June 2025, are covered. It closed with the restoration of democratic governance in September 2025, reflecting a broadly chronological, event-driven structure that tracked the crisis from rupture through resolution.

Table 9. Sample of RSTV Stories on the Rivers State Emergency

S/N	Story Title	Date
1	Presidential Declaration of State of Emergency in Rivers State	18 Mar 2025
2	Ibas Meets Labour, Assures of Sustained Welfare Packages to Rivers Workers	30 Apr 2025
3	Nigerian Senate Constitutes 18-Man Committee to Oversight Rivers Emergency Rule	6 May 2025
4	Ibas Declares Open 4-Day Training Workshop for Rivers Civil Servants	19 May 2025
5	Tinubu Transmits Rivers 2025 Budget of N1.481trn to National Assembly	22 May 2025
6	Administrator Calls for Stronger Prosecution of Oil Thieves	23 May 2025
7	I'll Return to Office Soon, Says Fubara	29 May 2025
8	Democracy Day: Fubara Reaffirms Commitment to Rule of Law	12 Jun 2025
9	Rivers Remains Willing Partner for Enhanced Maritime Operations – Ibas	23 Jun 2025
10	We Need Total Reconciliation to Move Forward – Fubara	28 Jun 2025
11	Ibas Advocates Tailored Socioeconomic Projects for Community Needs	29 Jul 2025
12	Ibas Pledges Support to Rural Electrification Agency	7 Aug 2025
13	Administrator Reaffirms Commitment to Nutrition Security	12 Aug 2025
14	Inclusive Dialogue Restoring Political Calm in Rivers – Ibas	14 Aug 2025
15	Ibas Approves Reconstitution of Eight Boards, Councils	14 Aug 2025
16	Courtesy Call by House of Representatives Ad-Hoc Committee	14 Aug 2025
17	Ibas Launches Flood Sensitisation Campaign	15 Aug 2025
18	"Serve Selflessly, Leave Legacies" – Ibas Charges NYSC Corps Members	20 Aug 2025
19	"Serve With Integrity, Innovation" – Ibas Tells Newly Inaugurated Boards	22 Aug 2025
20	Administrator Meets Labour, LG Administrators Ahead of Elections	29 Aug 2025
21	Ibas Monitors LG Polls, Describes It as Peaceful	30 Aug 2025
22	Ibas: Human Capital Is Our Biggest Investment	3 Sep 2025
23	My Mandate: Re-Establish State Institutions – Ibas	12 Sep 2025
24	Rivers Transition to Democratic Governance Thanksgiving Service Announced	13 Sep 2025
25	I've Planted Seeds of Love and Peace, Nurture Them – Ibas	14 Sep 2025
26	Rivers State Stabilised, Can Be a National Model of Good Governance – Ibas	17 Sep 2025

RSTV's 26 sampled items (Table 9) present a remarkably different emphasis: after an initial report on the presidential declaration, coverage concentrated overwhelmingly on the Sole Administrator's activities, welfare interventions, infrastructure commitments, board reconstitutions and appeals for reconciliation and unity, with comparatively little attention to political conflict or dissenting perspectives. This pattern is consistent with the literature's observation that state-owned broadcasters tend to align coverage with official government narratives (Folarin, 2002). This offers a plausible explanation for respondents' simultaneous trust in television's accuracy and their rejection of the claim that coverage was balanced across competing viewpoints (Table 5).

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: What was the extent of television coverage of the state of emergency in Rivers State?

Television stations were found to have reported the emergency extensively and consistently, a finding corroborated by the content analysis, tracking both stations from the initial declaration to the eventual restoration of governance. Stories sampled indicate that Channels Television reported fourteen (14) stories between the 17th of March 2025, when the emergency was declared, and 18th of September when it ended (Table 8). Similarly, Table 9 indicates that Rivers State Television (RSTV) reported twenty six (26) stories within the same period. Also in Table 2 respondents indicated very high extent of coverage by stations with all 5 statements accepted at the Weighted Mean Score (WMS) of between 2.90 and 3.04. This is consistent with the agenda-setting logic, whereby repeated media emphasis increases an issue's perceived importance to audiences (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Entman,

1993), and mirrors Ayara et al.'s (2025) finding of heavy print coverage of the same crisis. This suggests the emergency received sustained attention across Nigeria's media ecology.

Research Question 2: To what Extent were Citizens exposed to the Coverage?

Citizens' exposure to this coverage was correspondingly high as indicated in Table 3. All 5 statements were accepted with television serving as a major information source for most respondents. The statements were accepted within the Weighted Mean Score (WMS) of between 2.94 and 3.03, above the Average Mean Score of 2.50. This means that their exposure was extensive and above average. This pattern aligns with the Uses and Gratifications theory which says in part that facing political uncertainty, citizens actively sought television as a surveillance tool to satisfy information needs (Katz et al., 1974). This is also consistent with Nwabueze and Ebeze's (2013) observation that Nigerians intensify reliance on broadcast media during periods of national uncertainty.

Research Question 3: To what Extent did the Coverage influence Citizens' attitude towards the Declaration?

The most consequential finding concerns the gap between television's influence on citizens' understanding and its influence on political support. This distinction suggests that framing, as Scheufele (1999) argues, shapes how citizens think about an issue rather than dictating what position they take on it. Audiences appear to have processed televised information critically rather than adopting it wholly. Table 4 indicates that apart from the 2.45 below average mean score rejected by respondents, the other 4 statements were accepted at the WMS of between 2.55 and 3.01. This is consistent with de Vreese's (2005) account of frames as interpretive resources rather than persuasive instructions. This finding also qualifies Opeyemi, Eke and Ofome's (2025) observation that government's crisis communication was reactive and inconsistent, even as the coverage did not generate active political support.

Research Question 4: How did the citizens perceive the credibility of the report?

The credibility findings cut in two directions simultaneously. In Table 5, respondents trusted the accuracy, reliability and sourcing of coverage, yet clearly rejected the claim that the coverage presented balanced views across competing perspectives. Four (4) of the statement on perceived credibility were accepted at the WMS of between 2.50 and 2.93, while the 2.43 below average mean score was rejected, echoing Eguruze et al.'s (2025) finding that a majority of media workers themselves perceive crisis coverage as sensationalised rather than conflict-sensitive. The content analysis offers a plausible explanation: RSTV's heavy concentration on the Sole Administrator's activities and welfare messaging, set against Channels Television's more chronologically balanced, multi-actor coverage, suggests that the balance deficit respondents perceived may derive disproportionately from the state-owned station's alignment with government (Folarin, 2002), even as its factual reporting was still broadly trusted.

Research Question 5: What were the emotional and psychological effects of the coverage on residents?

The emotional findings heightened awareness and concern, and for many respondents anxiety, without a corresponding increase in confidence in government's handling of the crisis. Table 6 shows that one statement was rejected at a mean score of 2.41, while 4 were accepted at the WMS of between 2.71 and 3.08. These are consistent with Nabi's (2003) account of crisis coverage as an emotionally consequential experience distinct from its informational function, and support Holman, Garfin and Silver's (2014) broader observation

that repeated crisis exposure carries a measurable affective cost. That television succeeded in informing residents while failing to build confidence in government, suggests that Rivers State residents were able to distinguish sharply between being informed about a crisis and being reassured by it.

Research Question 6: What is the relationship between television framing and citizens' level of support for government emergency measures?

Findings on Framing indicate that coverage consistently cast the emergency as a security-driven order, restoring intervention, and that this framing shaped compliance with directives, but did not translate into increased personal support for government action (Table 7). Out of 5 statements, 5 were accepted at WMS of between 2.52 and 3.04, while rejecting 2.42 which was below the AMS of 2.50. This is consistent with the broader finding above and reinforces the conclusion that Rivers State citizens engaged with televised crisis information as an active, evaluative audience rather than as passive recipients of government-aligned messaging, a pattern the Uses and Gratifications framework anticipates (Ruggiero, 2000).

Conclusion

Channels Television and RSTV, which were used as the test case, played a substantial informational role during the State of Emergency in Rivers State. Their coverage was extensive, and audiences were highly exposed to it. It was broadly trusted for its accuracy and sourcing. However, its influence operated chiefly on citizens' understanding of events and their willingness to comply with directives rather than on their political support for the emergency measures themselves. The coverage also carried a measurable emotional cost without correspondingly building confidence in government's crisis management. These findings support the Framing Theory in showing that repeated frames shaped interpretation and compliance without dictating political allegiance, and the Uses and Gratifications Theory in showing that citizens actively sought television for surveillance purposes throughout the crisis. Both hypotheses were accepted, confirming significant relationships between exposure and attitude, and between framing and support, though the item-level evidence shows these relationships to be more modest and more mediated by citizens' independent judgement than a simple media-effects account would predict.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that:

- i. broadcast stations, particularly state-owned outlets such as RSTV, deliberately incorporate a wider range of sources and perspectives, including dissenting voices, to address the balance deficit identified in this study;
- ii. government communication during future emergencies be proactive and consistent rather than reactive, since improved television information alone did not build public confidence in government's handling of the crisis;
- iii. journalists covering political crises receive structured training in conflict-sensitive and trauma-aware reporting to mitigate the anxiety-inducing effects of sustained crisis coverage while preserving its informational value;
- iv. regulatory and journalism-training institutions promote regular capacity-building on crisis communication and political journalism, consistent with the structural weaknesses identified by Eguruze et al. (2025); and
- v. future research extend this audience-side inquiry to radio and social media, which increasingly mediate crisis information alongside television in Nigeria.

References

- Agbaje, A. (2011). *Media and Democracy in Nigeria*. University of Lagos Press.
- Ajzen, I. (2020). "The theory of Planned Behavior: Frequently asked Questions". *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2(4), 314–324.
- Akinfeleye, R. A. (2008). *Contemporary issues in Mass Media for Development and National Security*.
- Anyaogu (2025). "Nigerian leader suspends the governor of an oil-rich state in rare emergency rule". *Associated Press*, March 19, 2025
- Anyaogu (2025). "Nigeria lifts emergency rule in Rivers State after six months of political crisis". *Associated Press*, September 18, 2025.
- Asemah, E. S. (2011). *Selected mass media themes*. Jos: Matkol Press.
- Asemah, E. S., Nwammuo, A. N., & Nkwam-Uwaoma, A. O. A. (2017). *Theories and models of communication*. Jos: University Press.
- Associated Press. (2025, March 19). *Nigerian leader suspends the governor of an oil-rich state in rare emergency rule*. Associated Press.
- Associated Press. (2025, September 18). *Nigeria lifts emergency rule in Rivers State after six months of political crisis*. Associated Press.
- Ayara, M. I., Amadi, R. N., Dike, H. W., & Njoku, C. J. (2025). "Media coverage of the political crisis in Rivers State: An analysis of select newspapers in Nigeria". *Rapid Journals*, 2(11), 1250–1260.
- Channels Television. (2023). About us. Channels Media Group.
- Chong, D., & Druckman, J. N. (2007). "Framing theory". *Annual Review of Political Science*, 10, 103–126.
- Coombs, W. T. (2015). *Ongoing crisis communication* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Covello, V. T. (2010). *Risk communication and public health*. Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.
- de Vreese, C. H. (2005). "News framing: Theory and typology". *Information Design Journal + Document Design*, 13(1), 51–62.
- Druckman, J. N. (2004). "Political preference formation: Competition, deliberation and the (ir)relevance of framing effects". *American Political Science Review*, 98(4), 671–686.
- Easton, D. (1965). *A systems analysis of political life*. Wiley.
- Eguruze, L. I., Akarika, D. C., & Mboho, M. (2025). "Role of the media in curbing 2025 political crisis in Rivers State, Nigeria". *Advance Journal of Linguistics and Mass Communication*, 9(3), 1–21.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). "Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm". *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51–58.
- Ferejohn, J., & Pasquino, P. (2004). "The law of the exception". *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 2(2), 210–239.
- Folarin, B. (2002). *Theories of mass communication: An introductory text*. University of Ibadan Press.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Harvard University Press.
- Gross, K., & Brewer, P. R. (2007). "Framing emotions in political communication". *Political Psychology*, 28(2), 207–222.
- Gross, O., & Ní Aoláin, F. (2006). *Law in times of crisis*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hanitzsch, T., Hanusch, F., Mellado, C., et al. (2018). *Worlds of Journalism Study: Journalistic cultures around the globe*. Columbia University Press.
- Hanwa, U. S., Nuhu, Mohammed, M., Muhammad, A., & Abdulkadir, F. M. (2025). "Audience perception of broadcast media coverage on the agitation for security in Kaduna State". *Existential: Conrescence Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 3(3), 36–45.
- Holman, E. A., Garfin, D. R., & Silver, R. C. (2014). "Media's role in broadcasting acute stress following the Boston Marathon bombings". *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(1), 93–98.

- Ire, E. S. (2025). Broadcast media as a catalyst for language and cultural identity in Rivers State, Nigeria. *American Journal of Arts and Communication*, 10(2), 34–49.
- Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible? How television frames political issues*. University of Chicago Press.
- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1974). "Utilization of mass communication by the individual". In J. G. Blumler & E. Katz (Eds.), *The uses of mass communications* (pp. 19–32). Sage.
- Lee, S. (2020). "Political information involvement and citizen attitudes". *Journal of Political Communication Studies*, 8(2), 112–130.
- McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). "The Agenda-setting function of mass media". *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), 176–187.
- McQuail, D. (2010). *McQuail's mass communication theory* (6th ed.). Sage.
- Meyer, P. (1988). "Defining and measuring credibility of newspapers". *Journalism Quarterly*, 65(3), 567–574.
- Nabi, R. L. (2003). "Exploring the framing effects of emotion". *Communication Research*, 30(2), 224–247.
- National Population Commission. (2023). *Population estimates for Rivers State*. NPC.
- Norris, P. (2010). "Public sentinel: News media and governance reform". *World Bank Publications*.
- Nwabueze, C., & Ebeze, E. (2013). Mass media relevance in combating insecurity in Nigeria. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, 3(8), 1788–1797.
- Oliver, M. B., & Woolley, J. K. (2010). "Media exposure and emotional desensitization". *Journal of Communication*, 60(2), 294–313.
- Opeyemi, A. M., Eke, C., & Ofome, A. M. (2025). "Government public relations and crisis management: Evaluating public perceptions of Tinubu's state of emergency declaration in Rivers State, Nigeria". *Irish International Journal of Law, Political Sciences and Administration*, 9(2), 31–45.
- Oso, L. (2012). *Press and politics in Nigeria: On whose side?* Malthouse Press.
- Palmgreen, P., & Rayburn, J. D. (1985). "A comparison of gratification models of media satisfaction". *Communication Research*, 12(2), 141–164.
- Patterson, T. E. (2013). *Informing the news: The need for knowledge-based journalism*. Vintage Books.
- Reese, S. D. (2007). "The framing project: A bridging model for media research revisited". *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 148–154.
- Reuters. (2025, March 18). "Nigeria declares state of emergency in Rivers State over political crisis and security concerns". *Reuters*.
- Reuters. (2025, September 18). "Nigeria's Tinubu lifts emergency rule in oil-rich Rivers State". *Reuters*.
- Ruggiero, T. E. (2000). "Uses and gratifications theory in the 21st century". *Mass Communication and Society*, 3(1), 3–37.
- Scheufele, D. A. (1999). "Framing as a theory of media effects". *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), 103–122.
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Reese, S. D. (2014). *Mediating the message in the 21st century* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Sika, B. (2005). *History of radio broadcasting in Rivers State*. DOKUS Press.
- Slovic, P. (2000). *The perception of risk*. Earthscan Publications.
- Stroud, N. J. (2008). "Media use and political predispositions: Revisiting the concept of selective exposure". *Political Behavior*, 30(3), 341–366.
- Tamuno, T. N. (2011). *Peace and violence in Nigeria: The dilemma of the nation-state*. University of Port Harcourt Press.
- Tinubu, B. A. (2025). "Presidential address on the declaration of a state of emergency in Rivers State". *Federal Government of Nigeria*.
- Umechukwu, P. O. J. (2004). *Broadcasting regulation in Nigeria*. University of Nigeria Press.
- Witte, K. (1992). "Putting the fear back into fear appeals: The extended parallel process model". *Communication Monographs*, 59(4), 329–349.