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Introduction

Edo Journal of Arts, Management and Social Sciences is a double-blind peer reviewed academic journal published by the Faculty of Arts, Management and Social Sciences, Edo State University Uzairue in two issues per year, June and December in print and online. The journal has always published original research articles, book reviews, discussions and other forms of analysis in all aspects of Art, Management and Social Science disciplines. In this issue, Volume 5 Number 1, important and well researched articles were gathered from across the disciplines for socio and economic development. The first article in the issue is titled “Dissidence and Socio-political Conflicts in the Second Generation Nigerian poetry” and it depicts how the Second Generation Nigerian poets have been able to use their poetry to reflect on the socio and political conflicts in the Nigerian space. The second article in this issue is titled “Women and Creative Writing in Africa: Perspective from Prose, Poetry and Drama” and it also argues that African female writers have always depicted vital components of African Womanist theory and also desire to restore the woman-being from degraded position she was placed through colonial invasion of Africa between 1818 and 1914.

In the third article titled “Nigerians’ Trust in the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control’s Information on COVID-19” the extent to which Nigerians believed information on COVID-19 produced by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) during the COVID era is interrogated. In “Economic Inequality in Sub Saharan Africa: Nigeria in Perspective” the economic inequality within sub Saharan Africa is investigated and it is found that economic inequality in the region is high. The article titled “Investigating the Effectiveness of Social Media Platforms for Educating Distant Learners in a Collaborative Learning Environment” investigates the impact of social media platforms on students’ engagement, knowledge acquisition, and academic performance in the context of distance education. It reveals that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have shown potential in enhancing students’ engagement and knowledge acquisition and that educators can create online communities or groups where students can engage in discussions, share resources, and collaborate on projects.

In “Paternalism Vs Autonomy: An Ethical Question in Physician-Patient Relationship” different cases of physician-patient relationship are examined and through the application of analytic and comparative methods, the Paper draws on both primary and secondary cases to make a judgment on the side of balance. In “Economic History and Socio-Economic Prospects in Esanland Nigeria: Options for Indigenous and Foreign Investors” the economic history and socio-economic investment opportunities in Esan land (kingdoms) are presented using the descriptive and historical research approach. The article titled “Le Nouveau Roman Français

Face À Une Adaptation Romanesque Africaine: Le Cas De *Verre Cassé* D'alain Mabanckou is a discourse in French language. The article titled “The Johannine Concept of Sign: an Explanation for the *Real Presence* of Jesus in the Eucharist (John 6:1-15, 22-58)” questions today belief in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist as testified to in the Gospels, Tradition and Magisterium of the Church while in “Tax Avoidance Practices and Earnings Management” tax avoidance practices and earnings management is examined and the article concludes that aggressive tax planning or strategic tax behaviors are activities generally designed to reduce tax liability that includes tax evasion and legitimate saving of taxes and these activities have significant effect on debt and non-debt tax shield of the firms. In “Impact of Trade Unionism on Nigerian Tertiary Institutions: A Study of Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi 2010 – 2022” the impact of Trade Unionism on Nigerian Tertiary Institutions is examined, with Auchi Polytechnic as its focal study. In “Language Use in Post-Covid-19 Pandemic” the relevance of Development Communication as the requisite language tool is explored with the intention of facilitating effective information on the virus and possible ways of mitigating it. The article reveals that language and communication are inseparable and both played a crucial role in fighting the pandemic.

“Returns on Investment and Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria: Issues and Insights” examines Returns on Investment and Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria and reveals that Returns on Investment (ROI) on the financial statement is observed to be statistically significant. “Facebook as a Tool for Political Marketing During the 2023 General Elections in Nigeria” examines the impact of political advertising on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria and reveals that the potential risks of using Facebook for political advertising includes the spread of misinformation and manipulation of voters. “Pristine Ughievwen Worldview and Westernization - Adaptation and Change: A Historical Interrogation” examines how the Ughievwen culture has fared amidst influences from westernization and shows the sources of Ughievwen worldview and their acclaimed *modus operandi* in Urhobo society. “Stress Management and Control in the Workplace: Perception on Personnel Performance in Auchi Polytechnic Auchi” examines the relationship between stress management and control in the workplace.

Having gone through these articles in this issue, one cannot help but to note that this issue like all other issues of the Edo Journal of Arts, Management and Social Sciences will make a good read. As the editors of the journal we hope that the findings contained in these article help to shape government policies as well as impact on our national development.

Solomon Awuzie

DISSIDENCE AND SOCIO-POLITICAL CONFLICTS IN THE SECOND GENERATION NIGERIAN POETRY: TANURE OJAIDE'S POETRY

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Abstract

The Second Generation Nigerian poets have always used their poetry as tools to engage Nigerian socio-political conflict. With their poetry, they have responded to both the historical and socio-political circumstances that contributed to the underdevelopment of the Nigerian society. For this reason the poetry is described as a counter-hegemonic discourse against bad Nigerian leadership and against the socio-political conflict in the country. Using Tanure Ojaide's poetry as representative poetry of the Second Generation Nigerian poets, emphasis is made on how the poet depicts the conflict in Nigerian socio-political space. The article analyzes Ojaide's poems as the poetry produced by one of the important voices of period. It reveals the condition in which the poetry is produced and how it has responded to the decay in Nigeria at this time. The article concludes that the Second Generation Nigerian poetry has revealed that successive Nigerian governments as well as Nigerian politicians have not been patriotic and have always cared for themselves at the expense of the nation's wellbeing.

Keywords: Nigerian Poetry, Second Generation Poetry, Tanure Ojaide's Poetry, Social-Political Conflict

Introduction

The Second Generation Nigerian poetry has been called by different names. While Funso Aiyejina (1988) refers to the generation as "the alternate generation", Charles Nnolim (2009: 229) describes it as "the ideological and sociological generation". The generation came to public attention when a group of writers, who later became the Second Generation Nigerian writers, led by Kole Omotoso, Niyi Osundare and Femi Osanfisan announced that Achebe and Okigbo generation had been too concerned with explaining Africa to Europeans. Hence the Second Generation writings would be concerned with Africa's socio-political conflict and must explain Africa to Africans (see Awuzie 2019: 82). With a focus on the socio-political issues inherent in the poetry of the Second Generation, Chris Nwamuo (1986: 153) argues,

in his essay “Young Nigerian Poets and Dedication,” that with the emergence of the second generation, there is “a shift from white/black conflict to black/black dialectics”. According to Benedict Ibitokun (2007: 7) this is made possible because the Second Generation Nigerian poets “has come to the full awareness that the life of being in the world is a forgone tragedy of conflicts, sadness, treasons, failures and perpetual lack and desire: a holistic oven of the spleen”. However, the Second Generation Nigerian poetry is today regarded as one of the postcolonial apparatuses with which the conflict in Nigeria’s socio-political and historical space was engaged. Being a generation that was used to continue Nigerian rich literary tradition, it was positioned to reflect on the level of the country’s development few years after its independence in 1960. The poetry was, since its inception, the platform upon which the socio-political conflicts as well as the historical chaos that undermined Nigeria’s development, decades after its independence, were explored. In order to properly tackle the challenges that informed its establishment, the poetry became a counter-hegemonic force against both the nation’s bad leadership and the corrupt Nigerian social and public institutions. It has continued to reveal the early attempts of Nigerian poets to respond to the call for nation-building and the need of Nigerian government to tackle the decay that was, as at then, beginning to eat into the heart of the society’s soul. The fact that the country remains the way it was goes a long way to show that successive Nigerian governments did not take heed of the warnings as well as the fears that were expressed by the poets of the generation.

The Second Generation poetry did not only explore the socio-political and historical chaos that has come to characterize the nation from independence, it introduced ideological and sociological discourse into Nigerian poetic terrain. Some of the ideological and sociological issues that have central position in the poetry includes: successive Nigerian governments’ irresponsibility, Nigerian feminism, Marxism, Nigerian Civil War and military dictatorship. Charles Bodunde explains that the treatment of these issues in the poetry is consistent with the generation’s aesthetic practices. Being the leading voice of the time, the poetry focused on how successive Nigerian governments failed the people. In order to successfully reveal this, the poetry placed the Niger Delta conflict at the centre stage of its poetic discourse. It reflected on the Niger Delta region as a landscape in which observable physical disintegration and decay in social life correlate. The dominant aesthetic strategy that is noticeable in the poetry from the onset, “is the appropriation of the physical environment as an object in the portrait of the decline in the people’s well-being”(Bodunde, 2002: pp.195). As typical of the poetry, attacks were sometimes indirectly made on politicians, the public and the Nigerian socio cum public institutions. These attacks were done with the use of symbols and imageries that reflect on the activities of the addressees. The attacks were usually with the risk of grave financial loss to the poets and their publishers. Hence they sometimes risk death during the reign of totalitarian rulers (Ayo Keyinde, 2008, pp.7). The poetry depicts that most Nigerian politicians of the time were corrupt and have the nature of

self-love. Their human ego was to love themselves and to consider themselves only. With these the poetry assured its Nigerian audience that it was in poetry that our society, as time goes on, will find an ever surer stay. This is the reason Apronti (1976: 107) opines that the poets of the Second Generation did not just choose to write on these issues for the fun of it. The fact that their poetry was preoccupied with the issues that were prevalent in the society reveals the influence of time, thus:

One of the most striking of these is the way in which persistent references to time underline the urgency of the revolutionary situation. Time therefore becomes not merely an aesthetic tool, but an arm of the dialectical confrontation between freedom and oppression. The theme of time has of course been exploited in literature with varying degrees of success.

Among the leading Second Generation Nigerian poets who did not only distinguish themselves as poets, but whose poetry reflected on the characteristics that marked them out as Second Generation Nigerian poets were Niyi Osundare, Ossie Enekwe, Ada Ugah, Catherine Achononu, and Tanure Ojaide, among others. For the purpose of this article, Tanure Ojaide's poetry is discussed as a representative poetry of the Second Generation Nigerian poetry. The article reaffirms Ojaide's Second Generation Nigerian poet status by mapping the tenets of Second Generation Nigerian Poetry in his poetry. The article particularly stresses how Ojaide treated the themes of Nigerian social and political conflicts in his poetry.

Tanure Ojaide's Poetry and the Second Generation Nigerian Poetic Tradition

Since the themes of experience, style and time are central to the Second Generation Nigerian poetic creation, Ojaide does not only treat the issues of experience and time in his poetry, his poetry shows that he is at home to a radical representation of style. To confirm this, Bodunde (2002) posits that in Ojaide's poetry aesthetic images are stylishly deployed to emphasize the idea that human right struggle is imperative in seeking to restore the people's well-being. In one of his articles entitled "New Trends in Contemporary African Literature," Ojaide maintains that the dominant trend in Second Generation poetry is the zeal to restore the people's well-being and this emerges from the context in which the generality of the Nigerian populace were economically and politically marginalized. In the poetry, Ojaide's persistent reference to time reflects in his treatment of the three major issues that preoccupy the poetry of the generation: the political discourse, exile and the failing environmental issue. The shift in his poetic focus from culture, nature and individualism to these three issues affirms that his poetry was composed deliberately with an ear for public performance. Such public performances that are organized with the intention of reaching a wider audience made up of literates and semi-literates who understand English, high/low pidgin and indigenous languages. The shift is strongly evident in his poetry entitled "When It No Longer Matters Where You Live." Unlike his other

poetry, the poetry underscores the exilic consciousness in Nigerian poetry. In his essay entitled, “Exile, Exilic Consciousness and the Poetic Imagination in Tanure Ojaide’s Poetry” James Tar Tsaaio (2011) has noted that the thematic trajectory of the poetry of Ojaide as well as many other poets of the Second Generation is focused on the theme of exile. Hence exile constitutes a visible presence in the Second Generation Nigerian poetic afflatus and imagination. It is important to note that Ojaide’s poetry contributes significantly to the work on the theme of exile in the Nigerian poetry terrain and reflexively foregrounds the currency of the theme of exile in African poetry and, indeed, world literature. James Tar Tsaaio contends further that in the poetry, Ojaide’s framing and defining concern is the negotiation of the theme of exile in Nigerian poetry. Hence one can as well say that Ojaide’s poetic imagination and sensibility have generously benefited from the trope of exile which has been conditioned by the reality of living and working away from home in the United States of America even as the poet himself problematises this reality with his frequent home visits (Tar Tsaaio, 2011:99). This is sometimes not adequately or sufficiently acknowledged in his poetry. Increasingly, however, exile and exilic consciousness have continued to occupy a contested and contestable site in Ojaide’s poetry. This is because of the multiple and shifting networks of significations that undergird the very constitution and definition of home, exile and the exiled in the poetry. While exile signify absence from one’s homeland and registers an erasure of physical presence from a particular landscape, other interpretive grids that negotiate exile refract it as a spiritual and psychological state that does not necessarily translate to physical absence from home.

Through his poetry on the imagined memory of the pre-oil exploration past, Ojaide stretches our scientific and technological imagination in proffering solutions to the environmental and social challenges that attend the oil encounter. In his essay, Philip Onoriode Aghoghovwia (2013) posits that Ojaide interrogates the oil encounter in Nigeria’s Niger Delta and reflects on its impact on the country’s social and environmental structures. He maintains that Ojaide is able to achieve this through his collection entitled *Delta Blues & Home Songs* where the discourse of environmental justice and ecocriticism reflect on the poet’s excoriation of the oil encounter as the harbinger of environmental degradation. The poet calls for a lived kind of environmentalism as he invites the reader to inhabit the cultural world of his Niger Delta where he imaginatively recalls the past of his childhood, of fishing and farming. Ojaide’s near utopian past which the poet versifies becomes a model for the remediation of the oil-polluted Niger Delta environment.

Another important Ojaide scholar, Uzoechi Nwagbara (2013), has argued that Ojaide’s poetry negates ecological imperialism, a capitalist practice that destroys the periphery’s natural world. He notes also that in Ojaide’s poetics, there is an illustration of the nature and strategies employed to actualise resistance poetry. Ojaide’s *raison d’être* for this artistic preoccupation is simple: the environmental and

ecological predation in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, which is his native country. Hence, since Ojaide's poetry intersects with the realities of ecological imperialism, it is a dependable barometer to gauge Nigeria's environmental/ecological dissonance for sustainable development (see Awuzie 2017, pp. 77). In another of his essay, entitled "Poetics of Resistance: Ecocritical Reading of Ojaide's *Delta Blues & Home Songs* and *Daydream of Ants and Other Poems*" Uzoechi Nwagbara (2010) is also of the view that the Second Generation Nigerian written poetry spans about six decades, from its inception, and has been a medium of engagement, decrying colonialism, cultural imperialism, socio-economic oppression and political tyranny. And that Tanure Ojaide's poetic enterprise follows in the footsteps of this mould of interdiction, which can be called resistance poetics. Particularly, his collections of poetry, *Delta Blues & Home Songs* and *Daydream of Ants and Other Poems*, are illustrations of ecocritical poetry. Ojaide considers the ecocritical art of poetry as a kind of public duty, which he owes to the Nigerian people, to expose, reconstruct, and negate the actualities of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

Hence, while engaging these postcolonial Nigerian issues, Ojaide introduced "sublimated dialogue" into his poetry. According to Ojaide, some of the poems of the Second Generation Nigerian poets are "drums-accompanied, performance-oriented 'oral written poetry'" (2009: ix). He achieves this in his own poetry through his manipulation of memory and identity as important categories. Reflecting on this style Obododimma Oha (2003: 137) describes it as the "literary explorations of the other play on memory, identity, and representation". In the same essay, Oha posits that it is sometimes introduced as "the strategy of witnessing for authenticity" (2003:137). Of particular importance to the scholars of Second Generation Poetry is the fact that Ojaide engages this style with the use of everyday English. Chinyere Nwahunanya (2007:92) explains that the Second Generation Nigerian poets, which Ojaide represents in this study, "carry his audience along, first by refusing to be esoteric or rejecting totally the linguistic legacies of the indigenous tradition". Nwahunanya (2007:92) argues further that "while selecting topical subjects, he strives at clarity of expression that would ensure comprehensibility to the audience". Hence contrasting the poetry of the First Generation Nigerian poets where the linguistic resources of both the local and foreign languages are stretched and utilize in a new synthesis. According to Nwahunanya, this does not mean that the poet of the Second Generation does not also use the "linguistic resources of both local and foreign languages" as the First Generation but when he does so, he "recognizes also the potential ability of that language to carry and convey the literary experience he has conceived. In the same vein, he recognizes "the inability of the foreign language as literary medium to fully shoulder the weight of an African experience in a context of culture change" (2007: 92-93).

In Ojaide's poetry, the message is rendered in clear and simple English, such that it shoulders the weight of the Nigerian experience. This is the reason Ojaide's poetry can be described as a poetry that is born of the society and which has the capacity to comment back on the social matrix of the society. Writing about the art produced within the time-space of the generation, Osofisan (2006:7) asserts that the art "speaks to, and out of the heart of experience in all its multifariousness". Ojaide (1996: viii) confirms this when he says: "Time and place condition the writer's experience; hence the repetition of the saying that the writer is not an air plant". In his essay entitled, "Examining Canonization in Modern African literature" Ojaide (2009) affirms that there is need for the poets of the Second Generation to yield their poetry to contain the African, and by implication Nigerian, experience vis-à-vis its aesthetic values. According to him, this is based on the premise that literature is a cultural production hence literature expresses the socio-cultural, historical, and other experiences as well as the sensibility of its people. Because of the performance-oriented nature of the Second Generation poetry, Bethel Azubuike (2006:72) says of the poets of the Second Generation that they are co-custodians of culture and of language. He points out categorically that through this means they "help in creating new words". One can say that through his poetry, Ojaide helps in the creation of meaning that does not only capture his message but depicts the existential meaning of his writing. Though simple as Ojaide's poetry might be, if one removes one word from any line of his poetry, meaning will be lost and the line will breakdown. The meaning that is contained in his poetry cannot be explained simply by paraphrasing the poems, or by translating them into everyday language. If one changes one line, one image, one word of the poems, one will have different poems. The reason for this is that men's pleasure in poetry is made possible by its sense of novelty as well as its sense of recognition. This is the more reason Senanu and Vincent (1976:5) describe the poetry of this time "as a cumulative verbal entity through which the poet expresses a vision of life hidden to the less imaginative".

Dissidence, Conflict and Ojaide's Poetry

In many of his collections, Ojaide has always bemoaned the socio-political conflicts that characterized the country since independence. With the reiteration of similar themes in *The Fate of Vulture & Other Poems* (1990) - a collection he published to mark his fortieth birthday - he reveals the failure of successive Nigerian governments to address the Nigerian problems. However, the collection begins with the poem entitled "The Music of Pain" - where the poet restates his commitment to the country and decries the country's bad government, the corruption that has eaten into the country's social fabric as well as the socio-political conflicts that tend to undermine the country's development. The persona describes his poetry as "the chorus of resistant cries"(1990:2) and the "communion to shame/ chiefs of selfish rule" (1990: 2). He posits that his poetry has "the bite of desperate ones" and describes it as "fine-filed machete in the hands of the threatened" as well as "a swarm of mystery bees/ haunting robbers of the proud heritage" (1990: 2). Having

attained forty years of age, the persona declares himself a poet who has no reason to cry in vain. Hence, he invites the people to listen to this “music of communal pain” (1990: 3).

Subsequent poems in the collection reiterate the conflicts as well as the pain that have endured in the country. Most of them interrogate the killings, and the injustices that have come to characterize the Nigerian society. More importantly, they reflect on the corrupt activities in the country and their impacts on the immediate Nigerian communities. A typical example of such communities is the Niger Delta community which happens to be the persona’s home community. Elsewhere, in his book of essays entitled *Poetic Imagination in Black Africa: Essays on African Poetry* Ojaide (1996:122) has explained that his Niger Delta childhood experience shapes his overall perception of the nation and its leadership:

My Delta years have become the touch-stone with which I measure the rest of my life. The streams, the fauna, and the flora are symbols I continually tap [...]. Home remains for me the Delta, where I continue to anchor myself.

Hence it is not surprising that many of his poems published in different collections, such as *The Blood of Peace and Other Poems* (1991) and *Invoking the Warrior Spirit: New and Selected Poems* (1999), express his connection with his Niger Delta homestead and the damage that has been done to its environment. For instance, in poems like “For our own Reasons,” “Waking,” and “Visiting Home,” published in these collections, the persona has persistently painted a picture of the Niger Delta environment before the advent of the oil exploration. The picture portrays the Niger Delta environment in the pre-oil exploration period as beautiful and reflects the aquatic nature of the people. Not only do the poems stress the beauty of the community, in “For our own Reason” for instance, the streams of the Delta were represented as the sources of the people’s livelihood. This is evident in the line where the persona posits thus: “We cast fish-nets in the rain to exorcise famine” (1991:43). In “Visiting Home” the persona explains that the people also drink from the streams. As a matter of fact, the persona discloses that he goes to one of the streams, each time he is home, “to half-quench” his “burning tongue”(1999: 30). In “Waking” the serene nature of the environment is stressed. The persona declares that at this time he is always awake “to the chorus of the wind and birds” (1999:32). But with the discovery of crude oil in Oloibiri in 1956 by Shell-BP, things fall apart. The beautiful Niger Delta environment is not only plunged into chaos, the streams from where the people earn their livelihood are destroyed. Instead of the crude oil being the source of the community’s wealth and joy, it has become the source of their impoverishment and a product that erases smiles from their faces. The damage is not only seen by the people of the community, people from other communities have also decried the level of damage that has been done to the Niger Delta through the crude oil exploration. In the poems, the persona addresses the country and all those

politicians who have “squandered the resources” of Niger Deltans - the youth/ in family and communal rites” - and who did not “see eyes taunting” them.

In *The Fate of Vulture and Other Poems* (1990), the persona revokes the same bitterness that run in the above mentioned poems. In the poems, he persistently bemoans the socio-political conflicts that give birth to the present Nigerian situation. For instance in “When soldiers are diplomats” he condemns the bitter politics that are played in Nigeria. The poem reveals that the same class of politicians, who are supposed to protect the people, are the ones killing them. The poem provides reason why they find it so easy to kill and to destroy. The reason is that most Nigerian politicians, during this time, were retired soldiers who had been trained to kill and maim. Their presence in the country’s helm of affairs has, rather than position the country on the road to development, become detrimental to the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the country. This is because a soldier, whom he addresses as “bedbug, that smug cannibal,/ doesn’t care for the rank smell of blood”(p. 5). In the poem, Ojaide’s persona recounts how innocent Nigerians had been brutalized and killed during the reign of the military. In “What poets do our leaders read?” the persona wonders the poets who successive Nigerian leaders read. It goes ahead to posit that it is only clear that they read and listen to the songs of sycophants:

Perjurers of the Word,
Drummers of bloated drums,
Carriers of offensive sacrifice;
Fanners of vanities
And their own doubles, the likes
Sellers of tatters. (p.7)

Of course, as he says further, “you can see why/ small heads are so full of themselves” (p.7).

In “Compatriots!” the persona discloses that even as their activities are criticized, they gather strength in their atrocities. They do not just kill people; they destroy institutions of national unity. According to the poem, “they discouraged the savage thrust against our bane” and have “turned the phalanges’ lances/ into mere wooden paddles” (pp.13). For this reason, the persona describes them as “priests without creed” (p.13). He posits that Nigerian politicians “fortify themselves/ with vicious charms/ to live beyond their tenure” (p.13). Hence “as soon as they had their hold on the land/ they upset the customs of truth” (p.13). In the poem, the persona laments further that the judiciary, an arm of government represented with the symbol of the “blunted sacred sword” is no longer what it used to be. Thus he wonders:

how will justice be executed
when the metal is no longer a blade
and the beast escapes communal rage? (p.13).

In “The arrow-flight” he notes that the relationship between the Nigerian politicians and the people can be compared to the relationship between Shylock and his victim: “Shylock is a dim star in their galaxy of blood” (p.16). He states that Shylock is their mentor. For this reason “they command the world to attention” by “riding through the waves of tears in a vain-lift”(p.16). “They only have what it takes to seduce hungry patients”(p. 16). This is the reason promises of “placebos and fufu-ful” as well as the people’s wellbeing usually take preeminence during their campaigns. Angered by their pessimism to continue to subject the people to untold suffering, the persona declares in “My next step” that he must resist the unpatriotic gestures of Nigerian politicians. He vows to go too far even if it may be referred to as treason – “if that’s what it takes to revive the land” (p.20). He recounts the reason he has made such resolution thus:

For how long will eyes stand bullshit
For how long will they watch rather than break up
The offensive dance of those sworn to break rules?
For how long will hands and legs for fear of execution
Stay assault against the robbery of birthrights? (p. 20)

In “Orphans of hope” he maintains that Nigerian politicians have snatched away the people’s hope. Unlike every other poem in the collection, the persona uses abusive words in the poem to address the politicians. In the very first line of the poem, he describes them as “the falcon, fugitive of justice” (p. 22), in the third line, he calls them “the masquerader[s], mean witch[es]”(p. 22) and in the tenth line he refers to them as “Esu’s envoys” (p. 22). He asserts that “They have seen from afar the victory of farmers/ over charities, they have foreseen the dance/at the end of the painful patience of sweat,/ they have telescoped a new race of warriors/out of the loins of subject tribes” (p.22), hence they instigate riots which have caused a lot of blood shade and stampede in town. He states that the hope as well as the dream of every Nigerian reverberates with “mindless shots”: “When shall the land regain its soul-shine, when shall the genes of misfortune be shed/ for the people to live with their womb-gifts?”(p. 22) In “The ambush” the persona says that they always want to impress the people with their wealth. To do this, they stage parties where many people are invited to eat and dance, and where masquerades perform, showering words of praises on them. The persona reveals that the words and praises are in most cases not words of truth. The persona maintains that these are done to make the world “worship their virtues” (p. 38). In “The uniform of angels” he maintains that despite the fact that they are the ones who enact the laws, they are the ones who always break the law. They though always appear in whites as if they are saints, their white robes are for deceit and they do not mean well for anybody.

In “Song for my land” the persona reveals that because of Nigerian politicians’ unpatriotic activities, the country has been turned to a place of mockery and shame.

The persona asks two very important questions, which can be translated as, where is the evidence of the people's labour and hard work? And, why is the country's "sun of salvation eclipsed/ by coup and intolerable riots?" (p. 41) Despite the labour of our compatriots to make the country a better place, the politicians have ruined everything. They have made people of other nations to look down on Nigerians. The persona captures this by personifying the trees and winds thus: "naked trees flaunt sterile bodies at me" (p. 41) and "the winds gossip loud my dalliance/ to embarrass me from washing clean" (p. 41). He states also that every step he takes in the country, he is fraught with torments. One of the sources of his torments is the fact that he is not regarded in the country he calls his own. For instance, he is asked for a birthmark he does not possess before he can be embraced. In "Where everybody is king" he reveals that another major problem with the country is that every politician sees his/herself as king. In the poem, "Agbarha" is used as a microcosm of the Nigerian society. It is only in "Agbarha," the politician-king wakes to a bottle of gin and "sits at home" (p. 59). The persona notes that in Nigeria no politician-king "bows to the other" (p. 58). This is because the politician-king does not care -

[...] to acknowledge age, since
Power doesn't come from wisdom?
And who brags about youth
When there's no concession to vitality?
You just carry your head high.
And do you ask why
Where nobody accepts insults
Doesn't grow beyond its petty walls? (p.58)

For this reason also, no politician-king feels he is safe or "really great/ in the presence of others" (p.58). Hence "they try their diabolic charms/ on each other" (p.59). This is why most of them die "like outcasts/ without horn-blasts, without/ the communal rituals of mourning" (p.59). This is the reason a lot of things are not the way they should be. This is also the reason, a lot of dreams are killed before they come alive and a lot of ambitions are frustrated. In "Where the nightmare begins" this is further explained: Nigeria is a country where "you sleep with eyes open/ and hands clenched" (p.65). It is a country where "every day wears a sword/ beneath its swathe of light" (p.67). In "A crowd of odds", the persona states that every day in Nigeria "raises a brute's hand/ against an open heart" (p.67). In "The toast" he declares that if he is asked to propose a toast for Nigerian politicians, he "will do it with the purpled lip of a victim/ with compliment-coated curses/ and with sleeve-sheathed daggers"(p.89). He would say thus: "He who gloats over seeing others/ wounded and down/ should stand prepared to be/ someday floored and bruised" (1990: 89). This because "revenge is never far from the wounded mind"(p. 89).

In “A crowd of odds” he restates his commitment to a better Nigerian nation. He posits that despite this situation in which the nation fines itself, it is the duty of the poet to press for a better nation:

Left in the dark in the sun,
traditional healers
continue their job of restoration –
with myriads of love-warm fingers
to revive the battered body of the land,
there will be no atrophy
despite the crowd of odds. (pp. 67/8)

This is because the persona believes that the nation can only be better when the patriots lend out their voices for the condemnation of the ills of the society and to chart a new destiny for the nation. In “The funeral of the hyena” he refers to the patriots as the poets who are determined to write away the corrupt practices in the country and chart a new and better destiny for the nation. In the poem, the persona asserts that the poet has shown that he is a patriot because he has always stood for the course of justice and progress. In “The banner of the future”, the persona represents the patriots as the diviners and according to him, these same “diviners know a frightful vision”(p.71) and can correct things when they are going out of hand, by not keeping mute. Hence in the last poem of the collection entitled “Now that I am forty” he represents himself as a diviner who has seen everything and must say the truth. The poem stresses the fact that his age requires him to say the truth as a poet who also functions as a diviner. For this reason he vows to stand either with honour or dishonor “on a termite heap” wielding his machete against the adversaries of the people (p.98).

Conclusion

From the poems, Ojaide has shown that the period in which the Second Generation Nigerian poets wrote is marked by chaos and political turmoil. As a group of writers who are determined to correct the wrongs in Nigerian socio cum political space, the poets of the Second Generation both recorded and reflected the socio-political and historical conflicts that characterized the nation at this time-space. This is why a close reading of the poetry of the period reveals that successive Nigerian governments are unpatrotic. More importantly, The poetry of the Second Generation Nigerian poets have shown that Nigerian politicians care more about themselves than they are interested in the wellbeing of the nation. This is evident in the poetry produced by the poets of the generation as they address the obnoxious activities of Nigerian politicians. The reason for this is that for any nation to thrive, the politicians must be patrotic. Most developed countries of the world are developed because of the caliber of politicians they had. If the politicians in those countries had been extremely corrupt, the countries would not have achieved the level of development and growth they enjoy. Nigerian politicians are not only corrupt, they

see themselves as citizens of their different small tribes first before as Nigerians. This is the reason they see the fact that they are hold national positions as opportunities to embezzle and siphon national funds to private purse - formerly for the benefit of their tribe's people and presently for entirely private purposes. Seeing what the nation has degenerated into, the poets of the Second Generation began to challenge the status quo. In his reaction to the level of unpatrotism among Nigerian politicians, Niyi Osundare was quoted to have said that Nigeria during this time-space is not yet a human society (see Awuzie, 2019, p. 89). Hence, it is in the hands of the poets to fight for the course to make the society better and to chart a better future for the nation.

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WOMEN AND CREATIVE WRITING IN AFRICA: PERSPECTIVES FROM PROSE, POETRY AND DRAMA

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Abstract

The gamut of creative fictions produced by the African female writers is meant to reposition the status of African women whose images were poorly represented by some first generation male writers, pioneered by Chinua Achebe and Elechi Amadi. While decrying the stereotypical representation of women, African female writers in all genres of literature also attempt to recreate in their works women who are resourceful, resilient, resolute, assertive, educated and fully equipped to live fulfilled lives. Select works of female writers such as Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo, Ama Ata Aidoo, Sefi Atta, Miri Angela, Julia Okoh, Patience Nitumwesiga and Ellen Khuziwayo will be used. This paper seeks to highlight creative ingenuities of African women writers and their thematic concerns which span from local to global issues. This paper posits further, with emphasis on the texts, that these writers deal on various concerns, ranging from stereotypical representation of women, to the creation of social justice and equity awareness by women, then, to the celebration of the new African woman with all her glaring and unwavering loyalty to her home. Generally, African female writers depict vital components of African Womanist theory which thrives on the peculiarities of the continent and also desire to restore the woman-being from degraded position she was placed through colonial invasion of Africa between 1818 and 1914. Interestingly, from each writer's perspective, every narrative is distinct, reviving and valuable to enhance scholarship in feminism and the entire body of creative literature. It is the aim of this paper to emphasis the need to write more of liberating rather than punitive literature. That way, correct and dignified values and images of women would be upheld in the society. African audience is therefore expectant that the 21st century female writers would replicate the topical issues in the society to reflect contemporary times in their works. There is indeed a strong indication that African female writers are conscious of their responsibilities to the society as creative writers and have been responding accordingly.

Keywords: Womanism, female writers, resilient, creative, liberating literature, social

justice.

Introduction

“It is about time we start singing about our own heroic deeds.”

- Buchi Emecheta

It is a known fact that from the onset women were involved in literature. Anthonia Kalu et al (2013: xvii) testifies the early involvement of African women in oral literature when she describes woman as one, “... who straddles traditions and creates a bridge between generations”. African women contributed and still contribute to cultural creativity through use of satirical praise songs and folktales. Undoubtedly, creative writing which emerged with the introduction of literacy, favoured men first due to early exposure to formal education; women writers who later trailed behind their male counterparts proved their mettle by turning out creative works that represent women’s concerns. The early works of African male writers served as instruments of political liberation and reaffirmation of African cultural heritage and values which were unfortunately amputated and devalued by colonial imposition of alien and strange cultural values. Regrettably, while on this noble mission of rediscovery and reinvention of self by male writers, African women were devoiced, they were not adequately represented. Consequently, when female writers such as Flora Nwapa started writing, her works proved to be a reaction against the derogatory representation of women by the male writers. Iniobong Uko (2006: 85) corroborates this assertion when she avers that the condescending representation of women by male writers could be traced to colonialism. Uko’s (2006) view in “Transcending the Margins: New Directions,” takes the argument far beyond the issue that both sexes produce creative literature and blames colonialism more for marginalization of women by male writers when she says it does appear “... Eurocentric/colonial representations of the African women serve as a model for the African male to perceive his female counterpart. These representations portray her as an outsider” (p.85). Uko (2006) further contends that:

The inter-gender polemics of women as outsiders in Africa involves such issues as the marginality, subjugation within the praxes of professional, socio-political and economic self acclaim. They are also subjugated to subservient roles and relegated to the performance of their biological roles and a life of domesticity. These constitute the major motivating factors for women’s writing in Africa. (p.85)

Uko claims in her essay that women were not fully integrated in the political, social, economic and religious system of colonial period. She reiterates what the pioneer female creative writer, Flora Nwapa said concerning how she had the urge to write. According to Nwapa, having read Cyprian Ekwensi’s *When Love Whispers* and

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, she felt female characters were not properly represented in the novels. She was of the view that the female characters created in these works, were voiceless, especially in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, except for Chielo the priestess. And to Flora Nwapa, they do not offer real image of African women. Intuitively, the idea to write about an African woman who featured prominently in Igbo society, who also played important roles for the survival and progress of Africa, struck her mind; hence, the emergence of *Efuru* in 1966 and *Idun* in 1970. Writing about the sources and what spurred her into writing her novel, in "Women and Creative Writing in Africa," she asserts thus: "In my work I try to project a more balanced image of African womanhood" (527).

It is this absence of the traditional resourceful and energetic African women in men's creative works, except in some works of Peter Abraham, Ngugi Wa Thio'ngo and Sembene Ousmane, that elicits Nnaemeka Obioma's question on the credibility of the reality of African literature presented by male pioneer writers like Achebe, Ekwensi, etc, that are devoid of the "other African woman"(141). Hence, she asks where the male writers place:

...that independent, strong and admirable woman who is celebrated in our oral traditions, that African woman whose presence gave dignity and meaning to pre-colonial African society, that African woman whose existence and relevance are such an important part of African reality today? (141)

Some of these "other African women" include Ikonnia, Nwannediya and Nwugo of 1929 Aba Women Riot, Queen Amina of Zaria, Moremi of Ile- Ife, Emotan of Benin, Omu Okwel of Ossomari, Mme Kathilili of Kenya, Vaa Asentewa of Asente of Ghana, Ahhotep of Egypt, Nzingha of Angola, Taitu Bethel of Ethiopia, Mbuya of Nchanda of Shona, etc. These women featured prominently in their various societies and so cannot be ignored. However, colonialism alone is not responsible for poor representation of women by male writers. As Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo (1996: xv) posits, "In most traditional African societies, women were undervalued more than men". While making a comparison of women in pre-colonial and colonial Nigeria, she notes that women held a basically complementary, rather than subordinate position to men in indigenous pre-colonial Nigeria, which based power on seniority rather than gender.

Consequently, in an effort to assert her rightful position in African society, African female writers thus re-create and resurrect that other resourceful "African woman" into their creative works. This divergent position cultivated by female writers out of male subservient female, form the first general perspective of African women writers. They offer something different from what their male counterparts presented, thus attracted critical attention. This complies with Simone de Beauvoir's view that a

woman must break the bonds of patriarchal society and define herself if she wishes to become a significant human being in her own right. That is why even as Cyprian Ekwensi makes Jagua Nana a prostitute and J. P. Clark's Ebieri entices her husband's younger brother into a sexual relationship to have children; Flora Nwapa creates Efuru who debunks some of these negative portrayal of women by being resourceful and Sefi Atta creates Enitan whose coming of age actually reveals a lot about the society and its deceit. This coming of age psychologically prepares her to make choices in marriage and other areas of life.

Other African women writers include Mabel Segun, Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta, Tess Onwueme, Ifeoma Okoye, Akachi Adimora- Ezeigbo, Adaora Ulasi, Sefi Atta, Chimamanda Adichie, Mariama Ba, Aminata Sow Fall, Rebecca Njau, Bessie Head, Grace Ogot, Ama Ata Aidoo, Efua Sutherland, Nawal El Saadawi, Ellen Kuzwayo, Maria Ndiaye, Nadine Gordimer, Zaynab Alkali, Amma Darko etc. African women writers possess enduring creative talents as evidenced in their literary works. They utilize their creative talents to address vital social concerns which ordinarily would have been ignored. Mabel Ekwierhoma observes that:

At the backdrop of female creativity exist ideas which some of the writers apply to the various situations of women in text and content. The result often is a creativity which leans towards ideologies like feminism, womanism, and which becomes dominantly protestant and assertive of the place of women in society. (p.9)

African female writers identify this urgent need to create assertive women in their works that they employ all available details within their micro and macro environment to create female characters that would represent real African women. For as Micere Mugo attests, "Within the world of orature, the woman had a lot of power. She spoke the word. She was instrumental to defining the ethics and aesthetics around which the word operated..." (2). African women writers therefore attempt to re-enact their oral creative ingenuity in their modern creative writings.

Furthermore, these female writers widen the female space which was hitherto culturally restricted, to accommodate the rapid growing awareness and capabilities of women in social, political, economic and cultural aspects of life. In addition, African female writers not only recreate the resourceful image of the foremothers, they equally consider contemporary issues. It may be appropriate therefore to assert the relatedness of their themes and subject matter, but even in such closeness, there still exist peculiarities in each individual creative exploit.

Jasper Onuekwusi, while offering clarification on I.A. Richards and Alexander Pope's definition of an artist's work as the subject of art, avers that:

...the artist's distinction lies in how well he (she) can artistically utilize available human experience to offer a vision to society...if two or more artists are exposed to similar or identical themes and intentions. But ultimately perspective, that angle of vision from which an artist explores an experience is important, since it determines his method of exploration and his success or failure in a chosen medium. (p.100)

It is this perspective therefore, that embodies invention and originality of a writer. This is so, because even when these female writers are exposed to similar situations in their various societies, their personal definition and interpretation make each of their works original and unique. The thematic concerns of African women writers span from personal concerns to communal and global issues. They attempt to critically explore issues that positively or negatively affect the human society. That way, they contribute their quota in the literary world through prose, drama and poetry.

It is important also to note that each of these African women writers explores her local environment which inevitably forms the nucleus of individual local thematic issues. Flora Nwapa writes about life in Oguta to re-create the real resourceful African woman; Tess Onwueme deals on her people's culture and tradition; Ifeoma Okoye castigates the political system in Nigeria; Ellen Kuzwayo fights against the second class status of African women living under apartheid in South Africa; Bessie Head criticizes the stigmatization and racial discrimination in South Africa; Nawal El Saadawi, an Islamic socialist feminist, exposes the subjugation of women and violence in middle Eastern societies. Adimora-Ezeigbo re-integrates women into the political and religious structure of Igbo leadership system using the historic events of her town-Uga(Umuga). What this implies is that the Indirect rule in British colonised countries; the South African racism and apartheid; women incarceration in North Africa; and the political quagmire in the East, all helped to propel writings of African women writers, yet they all maintain one voice of helping the African woman reclaim her central position in the society, for the well being of mankind. They also explore issues such as corruption, ecological problems, bad leadership, thuggery in politics, etc. Even though these female writers thematically, revolve almost on the same social concerns through different perspectives nurtured by different social experiences, none would accept the radical militant feminism of the western world as propagated by Showalter and some other radical feminists.

While commending on Nwapa's works, Margaret Nutsukpo says "Nwapa prefers to be labelled a womanist, an ideology which is black-centred and accommodationist in orientation...suited to the Africa environment"(105). Most African women writers are

either accommodationists or womanists. They believe in the freedom and independence of women in addition to meaningful union with their families unlike radical feminism. These writers write to project African shade of feminism through complementarities. Interestingly, African women writers, like their male counterparts have testified to the influence of oral literature in their creativity. Lalage Bown in “The Development of African Prose-Writing in English” observes the uniqueness of African literature, when he says, “The subject-matter, ideas, and style of today spring from those of yesterday and the day before...” (33). Gloria Chukukere confirms Bown’s view in *Gender Voices and Choices*, when she contends that, Grace Ogot’s works are heavily influenced by her grandmother. Chukukere notes that *The Rain Came* “is ...significant in consolidating her grandmother’s literary influence and establishing, once more, the much acclaimed role of women in the sphere of oral narrative...” (218). Also, Ellen Kuzwayo’s *Sit Down and Listen* (1990) and *Call Me Woman* (1985) are heavily influenced by oral tradition. Siga Fatima in *Postcolonial African Writers* affirms that, “Both of Ellen’s works serve a tutelary function by attempting to provide a context for the stories; they also extend from an oral tradition of story telling as a means of education” (264). So, in Kuzwayo’s works oral tradition influences the structure, the style and method of her modern work.

In Akachi Adimora- Ezeigbo’s works, especially in her trilogy, she enormously employs oral narrative devices and also transliterates most Igbo proverbs and idioms. For instance, when portraying Moses Akunne and his wife as ingrates in *House of Symbols*, Osai says to Eaglewoman, “Even when we chew and spit into their hands, they chew and spit into our eyes...”. Ezeigbo maintains this style from the first novel- *The Last of the Strong Ones* till the last page of the last novel entitled *Children of the Eagle*. She empowers her present ideology with the past. Flora Nwapa’s first two novels- *Efuru* and *Idu*, are also indebted to oral literature. Nwapa’s *Efuru* and *Idu* “constitute a solid structure, documenting certain aspects of the traditional way of life of the Igbo people”.

This infusion of oral literature is also explored and utilized by the African female playwrights and poets. Exploring these traditional norms and techniques and weaving them into modern creative works, is one of the remarkable qualities of notable literary works. Notable female playwrights such as Zulu Sofola, Tess Onwue, Julie Okoh, Catherine Acholonu, Stella Dia Oyedepo and poets like Angela Miri, Cecilia Kato, Pat Nkweteyim, Jemeo Nyonjo, Patience Nitumwesiga, Chioma Shedrach Enwerem, and others explore these traditional features.

In their works, some female playwrights show conservative tendencies and portray characters that play traditional roles to maintain African culture and tradition; some others are revolutionaries who present resilient female characters. There are also female writers whose works portray none of these ends, rather, they stand in-between and attempt to build a bridge between the conservatives and revolutionists. This is

permissible in creativity since as Mabel Ewuirhoma points out in “Female Creativity and Women Centred Ideologies,” that:

The female dramatist as a member of the society... has the choice of portraying her woman to suit her authorial goals. She has also the prerogative of making her woman conform to the active radical group, or presenting her as docile and submissive. The former trend is a feature ideological plays, having its male and female characters enact strong and radical roles. (p.2)

The choice of portraying a character to suit authorial goals of the playwrights is not exclusively for female dramatists, but it simply implies that female playwrights like the male ones, also creatively create characters that would transmit their ideologies to the audience and that way, help to propagate their ideology and positively transform the society. In the play *Anowa*, Ama Ata Aidoo presents the protagonist- *Anowa*, who repudiates culture and tradition of her people. Though she is described as wild and strange, the villagers attribute her stubbornness to the influence of the gods and label *Anowa* a priestess. She marries Kofi Akor against her parent’s wish. Both migrated to another village in search of greener pasture. *Anowa* works with her husband, until he starts buying slaves which *Anowa* abhors, because to her, slave trade is a crime against humanity. As the slaves work for them and they prosper, their marital relationship dwindles. *Anowa*’s problem is compounded with her husband’s sterility. She hardly complained to anyone but is blamed for every predicament they encountered in marriage. This revelation is made by the old woman who laments thus:

*O Kofi Akor! Some say he lost his manhood because he was not born with much to begin with, that he had been a sickly infant and there always was only a hollow in him where a man’s strength should be. Others say he had consumed it acquiring wealth, or exchanged it for prosperity. But I say that all should be laid at *Anowa*’s doorstep. What man prospers married to a woman like *Anowa*? (p.63)*

While *Anowa* is set in what later became Ghana in 1870, some of the issues raised in the drama are modern and topical. Christina Ama Ata Aidoo chooses to let her heroine suffer without being vindicated till she dies. This is Aidoo’s approach to such issues where the protagonist pays dearly for not abiding to her people’s culture and tradition. This indicates conservatism. However, Aidoo does not completely uphold traditions that suppress women, she rather, subtly reveals those cultural practices that really sustain women’s dignity in traditional African society and the effects of westernism on the roles of women in their family and community. This way, Aidoo

maintains an equilibrium in her ideology which hinges on symbiotic relationship between male and female genders.

Aidoo is not alone in this preservation of positive old ways; Zulu Sofola also shares Aidoo's views on societal issues. In most of Zulu's plays, as Olu Obafemi observes, "... She counter-poses the old against the young, new ideas versus old tales. Her attitude seems to favour a preservation of the old even when this is untoward." (60) This conservatism is overtly portrayed in Zulu Sofola's *The Sweet Trap* (1977) and *Old Wines Are Tasty* (1979), and *Wedlock of the Gods* (1972). Though Nutsukpo proclaims Sofola as a reformist, most of her works depict otherwise. Zulu Sofola projects traditions and customs which infringe on rights of women but she proffers little or no solution to the problem and does not create escape route for her protagonist.

Countrary to Aidoo's and Zulu's views, Tees Onwueme, in most of her plays creates heroines who resist obnoxious cultural practices to effect positive transformation and still survive it. Onwueme is more progressive and revolutionary than Aidoo and Zulu. Onwueme in *Broken Calabash*, allows Courtma-Ona's father, to suffer the consequences of Idegbe cultural practice in Ogwashiukwu, which prefers an only female child – Ona to bear children in her father's house instead of marrying the man she loves. Courtma hangs himself when Ona accuses him of impregnating her. Here, Onwueme castigates and condemns a tradition which humiliates an innocent girl child. Also, in Onwueme's *The Reign of Wazobia*, the heroine Wazobia is able to mobilize men and women who are gender sensitive, to carry out a revolution which erases those cultural practices that stand against women.

Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo (2008) appreciates Onwueme's efforts in "Literature as a Tool for Developing the Society" as she notes that, "Onwueme's play makes a powerful statement about women's ability to change society by drawing from their inner strengths..." This explains what Ekwierhoma points out earlier that the female dramatist "... as a member of the society, has the choice of portraying her woman to suit her authorial goals." African female poets also express their concern on social issues like their counterparts in prose and drama. They are equally vocal in their expressions. Some of the post independence poetry of African women explore wide range of concerns on the continent and globally – love, identity, family, politics, sexuality, motherhood, hunger, hope, war, peace and more. Most of these female poets reflect Ogunyemi's womanist ideology.

A good example is Patience Nitumwesiga's (2013) "Created Woman." Nitumwesiga, a Ugandan, through her poem rejects the derogatory status and image of womanhood. The persona in "Created Woman" warns, "I don't want to be the kind of woman/ who spends her life wondering/ whether to obey or rule/ I just want to be a free fair woman" (p.63). The persona rejects a docile and constrained life of the African woman, initiated by the colonialists and extended to post independence Africa by the

pioneer creative writers through their works. The persona further states, “I don’t want to be the kind of woman/who wastes time struggling/to be like a man.” She overtly condemns the western feminism that uses militant approach in seeking women empowerment. The persona rather prefers complementarity which had existed in the pre colonial Africa, and that is the ideology African womanism projects. She further declares, “I just want to be a proud honest woman/who knows women and men are different/never capable of acting or behaving the same way/yet none less, none better than the other” (p.63). The persona subtly beckons on the African woman to embrace this concept that recognizes the complementarity which exists between the female and male-“Yet none less, none better than the other.” This entails that none of the gender can function without the opposite sex. This poet believes that life of complementarity would foster peaceful co-existence in the society. Angela Miri, expresses the urge to be freed from patriarchal marginalization in her poem “Do Not Stop Me!” The first stanza expresses the persona’s assertiveness.

Do not stop me!
I burn
Like the wild harmattan fire
Burning uncontrollably
And destroying everything in its path
To clear the sloth for a carnival!
No amount of water or jet of liquid chemicals
Can quench this thirst
In me for self-expression (p.185)

Here, the persona who for long has been restrained by patriarchal domination, now forcefully breaks loose to express self. She warns against any form of obstacle which could be destroyed by her radical movement. This poem, which is though rendered in simple language, passes a stringent message of women emancipation and a conscious effort to negotiate a wider space for women.

In her poem “Tendril Love of Africa,” Ogundipe-Leslie, expresses her concern for the deteriorating condition of Africa. Her Love for her home continent makes her decry the deplorable political, economic and social condition of Africa. However, she expresses hope that Africa’s dream would not be slaughtered on “butcher bench of time...” (16). The poet shows her commitment as a writer and optimistically prophesies that “dismembered” Africa can still be reconstructed and revived. Also, Chioma Shedrach-Enwerem (2008), in her anthology of poems, *As the Sun Rises*, re-echoes the relentless effort of the woman to survive and maintain her identity amidst all odds. In one of her poems entitled “Strength of a Woman,” the persona is:

Veiled with countless regulations
Burdened with dark ancient rules,
Yet she soars from her Purdah (pp.10-11)

“Countless regulations” and “ancient rules” have bruised the persona’s personality, but she has hope as the fire her destiny strokes, urges her on to success. She then summons local instruments to aid her in celebrating victory for women because even her local milieu understand her resilience and her song of victory.

Dance a dance of victory
To celebrate her prowess
To celebrate her strength
Udu, take the first step
Ekwe and Oyo
Echo your voices
Ogene and Osha, repeat
Your thrilling rhythms! (p.11)

Shedrach-Enwerem (2008) also decries the insensitivity exhibited by most African leaders in “Beneath the Rug.” She laments:

Then he walked on rug
But beneath the rug
Lay stinking mud
Yet he walked on
The mud-stained rug (p.69)

Beneath the rug
Lay bones of heroes
Withered arms of Piety
Shrunk shoulders of sages
Bumping up the rug.

Yet he pretended not to see (pp.69-70).

Like in Ifeoma Okoye’s *Men Without Ears*, most of the political leaders in African, especially Nigeria, are so insensitive to the plight of the masses such that even when they exhibit bad leadership, they still clutch on to power. This indicates clearly that African women writers are not only concerned with women issues but also x-ray political and economic situations in the continent.

In fact, African female poets explore various aspects of life and experiences, including use of praise poems to commend good behaviours and retention of content and meaning amongst school children. Anthonia Kalu et al (2013: xiv) confirms this when she says, “Contemporary African women poets also use praise poetry to explore political, historical, and social life, as well as women’s status in the family, society, and the nation”. Indeed, due to modernization in our globalised world,

women writers in Africa have a wider range of issues to write on. This accounts for the upsurge in literary creativity in all the genres of literature. As Iniobong Uko (2006: 183) notes, “Prior to the last decade or two, the preoccupation of African women writers was to redefine African womanhood, represent an authentic personality different from that portrayed by male writers who dominated the literary scene in Africa and designed its landscape”. It is important to note that African literary world has been influenced by globalization, and this eventually affects some female writers’ perspectives in their works.

In works of most pioneer female writers, the African woman could be allowed to be depressed and have a feel of denouncement if her marital expectations are not met as portrayed in Flora Nwapa’s *Idu* and Buchi Emecheta’s *Joys of Motherhood*; but for the contemporary novelists like Sefi Atta, wifehood and motherhood are secondary issues and must not be the sole quest of a woman. In Atta’s (2006: 295) *Everything Good Will Come*, marriage and procreation only contribute to a woman’s joy and do not guarantee ultimate satisfaction. That is why even when Enitan gives birth to Yinka, though she describes her baby as a ‘Pearl’, and says “Like a pearl, I could have licked her!” showing the love she has for her baby, motherhood experience does not deter her from walking out of her marriage when she could no longer tolerate her husband. The 21st century female writer would not allow her identity to be subsumed in her marital status. One can therefore contend that what Nnolim tags “fleshy writing” tendencies, are merely the realities of the contemporary environment in which the modern African writer finds himself/herself. A creative writer after all is a product of a society from which he/she gets materials for creativity. Globalization thus, affects human society in different ways. So, while battling with tradition and culture of her society, African female writers also have the globalized world to contend with, in order to be relevant, realistic and committed.

In fact, African female writers represent various thematic concerns in their works, and sometimes, most are preoccupied with marriage and its antecedents, political issues and ecological problems, they react to these issues differently, each depicting her ideological stance, and that is creativity expressed in different perspectives, as perspective is a product of the author’s personal experiences, his reasoning, training and even his temperament.

CONCLUSION

We have tried to discuss the emergence of African female writings and what really influenced their works. The paper also indicates that like her male counterparts, the sources of African female writings are traced to oral literature. The study reveals that even when these female writers are exposed to similar circumstances, each of them approach these issues from different perspectives. Their writings address a wide range of social concerns as shown above. In all, the major objective is to create the awareness among women and society in general of the need to erase obnoxious

cultural practices that demean womanhood and to impart in the contemporary African woman the resourceful, resilient and assertive human being. African women writers have indeed succeeded in carving a literary tradition which defined the real African woman known in traditional African society as one that is strong, resourceful and economically empowered, and one that could effectively contribute to the development of her immediate and wider society. This way, African women writers make themselves socially relevant and committed.

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NIGERIANS' TRUST IN THE NIGERIA CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL'S INFORMATION ON COVID-19

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Abstract

This study interrogates the extent to which Nigerians believed information on COVID-19 was given to them by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) via their daily media briefings across the different media in Nigeria. Using a quantitative survey method of 250 respondents in the purposively selected University town of Iyamho in Edo State Nigeria and based on the Libertarian theory of Mass Communication, the study found out that an overwhelming percentage of Nigerians, namely two-thirds, do not believe the information and statistics given to them by NCDC via their media briefings and also do not believe that the COVID-19 would be efficacious and the majority expressed their unwillingness to take the vaccine when they become available. The study recommended that further studies be carried out to investigate the abysmally low trust in such an important government agency charged with the responsibility of informing Nigerian about the dangers and management of such dangerous infectious diseases as COVID-19.

Keywords: COVID-19, trust, NCDC, vaccine, media, information

Introduction

In every society, the public pays attention to information emanating from the government, moreover, if the information is perceived to be important such as health-related information. However, if the citizens lose trust in the leadership of their country, they may be tempted to doubt the credibility of information disseminated by the government or its representative agencies and the government media. The general public perceived government information based on their political inclination, their previous experiences with the government or its agencies on certain matters of national interest, the credibility of the government media and trust. According to Easton (1965), trust means holding a positive perception of an

individual or an organization. According to Easton trust in government represents the confidence of the citizens in the actions of a government to do what is right and perceived as fair.

In third-world countries including Nigeria, credible leadership remains a big problem. This also affects the audience's perception of any information passed across to the public either through its agencies or the media. In Nigeria for instance, poor institutional performance, political polarization, increasing economic inequality, decreasing economic mobility, insecurity, and health sector crisis have continued to erode public confidence in the Nigerian Government. Since the outbreak of the Ebola Virus, the Government has been addressing the public through Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) via the mass media. Established in November 2018 by President Muhammadu Buhari the mission of the NCDC includes: preventing, detecting, and controlling diseases of public health importance, coordinating surveillance systems to collect, analyse and interpret data on diseases of public health importance, to support States in responding to small outbreaks, and lead the response to large disease outbreaks, developing and maintaining a network of reference and specialized laboratories, to conduct, collate, synthesize and disseminate public health research to inform policy and to lead Nigeria's engagement with the international community on diseases of public health relevance. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control is the country's national public health institute. According to Njidda et.al (2018, p.1) "Before the EVD crisis, Nigeria established the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), which played a pivotal role in the control of the EVD outbreak in Nigeria, as well as provided support to other countries that were affected by the crisis modelled on the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)"

Covid-19 information (report) essentially gets to Nigerians from the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) via the mass media. Since the Covid-19 pandemic crept into Nigeria in March 2020 following its outbreak in Wuhan China, NCDC has been disseminating information on three key areas viz total confirmed cases, discharged, and deaths and recently talked about the vaccine. As of today, February 4, 2021, the NCDC report shows that Nigeria has recorded 136,030 confirmed cases of Covid-19; 110,449 discharged from isolation centres and 1,632 deaths recorded (NCDC, 2021). However, the extent of the audience's believability of the credibility of this information has become a thing of concern to many of us, given the fact that some Nigerians are not showing signs of compliance with Covid-19 safety protocols. To probe the audience's trust in the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control COVID-19 related, the researchers are prompted to interrogate audience trust in the NCDC statistics of the total confirmed cases, discharged, deaths and their belief in the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine already in circulation.

Literature Review

A huge body of literature exists on Covid-19 information dissemination in Nigeria. Egielewa and Ate (2020) in their work, *COVID-19, Misinformation and disinformation: Analysis of Nigerians' perception of social media health awareness campaigns* interrogated the extent to which COVID-19-related information is shared on social media in Nigeria, the extent to which Nigerians believe COVID-19 related information received on social media; and the extent to which Nigerians pay attention to sources of COVID-19 related information. The study found that 3 out of 4 Nigerians received COVID-19-related information on social media and that 3 out of 5 received COVID-19 awareness messages from Whatsapp and Facebook. The study also found that 60% of the information received from social media is genuine. The study recommends among other things that Nigerians should pay special attention to the sources of COVID-19 information from social media to ensure their reliability and credibility.

Similarly, Idowu (2020) in his study, *Effect of television graphics and animation on COVID-19 awareness campaign* examined the levels at which television graphics and animation create awareness about COVID-19; how television graphics and animation on COVID-19 appeal to viewers and the effect of television graphics and animation in the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. The study found that 90% of the respondents are aware of television graphics and animation on COVID-19 and that 83% of the respondents confirmed that television graphics and animation on COVID-19 are appealing. Data from the study also revealed that 70% of the respondents agreed that television graphics and animation on COVID-19 suit their expectations. The study which used a survey research design recommends among other things that the media need to develop more television graphics and animation contents that will cut across all boundaries of age classifications.

In another study titled, *COVID-19, Television audience's programme choices: An analysis of how Nigerians consume television programmes during the pandemic* by Egielewa, Ate and Ngonso (2021), the researchers probed types of media consumed during the COVID-19 lockdown, the extent to which television viewers consume programmes during the lockdown; the most proffered television programmes consumed by Nigerians during the lockdown period; choices of television programmes during the lockdown period and challenges faced by Nigerian television viewers during the period. Findings revealed that 90% of the respondents consume digital media content during COVID-19. Findings also showed that there is a 58% increase in the number of hours respondents watch television during the COVID-19 lockdown. The findings of the study also revealed that respondents prefer news, films/movies and religious programmes during the lockdown and that Nigerians were more satisfied with the handling of COVID-19 by the Federal government than by state governments. Nigerians, according to findings watched television programmes during the period basically to get information about COVID-19, kill boredom and get spiritual inspiration from God. Also, according to findings, lack of

power supply was the major challenge to watching television during the lockdown period. It is remarkable to note that the above studies and many others address different issues regarding COVID-19 information dissemination but none interrogated how the audience perceives and trust NCDC's information dissemination across different media channels. This study, therefore, intends to close this existing gap which underscores the desirability and inevitability of the study.

Theoretical Construct

The audience is the most important of the clients and influences the environment of any media organization (McQuail, 1987). Therefore, putting across messages to the audience on COVID-19 ought to be done with a high aural of credibility and believability. The libertarian theory of the press is apt for this study. This theory empowers the press to publish or air opinions freely and allows the audiences to sieve the truth from falsehood. According to Ate (n.d.), the theory is "based on the concept of the free marketplace of ideas which held that good ideas would inevitably drive out bad ones if both were guaranteed free expression" (p.16). The theory also held that members of the public are not fickle-minded and therefore should be able to decipher what is being communicated (truth and falsehood). The way and manner people perceive and believe COVID-19 messages depend largely on who is transmitting the information and the trust of the source of information.

Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative survey research approach. Edo State which is one of the 36 states in Nigeria was purposively selected. Thereafter, researchers purposively selected Etsako West Local Government Area for the study and the university town of Iyamho because of the high level of literacy was chosen for the study. Iyamho town has an approximate population of 3, 500 persons including locals, students and staff of Edo State University Uzairue, Edo State Nigeria. A set of questionnaire was designed and administered randomly to students and staff in the university as well as locals through churches and mosques as long as they were adults. 300 questionnaires were distributed but 250 were returned for analysis. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS.

Findings

The data shows that 55% of the respondents were male with 45% being female. Also, 86% were Christians, 13% were Muslims with 1% identifying themselves with no religion. The table below summarizes the findings of the study.

Research Questions (RQ)	Very	Much	Somehow	Not so	Not at all	Total
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	much (%)	(%)	(%)	much (%)	(%)	
Do you get COVID-19-related information from the Daily briefings by the NCDC?	16.1	21.0	38.3	16.5	8.1	100
Do you believe the Statistics from NCDC on the number of confirmed infected Nigerians put at 136, 030 as of 4 th February 2021?	6.9	7.7	19.0	39.7	26.7	100
Do you believe the Statistics from NCDC on the number of confirmed Nigerian deaths from COVID-19 put at 1, 632 as of 4 th February 2021?	6.0	6.0	21.3	43.4	23.3	100
Do you believe the Statistics from NCDC on the number of confirmed Nigerians COVID-19 patients who were discharged from isolation centres put at 110, 449 as of 4 th February 2021?	8.5	7.7	23.8	39.5	20.5	100
Do you believe that the vaccines procured by the NCDC will be effective in preventing the ailment?	8.8	10.8	32.9	33.3	14.2	100
Total	58	59.5	135.3	172.4	92.8	
Average Percentage Total	11	12	26	33	18	100

Table showing results from researchers' findings.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The data shows that Nigerians got Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) information on COVID-19 (37.1%). Approximately three out of every five Nigerians said they got most NCDC COVID-19-related information from social media (63%) with a quarter saying they got their NCDC COVID-19 information from Television and Radio (25%). An insignificant 2.4% said they got their NCDC COVID-19-related information from one-on-one communication. This indicates that Nigerians were becoming not only more and more digital in their media consumption but they are also relying more and more on technology-mediated interactions while abandoning or drifting away from interpersonal communication in seeking health information such as COVID-19. This data aligns with findings by Egielewa and Ate (2020) which showed that Nigerians patronise social media health awareness information more than television for their search for COVID-19-related information.

In terms of Nigerians' belief in COVID-19-related information obtained from NCDC, data shows that an overwhelming two-thirds (66.4%) of Nigerians do not believe the NCDC statistics of the number of confirmed infected Nigerians put at 136, 030 as of 4th February 2021. Similarly, two-thirds of Nigerians (66.7%) do not believe the NCDC statistics of the number of confirmed Nigerian deaths from COVID-19 put at 1, 632 as of 4th February 2021. Also, three out of every five Nigerians do not believe the NCDC statistics on the number of confirmed Nigerians COVID-19 patients who were discharged from isolation centres put at 110, 449 as of 4th February 2021. The implications from the above data indicate that trust in the NCDC (a government agency responsible for advising Nigerians on the management of infectious diseases such as COVID-19) was abysmally low such that the statistical information given to Nigerians during their daily briefings met a suspicious public.

As with the suspicions with NCDC statistics on COVID-19, only a few Nigerians believe that the newly procured COVID-19 vaccines will be effective in treating COVID-19 after the WHO said COVID-19 vaccination is the best long-term solution to combat the scourge of COVID-19. Approximately half of all respondents (48%) said they do not believe the vaccines will be effective in halting the scourge compared to only 20% of Nigerians who believe the vaccines will be effective. Relatedly, data also shows that approximately three out of every five Nigerians (58%) said they will not take the vaccine when they are made available. The implication of these data shows that Nigerians do not trust the NCDC as a government agency, they do not trust their statistics and they do not trust any global intervention in halting COVID-19 such as the vaccines.

The libertarian theory of the press is well corroborated in the above findings because the media, particularly the social media in the study published information from the NCDC daily briefings on COVID-19 freely and Nigerians received the information and yet made up their minds not to believe the information so received.

This study concludes that Nigerians' trust in the NCDC is low and this low trust led Nigerians to also doubt the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines. This study, therefore, recommends further studies to interrogate why Nigerians' trust for information from NCDC was abysmally low and why they don't believe COVID-19 vaccines were not efficacious. It also recommends that NCDC as a government agency must do more to win the trust of Nigerians; otherwise, its efforts in combating infectious diseases such as COVID-19 would amount to futility.

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ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICA: NIGERIA IN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Nigeria's economic growth under the current Fourth Republic has been fraught with crises. The economic inequality level in Africa's biggest democracy is at crisis level. This research investigated economic inequality within sub Saharan Africa. Deploying secondary sources of evidence, in the form of textual and statistical data, the study examined inequality levels across critical indices of human development in Nigeria as the point of departure in the region. It was found that economic inequality in the region is high. The study recommends that political leadership should partner with organized private sector with a view to getting interest free loans to support peasant agriculture and SMEs, that the state adopts a progressive tax system to free some resources for the poor, and finally creating strong institutions that will prevent elitist state capture.

Keywords: Economy, Inequality, Nigeria, Sub Saharan Africa.

Introduction

There are well over 16 billionaires in sub-Saharan Africa living alongside the more than 358 million people living in extreme poverty (Nsehe, 2014; Oxfam, 2019). Absurd levels of wealth exist alongside desperate poverty around the world. Economic inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa has received scant attention not just in terms of political focus but also in the aspect of policy research. However, there have been attempts to cover this gap especially as poverty and inequality are integral to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiative and the Agenda 2030 (Anyanwu, 2016; UNDP, 2017). Following political independence, states in the region in the 1980s and 1990s were preoccupied with modernization and economic growth. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) took centre stage at the turn of the century, with emphasis on poverty reduction (UNDP, 2017). In 2015, when it became clear that MDGs had not been met, events took a different dimension with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiative and the Agenda 2030 with solid emphasis on clamping down on inequality in addition to poverty reduction. Thus as the rising incidence of inequality became a problem for the global community, there arose the need to pay closer attention to the malaise especially as it

affects different regions. In much of Sub-Saharan Africa, structural adjustment and economic liberalization during the 1980s and 1990s worsened the inequality conundrum (UNDP, 2017).

The palpable increase in inequality in the region has spurred a number of empirical and theoretical literatures outlining the adverse effects of inequality on long-run growth (UNDP, 2017; Voitchovsky, 2011; IMF, 2014) its ramifications for poverty reduction (Fosu, 2011; Berardi and Marzo, 2015) and its implication for socio-political stability, violent conflicts and regime change (Stewart, 2010). These narratives were preoccupied with providing lucid explanation of the consequences of acute inequality which prevents disadvantaged people from resource accumulation, educational opportunities and access to healthcare. Indeed, low income earners and excluded groups are often unable to escape from generational cycle of poverty. Thus without radical policy redirection, intergenerational economic mobility will be difficult to achieve and the long term ambition of poverty reduction will be in jeopardy. This is especially vital as the region experiences huge population growth (UNDP, 2017). With an expanding population that is struggling to keep pace with GDP growth rate the region is easily susceptible to poverty incidence. However, it's not all doom and gloom as there is hope that with the emergence of nascent democratic enclaves in the region there will be conscientious redistribution and a widespread production of public goods and services, rather than the patronage political economy associated with erstwhile undemocratic regimes (Gymah-Brempong, 2002; UNDP, 2017).

The advent of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development has reconstructed the narrative and emphasis is beginning to be hinged on inclusive growth and equity. The discourse on development in Sub-Saharan Africa is increasingly interrogating growth and its relationship with inequality and poverty (Fosu, 2011; Berardi and Marzo, 2015). While this appears to be a positive sign, there is nevertheless a disconnect between theoretical lyrics on pathways to development and genuine practical policy attempt at deploying theory to benefit governance. This anomaly has been put down to weak institutions and the shortage of political will by African agencies (Murray-Evans, 2015; Murray-Evans, 2018). Theoretical consensus building must therefore be preceded by collective state action geared towards actualizing the findings of research. This perhaps is the path that will lead sub-Saharan African states to autarky.

One of the greatest threats to Sub-saharan Africa's democracy and democratization process is the vexatious issue of economic inequality. On the economic front, it prevents the vast majority of the people from meeting their needs. In the context of democratization, it may frustrate credible elections as the poor is susceptible to vote selling. Extreme inequality is injurious to growth and development as it is to peace and security. It has been suggested that the increase in criminality in some regions in Nigeria can be linked to regional economic inequality (Sobowale, 2019).

Everywhere across the globe, there is now a conscious effort to clampdown on economic inequality. The end game of this article was to find solution to this issue in the context of Nigeria. Data for this study were gathered through secondary sources. Data were accumulated from relevant journals and other documentary sources which were carefully selected. From these sources secondary documentary evidence and data, in the form of text and statistics, were gathered. The data were analyzed under themes. A thematic analysis of the data meant that the secondary data collected were discussed under specific sub-heads. The researcher engaged an in-depth analysis of the data, reading through the data set, and drawing out meanings and patterns to find themes. The researcher attempted an objective process of reflexivity, as researchers' subjective dimension and bias can negatively affect thematic studies.

Literature Review

One of the most conspicuous standouts in the inequality literature on Sub-Saharan Africa is the degree to which fiscal policies and resource redistribution can reduce inequality (Odusola, 2017; UNDP, 2017). These arguments critique the existing fiscal policy frameworks and bemoan their inability to effectively redistribute resources with a view to bridging the gap between the rich and the poor. These discourses criticise the largely irresponsible wage structures birthed by a largely amoral political leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa, regressive tax systems and low investment in pro-poor social welfare sectors like education and health. All of this prevents the emergence of a socio-economic climate that encourages efficient redistribution of resources whose eventual ramifications are lower levels of inequality. In the face of these challenges, public policy must thus be redirected towards progressive tax system alongside subsidizing the healthcare and educational needs of the underclass. The failure of Sub-Saharan Africa's political leaders and economic institutions to creatively navigate these issues is a drawback and represents a major milestone for Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals initiative.

Other third world economic themes have focused on the linkage between natural resource availability and high levels of domestic inequality (Lewis, 2007; Voitchovsky, 2011). Resource-dependent growth can deepen inequality due essentially to the fact that amoral political elites may simply enrich themselves and few cronies with the majority of the population remaining poor and helpless. Drawing on the resource-curse thesis, this position holds that political leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa often throwaway accountability and transparency when deploying natural resource wealth of their respective states. The entrenched disjuncture between the state and the society in the region further worsens the conundrum as the people themselves demand little or no accountability as they view governmental actions as no man's business. Prebendalism, corruption and the conversion of official positions into channels for material accumulation all deepens the socio-economic

gap between the rich and poor. This has the tendency to increase inequality to higher levels as poverty spreads relentlessly.

The desire to pursue employment and economic growth with a burgeoning manufacturing sector has led to investigation geared towards the industrial and manufacturing arena (UNDP, 2017). The argument here is that Sub-Saharan African states ought to direct resources to growth-stimulating industrial and manufacturing sectors with a linkage to the agricultural sector. This will have the effect of supporting poor people with the opportunity to leverage on investments in areas which require little capital and less skill. However, this quest for a revolution in manufacturing capabilities of Sub-Saharan African states has remained elusive as their productive bases are weak. Unlike in Europe and America, where productive structures are stronger making it easy for diversification in terms of manufactured products, African economies are relatively weak and are yet to undergo manufacturing and growth-inducing transformation. The consequence is that most Sub-Saharan economies often hold the short end of the stick when encountering developed regional groupings in trade negotiations (Murray-Evans, 2018). Again, public policies deployed to address this issue have largely fallen short of expectations.

Dimensions of Inequality in Nigeria

There are a number of views on the nature and dimensions of inequality in Nigeria. However, there is a consensus that three dimensions stand out (Umukoro, 2014; Aigbokhan, 2017). These are economic, gender and regional inequalities. Yet gender inequality and regional inequality both manifest as economic inequality within their respective domains. This is due essentially to the fact that the first two overlap with the latter. In drawing out the capabilities of men and women everywhere writers can make allusion to their economic strengths. For example, in Nigeria politics the relative weakness of women in terms of economic strength prevent them from having the desire to participate in the political process. In a similar vein, the ability of people to be economically strong is often dependent on their place of birth (Owoseye, 2019). Globally, it can be argued that those who are born in the affluent economies of the northern hemisphere stand more chance than their counterparts in the underdeveloped rural south.

According to Umukoro (2014:3) ‘economic inequality is the difference in the distribution of economic assets (wealth) and income within or between populations or individuals’. This view explains the concept of inequality in the material sense. Here perhaps economic indices such as income and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) can help to explain the differences in wealth between individuals and regional or governmental bodies. Economic inequality scrutinizes the inherent idea of equality of outcomes, opportunity and life expectancy (Fletcher, 2013). These variables are dependent on specific criteria like the level of education, health conditions and the

socio-economic relations of individuals, groups and governments. Economic inequality is often reflected in such data like the incidence of poverty between and among individuals and groups, and the income disparity which exist between and among such groups and individuals.

In Nigeria people living below the poverty line have increased consistently in much of the Fourth Republic period. For example, income inequality as measured via the Gini index increased from 40% in 2003 to 43% in 2009 (Oxfam, 2017). In terms of the internal dynamics, some regions experience poverty more than others due to educational and socio-cultural differences between regions. The North-West geopolitical zone of the country is the most economically backward area. For example, there is evidence which suggest that incidence of poverty in Sokoto State is 81%, while the figure is much lower in the North-Central state of Niger at 34% (Oxfam, 2017). In Nigeria economic and gender inequality feeds on and reinforces each other. Nigeria is a largely patriarchal society with cultural practices impeding the prospect of women as they are less likely to own land and often operate in the low-paid, informal sector where the value of their production is often undermined. Inequality and extreme poverty are not due to lack of resources in Nigeria, but due to governance crises arising essentially out of resource misallocation, rent-seeking behaviours and pervasive corruption on the part of politicians, bureaucrats and rich contractors tied together in amoral relations usually detrimental to the survival of ordinary citizens.

The foundations of the study of economic inequality can be traced to the writings of classical economic theorists like Marx, who attempted to explain the existential living conditions of the underclass in ways that were quantifiable (Samuelson, 1980). This idea was later polished and developed by the Neo-classical economists particularly the English man Stanley Jevons and the Austrian School led by the erudite Carl Menger. Today functional income distribution is easily measured via the Gini coefficient, the Palma ratio, Thiel index or the Wolfoson polarization. According to Aigbokhan, (2017) all four inequality indices recorded an increase in Nigeria between 2012 and 2016, as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Inequality Measures in Nigeria, 2004-2016

Gini	Wave 2 (2012/2013)						Wave 3 (2015/2016)			
	2004	2010	Gini	Theil	Palma	Wolfoson	Gini	Theil	Palma	Wolfoson
National	0.4296	0.447	0.36188	0.25300	1.51804	0.30544	0.38702	0.265995	1.72760	0.34064
Urban	0.4154	0.4329	0.34604	0.24842	1.40532	0.28340	0.36772	0.23599	1.55846	0.30904
Rural	0.4239	0.4334	0.34907	0.21614	1.42641	0.29103	0.37787	0.24625	1.64568	0.33172
S/South	0.3849	0.434	0.32998	0.18150	1.28377	0.28079	0.36926	0.22681	1.55563	0.35601
S/East	0.376	0.444	0.32416	0.18556	1.26597	0.26126	0.40612	0.29624	1.92862	0.35928
S/West	0.4088	0.4077	0.37673	0.39182	1.68479	0.26883	0.36968	0.24694	1.60193	0.30451
N/central	0.4459	0.422	0.37634	0.26475	1.62340	0.33610	0.35599	0.20994	1.44030	0.31910
N/East	0.4114	0.4468	0.36902	0.23452	1.58829	0.32398	0.41417	0.28882	1.98485	0.38947
N/West	0.4028	0.4056	0.36367	0.23638	1.55316	0.30940	0.35178	0.20709	1.42233	0.30641

Source: Computed from National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) General Household Survey Panel Data Wave 2(2012/2013) & Wave 3 (2015/2016). Figures for 2004 & 2010 are from NBS Press Briefing on Nigeria PovertyProfile 2010 Report, Abuja. Adapted from Aigbokhan (2017). Palma ratio –computed via income share of top 10% divided by the share of the bottom 40%

Gender inequality has received attention in development literature (Umukoro, 2014; OECD, 2015; Aigbokhan, 2017; UNDP, 2017; Oxfam, 2019). Indeed, it has been suggested that there is little hope of clamping down on poverty without improving the existential living conditions of women and girls (OECD, 2015). Some of the measures for gauging the level of progress of women in different societies include the ratio of girls to boys in school enrolment across primary, secondary and tertiary levels, the share of women in formal sector non-agricultural wage employment, the number of women entrepreneurs and the number of women in elected and appointive positions in national, state and local politics (Aigbokhan, 2017). These criteria reflect the level of achievement of a substantial part of the population of the nation. Women are care givers and form the basis upon which children are inculcated into the society and as such should be economically strong to handle socio-economic and political challenges.

On the measures of progress for women, Nigeria fall substantially short of expectations as the nation lags behind on most fronts. We seem to be living in a patriarchal society where men hold the long end of the stick. Aigbokhan (2017: 7-9) provides empirical evidence to substantiate the fact that women in Nigeria suffer not only socio-economically but also politically as their interests have not been well captured. Women also navigate certain psychological and spiritual intimidation within civil society. There has been, perhaps unsubstantiated claims, that pastors and Imams periodical abuse female folks and exploit them both emotionally and financially. Oxfam (2017) showed clearly that women are less likely to own land in Nigeria due to socio-cultural inheritance practices and as such are less likely to be in positions that can aid the accumulation of wealth. This births serious financial issues as they are often not able to provide collateral required for accessing loans. This is an indictment not only on present cultural norms but also the governance structure that consistently refuse to rectify the anomaly.

Regional inequality manifests in various climes and may be attributable to natural environment and public policy choices. At the goal keepers' event for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2019 in New York, Billionaire and philanthropist Bill Gates argued that if the SDGs are to be met developing nations must focus on two sectors, education and healthcare. He argued that where a child is born determines if it will survive the first five years. Deploying Nigeria as an example, specifically the high levels of poverty in Northern Nigeria viz a viz southern Nigeria; he argued that children born in the south are more likely to survive their fifth year than their counterparts in the north (Owoseye, 2019). Regional inequality is a problem for developing countries and in Nigeria this problem is escalating (Umukoro, 2014). As seen on table 1 above, differences in economic inequality across the various geo-political zones in Nigeria thus reflect the regional differences in terms of the chances and opportunity of escaping the poverty conundrum.

Inequality in Nigeria: Interrogating the causes

Even in the face of the recent recession, available evidence indicates that Nigeria is Africa's largest economy (Oxfam, 2017; Oxfam, 2019). Yet the most populous black enclave in the world continues to be home to a lot of poor people, while a minute group of hegemonic elites capture the state and pillage the economy. In much of the post-colonial history of the nation inequality kept rising. While this phenomenon has not been associated with Nigeria alone, it has assumed a frightening dimension. Inequality the world over has been on the increase in the post-world war two era. As at 2015, sixty two people had much wealth than the poorest fifty percent of humanity, and that the most affluent one percent in the globe had more wealth than the rest of the world put together (Oxfam, 2016). This is an unjust situation and public policy everywhere ought to react appropriately and alleviate this condition. It is clear that the poor across the world hold the short end of the stick and have been economically undermined for quite a while. In Nigeria the scale of this issue is mindboggling and has almost reached its apotheosis.

The wide gap between the rich and the poor in Nigeria constitutes a big problem for government since it, in part, accounts for peasants' frustration which increases criminal tendencies and hastens socio-economic and political instability. According to a study by Oxfam (2017), pulling out Nigerians currently living in extreme poverty of below \$1.90 will require \$24 billion, an amount which is below the total wealth enjoyed by the five most affluent Nigerians. This in itself is an indictment on governance and the entire public policy architecture and direction of Africa's most populous democracy. Poverty in Nigeria appears to be an aberration and a contradiction as the phenomenon has been growing in the context of a prosperous and expanding economy. This situation reflects the fact that resources accruing to the state over time have been consistently cornered by a minority segment of the hegemonic class who in collaboration with their cronies in business have often use their influence over the direction of public policies to expand their wealth to the detriment of the underclass.

In Nigeria people living below the poverty line have increased consistently in much of the Fourth Republic period. For example, income inequality as measured via the Gini index increased from 40% in 2003 to 43% in 2009 (Oxfam, 2017). In terms of the internal dynamics, some regions experience poverty more than others due to educational and socio-cultural differences between regions. The North-West geopolitical zone of the country is the most economically backward area. For example, there is evidence which suggest that incidence of poverty in Sokoto State is 81%, while the figure is much lower in the North-Central state of Niger at 34% (Oxfam, 2017). In Nigeria economic and gender inequality feeds on and reinforces each other. Nigeria is a largely patriarchal society with cultural practices impeding the prospect

of women as they are less likely to own land and often operate in the low-paid, informal sector where the value of their production is often undermined. Inequality and extreme poverty are not due to lack of resources in Nigeria, but due to governance crises arising essentially out of resource misallocation, rent-seeking behaviours and pervasive corruption on the part of politicians, bureaucrats and rich contractors tied together in amoral relations usually detrimental to the survival of ordinary citizens.

The failure of governance to tackle the inequality conundrum means that Nigeria is fast becoming popular for being at the top of the list on most underdevelopment criteria. Lack of access to safe water, open defecation, and out of school children are some of these negative indices. It is in the light of this that some commentators have argued that the nation has taken over from India as the poverty capital of the world (Olawoyin, 2019). This section examines the literature as it concerns some of the evidence of inequality in Nigeria. It assesses the literature on economic and gender inequality, the largely regressive taxation system which places a heavy burden on the poor as against the rich, state capture by elites and their collaborators, excessive cost of governance, resource misallocation, and the attempt at reducing inequality via policy choices and political will.

The extent of economic and gender inequality in Nigeria

Across the six geo-political zones of the Nigerian federation, poverty manifests in the daily toiling and struggling of majority of citizens as they try to eke out a living in a country where a minority continue to live in affluence. Figures from the NBS (2012) and Forbes (2016) show that over 112 million Nigerians were living in poverty in 2010 and that it will take a whopping forty two years for Nigeria's richest man to spend all his wealth at one million naira a day. These are uncomfortable statistics and they reflect the dire conditions that ordinary Nigerians live in. Available evidence indicates that the annual economic growth rate in the first ten years of the Fourth Republic averaged 7% (World Bank, 2013). In such situation, it becomes contradictory for the nation to experience tremendous increase in inequality. It reflects the absence of public policies geared towards redistribution and inclusive growth.

Table 2: Trends in Poverty Levels in Nigeria, 2014-2017

Year	Gini	National Poverty Index	Unemployment Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth
2014	46.3	55.9	17.1	53.32
2015	46.9	55.8	17.6	53.6
2016	47.5	57.2	18	53.82
2017	48.1	61.2	18.5	54.1

Adapted from Ewubare and Okpani (2018)

Table 2 captures the situation of the Nigerian State in recent times. Life expectancy at birth is low relative to the global norm which is clearly above 60 years. Inequality, as reflected in Gini is high, and the unemployment rate and the national poverty index are also poor. These data and evidence perhaps reveals the failure of governance to strategically redistribute resources in favour of the poor. Available evidence also shows that in Nigeria poverty and inequality have a strong geographical correlation. Poverty incidence is rife in the rural areas in comparison to urban areas where it is comparatively low. This is perhaps due to the fact that opportunities for education and upward mobility in the rural areas are few and far between in comparison to the urban areas. In terms of geographical differences in poverty rate, the gap is even more as states in the northern region experience more incidence of poverty. Poverty rate is lowest in the South West as shown in Table 3 below. Across the nation, Sokoto state in the North West geo-political zone has the highest poverty rate while Niger state in the North central geo-political zone has the lowest poverty rate. With these evidence and with the lowest poverty rate resting at roughly 50%, the poverty alleviation schemes of both the federal and state governments in Nigeria can be rightly adjudged as having fallen short of their expected objectives.

Table 3: Inequality and Poverty rate by Regions

Geo-political zone	Poverty rate (%)
North West	71.4
North East	69.1
North Central	60.7
South East	59.5
South South	55.5
South West	49.8

Source: Oxfam, 2017

Frustrating levels of inequality in collusion with an abysmal level of public services provision means that the prospect for multi-dimensional poverty is high in Nigeria. Households struggle to meet their basic needs and face health, educational and other challenges. It is in the face of these challenges that UNDP (2015) reported that Ethiopia, Nigeria and Bangladesh had the highest incidence of multi-dimensional poverty at 88.2%, 50.9% and 49.5% respectively. The cases of Nigeria and Bangladesh are especially critical due to their huge populations. As such in absolute sense, Nigeria has the most incidence of multi-dimensional poverty in the world. The gender dimension to the discourse on inequality is equally problematic for public policy in Nigeria. Women are extremely marginalised and they have less opportunity for upward mobility and as such they represent a group that public policy and governance ought to work assiduously to assuage. Socio-cultural practices within a largely patriarchal environment frustrate their opportunities.

Nigeria ranks poorly on the Gender Gap Index (WEF, 2015). Women are therefore likely to be poorer than men in Nigeria even if they have often engaged in the informal sector where productivity is difficult to calculate and inculcate in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Their historical disempowerment arose from the fact that they are behind in terms of educational opportunities, access to healthcare facilities, access to political offices and participation among others. In the end, majority of women operate in the low-skilled, under-paid informal sector of the economy where their contribution is often undervalued and undermined by a largely patriarchal public policy making environment. There is also evidence in the literature to the fact that despite women constituting 60% to 79% of Nigeria's rural labour force, their male counterparts are five times more likely to be owners of land, although there are regional differentials as women in the southern part of Nigeria do not suffer as much as their northern counterparts (Olomola, 2013). Women's largely inability to own land further diminishes their chances of securing credit to drive their business and agricultural endeavours since they may not have other means to present as collateral.

Indeed, beyond the agricultural sector women suffer marginalization. According to British Council (2012), many factories have the penchant of hiring women in poorly paid jobs because they are often unable to complain about miserable wages and poor working conditions. It is also true that women who go into entrepreneurship at the peasant level often suffer from a perverse tax collection regime and amoral loan-sharking behaviour on the part of micro-finance banks. These tendencies often prevent industrious women from undertaken businesses in which they have the natural abilities to engage in. Educational opportunities are intricately connected to economic opportunities, and on this front much has been written about the disadvantages facing the girl child in Nigeria (British Council, 2012; Oxfam, 2017; Oxfam, 2019). Girls are less likely to get basic education but this disadvantage is far more prevalent in Northern Nigeria than any other region of the country (Oxfam, 2019). Sometimes the opportunity for education is missed due to early marriage and in the event of child birth the chances for education become even slimmer. These narratives depict the existential situation of women in Nigeria and some of the challenges they face.

On the health front, women face similar challenges as they are often exposed to certain diseases, like Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF) especially when they marry or give birth very early. This is very apt in the context of northern Nigeria where socio-cultural practices have encouraged early marriages for quite a while now. It is estimated that over 12000 cases of VVF are recorded in Nigeria yearly (FMH, 2015). Patriarchy in the Nigerian public sphere has also led to the increase in Gender Based Violence which has had the unintended effect of conditioning women to accept physical assault from their male counterparts, whether in the home, workplace or any other social arena. This tendency has become ingrained in the psyche of women such that they have been completely subjugated by the male folks in Nigeria. Gender discrimination in Nigeria reaches its apotheosis in the political marginalization of

women. The so-called thirty-five percent affirmative action enjoys only lip service from the political class. While this position which purports to be in the interest of women is absurd since women constitute over fifty percent, it has wrongly assumed an ideal theme. In the vilest of cases, politically gender-sensitive positions like Commissioner for women affair have been usurped by a patriarchal political class. This happened in Adamawa State in 2015 (Oxfam, 2017).

Conclusion

The inescapable verdict then is that the nation has not been able to reduce poverty and inequality. Nigeria's democracy has not been able to improve the existential living conditions of its teeming population. While this condition subsists, there is the paradox of the nation being a resource rich territory with a potential for quantum growth and socio-economic transformation. If the managers of the nation's resources effectively deploy them the nation will inevitably become capable of taking proper care of its peoples and the push for poverty reduction will get meaningful boost.

Recommendation

First, political leadership should partner with organized private sector with a view to getting interest free loans to support peasant agriculture and SMEs. In this regards, government can set up a data bank housing all SMEs and peasant agric-holdings with a view to effectively supporting them and building livelihoods for a whole segment of the populace. A substantial amount of people operate from the informal sector in Nigeria and their activities are not well captured and reported. If the right approach is deployed information about the activities and number of these small holdings can be aggregated and the necessary support provided to them. The multiplier effect of this gesture will be noticed in the number of people that will be lifted out of the poverty cycle. A deliberate attempt by government to empower people at the lower rungs of society is a clear way of fighting poverty and social vices.

The adoption of a progressive tax system is another way of ensuring that the gap between the rich and the poor within society is drastically reduced. By taxing the rich and subsidizing the poor with the resources so gathered society will inevitably clamp down on poverty and reduce the tendency for the poor to engage in criminality. The idea of giving tax breaks to foreign capital and big businesses under the guise of encouraging investment in the local economy is not a rational economic decision. This is because foreign capital needs the local economy as much as the local economy needs the investments. It therefore makes little sense for the government to abdicate its responsibility of accumulating resources on behalf of its citizens via taxes on the more virile segments of the economy. A well structured progressive tax regime will make it easy for the state to appropriate the necessary resources to engage in a fair equalization of wealth within society.

Finally, is the need to prevent, or better still halt, elitist state capture so that a few people do not have exclusive preserve or right over policy formulation and implementation? A number of provisions, legal and moral, can be of help in this quest.

Suggestion for further studies

Future studies can deploy primary data to further illuminate this issue, in the context of Nigeria or other sub Saharan states with a view to bringing further solutions to the crisis of inequality in Nigeria specifically and Sub Saharan Africa in general.

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INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR EDUCATING DISTANT LEARNERS IN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of social media platforms on student engagement, knowledge acquisition, and academic performance in the context of distance education. With the increasing popularity and widespread use of social media, there is a need to explore its potential as an educational tool for remote learners. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. A quantitative survey is conducted to gather data on the frequency and types of social media platforms used by distant learners, as well as their perceptions of the effectiveness of these platforms for collaborative learning. The survey is administered to 400 students of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) through an online survey. The findings from the study reveal that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have shown potential in enhancing student engagement and knowledge acquisition, and that educators can create online communities or groups where students can engage in discussions, share resources, and collaborate on projects. The study recommends that educators and distance education institutions should consider the potentials of platforms when choosing social media platforms for collaborative learning among distant learners and that social media platforms should be utilized to promote collaboration and interaction among distant learners.

Keywords: Social media platforms, Distant learners, Collaborative learning environment, Academic performance and social media and collaboration

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a significant increase in the number of students learning remotely. As a result, there has been a growing interest in the use of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have

become increasingly popular among students, and educators have started to explore their potential for enhancing the learning experience of distant learners.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. For instance, Gikas and Grant (2013) conducted a focus group interview of students in three different universities in the United States and found that the use of social media created opportunities for collaborative learning and engagement in various extracurricular activities. Similarly, Al-Rahmi, Alias, Othman, Marin & Tur, (2018) found that both male and female students were satisfied with the use of social media for collaborative learning, and engagement was found to positively affect learning performance.

Social media platforms have been found to have many advantages in learning, such as providing wide access to information and resources, reducing barriers to group interaction and telecommunications, supporting collaborative learning activities, encouraging learners to learn more about self-learning, increasing engagement and learner's motivation, enhancing engagement of learners with each other and their teachers, and supporting active and social learning (Ansari & Khan, 2020). However, some studies have also highlighted the negative impact of social media on students' academic performance. For instance, a study by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) found that students who used Facebook while studying had lower grades than those who did not use Facebook. Similarly, a study by Junco (2008) found that students who spent more time on Facebook had lower GPAs than those who spent less time on Facebook. Despite the growing interest in the use of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment, there are still many gaps in knowledge about this topic. For instance, there is a need to investigate the most effective social media platforms for educating distant learners, the best practices for using social media platforms in a collaborative learning environment, and the factors that influence the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners. The purpose of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many educational institutions to shift to remote learning, which has led to an increased reliance on social media platforms for educational purposes. Social media platforms have the potential to provide a collaborative learning environment for distant learners, where they can interact with their peers and instructors, share ideas and resources, and receive feedback. However, the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment is not well understood. While some studies have shown that social media platforms have a positive impact on academic performance (Sobaih, Palla, & Baquee, 2022), others have highlighted the need for further research to determine the effectiveness of social media in education

(Alazemi, 2021). Additionally, there is a gap in the literature regarding the use of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. The use of social media in e-learning has been found to have many benefits, including better communication, increased student involvement, and the ability to build social networks. To investigate the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment, a mixed-methods approach was considered beneficial. A mixed-methods approach is useful for exploring complex phenomena and can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions.

The study begins with a quantitative survey to gather data on the frequency and types of social media platforms used by distant learners, as well as their perceptions of the effectiveness of these platforms for collaborative learning. This was followed by a focus group discussion to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of learners and instructors. The quantitative research instrument was administered to 400 students of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), using an online survey, and the sample size was obtained by applying the Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination. The criteria for selection of respondents were that the participants must be a student of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), studying any course at any level.

The findings from the quantitative survey were then used to inform the focus group discussion. It is important to note the importance of meaningfully engaging learners in the discussion to ensure validity and to gain insights into how the students really feel about using social media for collaboration. The data collected from focus group discussion were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis to identify the recurring themes. This helped to strengthen the understanding of the data, identify findings, and draw meaningful conclusions.

Conceptual Clarifications

The use of social media platforms for educational purposes has become increasingly popular in recent years. Social media platforms offer a collaborative learning environment that allows learners to interact with each other and with their instructors, regardless of their geographical location. This literature review aims to investigate the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. The review will explore the concepts of social media-based collaborative learning, academic self-efficacy, cyberbullying, and interactivity with peers, teachers, and online knowledge sharing behaviour. The review will also highlight the importance of this research study and its contribution to the field of education.

Several studies have shown that social media-based collaborative learning has a positive impact on student learning ability (Lund, 2008). Social media platforms offer a collaborative learning environment that allows learners to interact with each other and with their instructors, regardless of their geographical location. Lund (2008) found that social media-based collaborative learning significantly positively impacts learner performance. The response of mentors in close social media-based learning groups is very high, and a student gets a timely and rapid response from their fellows and mentor and will complete the final version of their work quickly and publish it on time (Lund, 2008).

Academic self-efficacy is an important concept in education that refers to a student's belief in their ability to succeed academically. Several studies have shown that academic self-efficacy is positively associated with student performance (Lund, 2008). The use of social media platforms for collaborative learning can increase academic self-efficacy by providing learners with a supportive learning environment that encourages cooperation and knowledge sharing (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010).

Cyberbullying is a growing concern in the use of social media platforms for educational purposes. Cyberbullying can negatively impact student performance and engagement in collaborative learning environments (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010). However, several studies have shown that the use of social media platforms for collaborative learning can mitigate the negative effects of cyberbullying by providing learners with a supportive learning environment that encourages cooperation and knowledge sharing (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Al-Rahmi, & Zeki, 2018).

Interactivity with peers, teachers, and online knowledge sharing behaviour is an important aspect of collaborative learning environments. Several studies have shown that the use of social media platforms for collaborative learning can increase interactivity with peers, teachers, and online knowledge sharing behavior (Lund, 2008; Alzahrani, 2020); Akçayır, & Akçayır, 2017). The application of online social media facilitates the students to become more creative, dynamic, and connect to the worldwide instructor for collaborative learning (Alzahrani, 2020). The result of this investigation confirmed that the use of social media for collaborative learning purposes, interaction with peers, and teachers affect their academic performance positively, meaning that the implementation of such sophisticated communication technology would bring revolutionary, drastic changes in higher education for international (Alzahrani, 2020).

This review is necessary as it provides a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. The review highlights the positive impact of social media-based collaborative learning on student performance and academic self-

efficacy. The review also highlights the importance of mitigating the negative effects of cyberbullying in collaborative learning environments. Finally, the review emphasizes the importance of interactivity with peers, teachers, and online knowledge sharing behaviour in collaborative learning environments. The findings of this review will contribute to the development of effective strategies for using social media platforms for educational purposes.

Griesemer, J. A. (2014) conducted a study titled "Using social media to Enhance Students' Learning Experiences." The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of social media platforms in enhancing students' learning experiences. The study's research question was, "Can social media platforms be used to enhance students' learning experiences?" The study's objectives were to identify the benefits of using social media platforms in education, explore the challenges of using social media platforms in education, and provide recommendations for educators on how to effectively use social media platforms in education. The study's significance was to provide insights into the use of social media platforms in education and to help educators understand how to use social media platforms effectively.

The study used a qualitative research design, and data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 students and 5 educators. The study's participants were selected from a university in the United States, and they were chosen based on their experience with using social media platforms in education. The study's data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The study found that social media platforms can be used to enhance students' learning experiences. The study identified several benefits of using social media platforms in education, including increased student engagement, improved communication between students and educators, and the ability to create collective content. The study also identified several challenges of using social media platforms in education, including privacy concerns, distractions, and the need for training on how to use social media platforms effectively. The study's recommendations for educators on how to effectively use social media platforms in education included setting clear guidelines for social media use, providing training on how to use social media platforms effectively, and using social media platforms to create collaborative learning environments.

Griesemer (2014) study relates to the present study investigating the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment, in that the social media platforms can be used to enhance students' learning experiences, and the study investigating the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment found that social media platforms can be used to create collaborative learning environments. Both studies highlight the benefits of using social media platforms in

education and provide recommendations for educators on how to use social media platforms effectively.

The study by Poellhuber and Anderson (2021) aimed to investigate the readiness of distance students for social media and collaboration. The study was conducted to address the gap in the literature on the use of social media in distance education. The research question was: What is the level of readiness of distance students for social media and collaboration? The objectives of the study were to identify the factors that influence distance students' readiness for social media and collaboration and to determine the relationship between students' readiness and their demographic characteristics. The significance of the study was to provide insights into the use of social media in distance education and to inform the development of effective strategies for promoting social media use among distance students.

The study used a quantitative research design, and data were collected through an online survey. The survey was distributed to students from four large Canadian distance education institutions. A systematic sampling technique was used to select the participants. The survey consisted of 28 items that measured students' readiness for social media and collaboration. The items were grouped into four categories: technical skills, social skills, motivation, and learning preferences. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

The results of the study showed that distance students had a moderate level of readiness for social media and collaboration. The mean score for the overall readiness was 3.23 out of 5. The highest mean score was for technical skills (3.56), followed by motivation (3.28), social skills (3.16), and learning preferences (2.98). The study also found that there was a significant relationship between students' readiness and their demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, and program of study. Older students and female students had a higher level of readiness than younger students and male students. Students in social science programs had a higher level of readiness than students in other programs.

The study concluded that distance students had a moderate level of readiness for social media and collaboration. The study also identified the factors that influence students' readiness, such as age, gender, and program of study. The study recommended that distance education institutions should provide training and support for students to develop their technical and social skills for using social media in a collaborative learning environment. The study also recommended that distance education institutions should consider the demographic characteristics of their students when designing social media-based learning activities.

The study by Poellhuber and Anderson (2021) provides insights into the readiness of distance students for social media and collaboration. This study can inform the

development of effective strategies for promoting social media use among distance students. The relationship between this paper and the study under review is that it helps to provide guidance on the factors that influence students' readiness for social media and collaboration, which can inform the design of effective social media-based learning activities.

Considering the foregoing concepts and extant literature on the subject-matter, the Social Learning Theory guides this study. Social Learning Theory (SLT) is a theoretical framework that explains how people learn from observing others. According to SLT, learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modelling of others' behaviour, attitudes, and emotional reactions (Bandura, 1977). SLT emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process and suggests that individuals can learn from each other through social interactions. SLT also suggests that individuals can learn through reinforcement, which can be positive or negative.

Social learning theory is a psychological theory that emphasizes the importance of observing and modelling the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. According to the theory, individuals primarily learn by observing others, and this learning can be social and not merely behavioural. Social learning theory considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behaviour.

Distant learners face unique challenges that traditional learners do not. Distant learners often lack access to the same resources and support systems as traditional learners, which can hinder their learning experience. Social media platforms offer a collaborative learning environment that can help distant learners overcome these challenges. However, the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment is not well understood.

The use of social media platforms for educational purposes has become increasingly popular in recent years, particularly for distant learners. Social media platforms offer a collaborative learning environment that can enhance the learning experience of distant learners. Social Learning Theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process and suggests that individuals can learn from each other through social interactions.

The relationship between the theory and the study lies in the fact that social media platforms can provide a space for learners to observe and model the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Learners can learn from each other through the process of observational learning, which is a key component of social learning theory. The theory can also be used to examine how factors such as attention, motivation, attitudes, and emotions influence how learners learn from each

other. The study can also be used to explore how social learning theory can be applied to the design of effective collaborative learning environments on social media platforms. The social learning theory provides a useful framework for understanding how learners can learn from each other on social media platforms in a collaborative learning environment.

Social Media Platforms and Distant Learning: Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1 shows the social media platforms used for collaborative learning by the respondents. The data in the table suggests that Facebook was the most commonly used social media platform for collaborative learning among the respondents, with 30% of the respondents using it. LinkedIn was the second most commonly used platform, with 25.2% of the respondents using it. Twitter and Instagram were used by 22% and 14.3% of the respondents, respectively. Other social media platforms were used by 8.5% of the respondents.

Table 1: *Social media platforms used for collaborative learning by respondents*

Options	N	%
Facebook	120	30.0%
Twitter	88	22.0%
Instagram	57	14.3%
LinkedIn	101	25.2%
Other	34	8.5%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: *Field survey, 2022*

The data implies that Facebook and LinkedIn are the most popular social media platforms for collaborative learning among the respondents. This information can be useful for educators and researchers who are interested in using social media for collaborative learning. They can use this information to choose the most appropriate social media platform for their students or participants. Additionally, the data can be used to inform the design of social media-based collaborative learning environments to ensure that they are optimized for the most commonly used platforms.

Table 2: *Effectiveness of Social media platforms in collaborative learning*

Options	N	%
Very effective	108	27.0%
Somewhat effective	100	25.0%
Neutral	70	17.5%
Somewhat ineffective	72	18.0%
Very ineffective	50	12.5%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 2 shows the effectiveness of social media platforms in collaborative learning, as reported by the participants of the study. The data suggests that a majority of the participants found social media platforms to be effective in collaborative learning, with 27% finding it very effective and 25% finding it somewhat effective. On the other hand, 12.5% of the participants found social media platforms to be very ineffective in collaborative learning.

The implication of the data is that social media platforms can be effective tools for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. The majority of the participants found social media platforms to be effective in collaborative learning, which supports the idea that social media can enhance abilities, self-confidence, and motivation among students. The positive impact of social media on interactivity with peers, teachers, and online knowledge sharing behavior has also been reported in previous studies (Ansari & Khan, 2020, and Sarwar, Zulfiqar, Aziz, & Chandia, 2019). However, it is important to note that a small percentage of participants found social media platforms to be very ineffective in collaborative learning. This suggests that social media platforms may not be suitable for all learners and that other factors, such as academic self-efficacy, should also be considered when designing collaborative learning environments (Liu, Zaigham, Rashid & Bilal, 2022).

Table 3: Most helpful features of social media platforms used for collaborative learning

Options	N	%
Chat/messaging	89	22.2%
Discussion forums	74	18.5%
Video conferencing	105	26.3%
File sharing	100	25.0%
Other	32	8.0%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 3 shows the most helpful features of social media platforms used for collaborative learning is video conferencing which had the highest percentage of respondents at 26.3%, followed by file sharing at 25.0%, chat/messaging at 22.2%, and discussion forums at 18.5%. The "other" option had the lowest percentage of respondents at 8.0%.

The data implies that chat/messaging, discussion forums, video conferencing, and file sharing were the most commonly used and the most helpful features of social media platforms for collaborative learning, while other features such as polls, wikis,

and blogs were not as effective. This indicates that for remote educators looking to leverage social media for collaborative learning, they may want to ensure they have access to chat/messaging, discussion forums, video conferencing, and file sharing tools.

This data is consistent with the finding of Liu, Zaigham, Rashid & Bilal, (2022)'s research that shows the positive impact of social media-based collaborative learning on student performance. The study also highlights the importance of chat/messaging and discussion forums, which are commonly used features of social media platforms for collaborative learning. The results of the study can be useful for educators and instructional designers in selecting social media platforms and features that are effective for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment.

Table 4: *Frequency of use of social media for academic purposes*

Options	N	%
Multiple times a day	110	27.5%
Once a day	89	21.5%
A few times a week	97	24.3%
Once a week	84	21.0%
Rarely or never	20	5.0%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: *Field survey, 2022*

Table 4 shows the frequency of use of social media for academic purposes among the participants. The data shows that the majority of the participants use social media for academic purposes multiple times a day (27.5%) or a few times a week (24.3%). Only a small percentage of participants rarely or never use social media for academic purposes (5.0%).

The implications of this data to the study are that social media is a commonly used tool for academic purposes among the participants. However, the frequency of use may have an impact on academic performance and productivity. Studies have shown that heavy use of social media can lead to distractions, procrastination, and reduced productivity (scfcc.edu, 2020). Students who regularly use Instagram while studying tend to perform slightly worse than those who do not use social media while studying (myprivateprofessor.com, 2021).

On the other hand, those who use social media to communicate about academic/school-related topics tend to have marginally better grades than those who use social media for non-academic-related matters (myprivateprofessor.com, 2021). Therefore, while social media can be a useful tool for academic purposes, it is important to use it in moderation and for academic-related matters. Students should

be aware of the potential negative effects of heavy social media use on their academic performance and productivity.

Table 5: *Rating of respondents' academic performances since exposure to the usage social media*

Options	N	%
Significantly improved	100	25.0%
Somewhat improved	106	26.5%
No change	80	20.0%
Somewhat worse	72	18.0%
Significantly worse	42	10.5%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 5 shows the rating of respondents' academic performances since exposure to the usage of social media. The data shows that 25% of the respondents reported a significant improvement in their academic performance, while 26.5% reported a somewhat improved performance. On the other hand, 18% of the respondents reported a somewhat worse performance, and 10.5% reported a significantly worse performance. The remaining 20% reported no change in their academic performance.

The implication of this data to the study investigating the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment is that social media can have a positive impact on the academic performance of students. The data shows that a significant number of respondents reported an improvement in their academic performance since exposure to social media. This suggests that social media can be an effective tool for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment. However, it is important to note that a significant number of respondents also reported a worse performance, which highlights the need for caution in the use of social media for education.

The data suggests that social media can be an effective tool for educating distant learners, but its use should be carefully monitored to ensure that it does not have a negative impact on academic performance.

Table 6: *Impact of social media on respondents' academic performances*

Options	N	%
It has made learning easier for me	72	18.0%
It has improved my knowledge beyond the classroom	76	19.0%
It helps me to interact with learners outside my country	88	22.0%
It exposes me to more educational materials	89	22.3%
All of the above	75	18.8%

Total	400	100.0%
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Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 6 shows the impact of social media on the academic performance of the respondents. The implication of the data in Table 6 is that the respondents in the study generally have a positive view of the impact of social media on their academic performance. The majority of the respondents (89.3%) chose one or more of the options that suggest that social media has a positive impact on their academic performance. Specifically, 72 (18.0%) respondents chose "it has made learning easier for me," 76 (19.0%) chose "it has improved my knowledge beyond the classroom," 88 (22.0%) chose "it helps me to interact with learners outside my country," and 89 (22.3%) chose "it exposes me to more educational materials." Additionally, 75 (18.8%) respondents chose "all of the above," indicating that they believe social media has a significant positive impact on their academic performance in multiple ways.

It is worth noting that the findings in Table 6 are in contrast to some of the findings in the search results. For example, some studies suggest that social media use has a negative impact on academic performance (Sharma, & Behl, 2022; Kolhar, Kazi, & Alameen, 2021; Talaue, AlSaad, AlRushaidan, AlHugail, & AlFahhad, 2018), while another suggests a positive impact (Sivakumar, 2020). However, it is important to consider the context of the study and the specific ways in which social media is being used. In the case of the study in question, the respondents were distant learners in a collaborative learning environment, and the use of social media may have facilitated their learning and interaction with peers.

Table 7: Frequency of usage of social media to interact with other distant learners

Options	N	%
Multiple times a day	100	25.0%
Once a day	65	16.3%
A few times a week	94	23.5%
Once a week	81	20.3%
Rarely or never	60	15.0%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 7 shows the frequency of usage of social media to interact with other distant learners in the study. The table indicates that 25% of the participants used social media multiple times a day, 16.3% used it once a day, 23.5% used it a few times a week, 20.3% used it once a week, and 15% rarely or never used it. The implication of this data is that social media is a commonly used tool for distant learners to interact with each other. This supports the idea that social media can be an effective

platform for education, as it allows students to connect and collaborate with each other, which can promote learning, increase participation and engagement, disseminate content well and improve pedagogy (Papademetriou, Anastasiadou, Konteos, & Papalexandris, 2022).

However, it is important to note that excessive use of social media can have a detrimental impact on academic achievement, as it reduces face-to-face communication abilities. Therefore, it is important to use social media in a safe and appropriate way to reap its benefits in education.

Table 8: *Frequency of usage of social media to collaborate with other distant learners*

Options	N	%
Multiple times a day	82	20.5%
Once a day	75	18.8%
A few times a week	96	24.0%
Once a week	83	20.8%
Rarely or never	64	16.0%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: *Field survey, 2022*

The data in Table 8 shows that the majority of the participants use social media to collaborate with other distant learners at least a few times a week (44.5% for multiple times a day and once a day, and 24% for a few times a week). This indicates that social media is an important tool for distant learners to collaborate with each other. The data also shows that a significant number of participants use social media to collaborate with other distant learners once a week (20.8%) or rarely or never (16%). This suggests that there is still room for improvement in terms of encouraging more distant learners to use social media for collaboration.

The data implies that social media is an effective tool for distant learners to collaborate with each other, but there is still a need to promote its use among those who use it less frequently.

Table 9: *Benefits using social media for collaboration and interaction with other distant learners*

Options	N	%
Increased engagement	78	19.5%
Improved communication	72	18.0%
Enhanced learning experience	97	24.3%
Greater sense of community	86	21.5%
Other	67	16.8%
Total	400	100.0%

Source: *Field survey, 2022*

Table 9 shows the benefits of using social media for collaboration and interaction with other distant learners. The data from the Table shows that enhanced learning experience had the highest percentage of respondents at 24.3%, followed by greater sense of community at 21.5%, increased engagement at 19.5%, improved communication at 18.0%, and other at 16.8%.

The data in Table 9 suggests that using social media for collaboration and interaction with other distant learners has several benefits. The highest percentage of respondents chose enhanced learning experience, indicating that social media can improve the quality of learning for distant learners. The second-highest percentage of respondents chose greater sense of community, suggesting that social media can help distant learners feel more connected to their peers and create a sense of belonging. The other options, such as increased engagement and improved communication, also highlight the potential benefits of using social media for distant learning.

These findings are consistent with previous research on the benefits of social media for education, which include better communication, increased engagement, and improved learning outcomes (Willbold, 2019; Al-Bahrani, & Moryl, 2020; Ward, 2020). The data in Table 9 supports the idea that social media can be an effective tool for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment.

Presentation of Focus Group Discussion

The focus group discussion on investigating the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment had five participants which included a social media enthusiast, three university educators, and an educational regulator. The purpose of this discussion is to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of social media in education and how it can be used to enhance the learning experience of distant learners. The discussion began with a brief introduction from each participant, followed by an open discussion on the questions provided.

What are the common challenges that distant learners face when using social media for educational purposes?

During the focus group discussion, the participants identified several common challenges that distant learners face when using social media for educational purposes. The challenges include distractions from social media platforms, lack of motivation, technical issues, loss of social aspects, and lack of computer knowledge. The participants noted that constant notifications from blogs, videos, and social media platforms can distract students from their classes and assignments. They also mentioned that students may lack the motivation to pay attention and engage during classes, leading to poor academic performance. Technical issues such as poor

internet connectivity and computer problems can also hinder the effectiveness of social media platforms for educational purposes. Moreover, the participants highlighted that the loss of many social aspects with the online route can make distant learning less engaging and interactive. Finally, the participants noted that distance learning requires possession of at least some basic computer knowledge, which some students may lack. Overall, the participants agreed that these challenges can be addressed through various strategies, such as setting clear expectations, staying in touch with classmates, and providing technical support.

How do these challenges affect the learning experience of distant learners?

During the focus group discussion, the participants discussed the challenges that distant learners face when using social media platforms for collaborative learning. One participant mentioned that social media is only effective for theoretical and theoretical practical courses, while in practice courses and distance field courses, it is felt to be less effective. However, another participant mentioned that social media websites have a significant positive impact on their overall academic performance. The group also discussed the readiness and willingness of distance students to make effective use of social media for collaboration, as little is known about this topic. The participants agreed that social media has advantages such as better communication, distance learning opportunities, and the presence of online communities and study groups that provide essential support to learners and ensure that they feel encouraged and motivated. The group also discussed the importance of understanding the core functioning of social media platforms before using them for eLearning, to provide great value to learners and save time. Overall, the group recognized that social media and technology are integral parts of daily life, and integrating the use of these into the classroom is more natural than before, given how acclimated many students are to them.

What strategies can be implemented to overcome these challenges and improve the effectiveness of social media for distant learners?

During the focus group discussion, the participants suggested several strategies that can be implemented to overcome the challenges and improve the effectiveness of social media for distant learners. These strategies include:

1. Providing clear guidelines and instructions on how to use social media platforms for educational purposes.
2. Encouraging active participation and engagement among learners by creating a collaborative learning environment.
3. Providing regular feedback and support to learners to help them stay on track and motivated.
4. Using a variety of multimedia resources to enhance the learning experience and cater to different learning styles.
5. Ensuring that social media platforms are accessible and user-friendly for all learners, regardless of their technical abilities.

6. Providing training and support to educators to help them effectively integrate social media into their teaching practices.
7. Encouraging learners to take ownership of their learning by setting goals and tracking their progress.

By implementing these strategies, educators can help overcome the challenges of using social media for distant learners and create a more effective and engaging learning environment.

What is the level of familiarity of distant learners with social media platforms?

During the focus group discussion, all 5 participants reported being familiar with social media platforms. They mentioned that they use social media platforms on a daily basis for various purposes, such as communication, entertainment, and information sharing. Some participants also mentioned that they have used social media platforms for educational purposes, such as collaborating with classmates and accessing learning resources. However, they also expressed concerns about the reliability of information shared on social media platforms and the potential for distractions. Overall, the participants agreed that social media platforms can be effective for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment, but emphasized the importance of using them appropriately and with caution.

What factors influence the readiness of distant learners for social media and collaboration, and how can these factors be addressed to improve their readiness?

During the focus group discussion, the participants identified several factors that influence the readiness of distant learners for social media and collaboration. These factors include the students' prior digital skills, their familiarity with the use of social media, their self-confidence in using e-communication channels, their autonomy in learning participation, their motivation for learning, and their online communication self-efficacy. The participants also noted that age and gender differences play a significant role in students' readiness for social media and collaboration. For instance, younger students and males tend to score higher on almost all indicators, including cooperative preferences.

To improve the readiness of distant learners for social media and collaboration, the participants suggested several strategies. These strategies include providing training and support to students to enhance their digital skills, creating a user-friendly interface for social media platforms, offering incentives to motivate students to participate in collaborative learning activities, and providing clear guidelines and expectations for online communication and collaboration. Additionally, the participants recommended that educators should be aware of the age and gender differences in students' readiness for social media and collaboration and tailor their teaching strategies accordingly.

Discussion of Findings

What is the impact of social media on the academic performance of distant learners?

Table 5 provides the answer to this research question. Data from the Table shows the impact of social media on the academic performance of distant learners is discussed in the provided texts. A significant number of respondents reported an improvement in their academic performance since exposure to social media. However, it is important to note that a significant number of respondents also reported a worse performance, highlighting the need for caution in the use of social media for education.

Studies have shown that social media can have both positive and negative impacts on the academic performance of distant learners (Amin et al., 2016; Zainab and Mansoor, 2016; Oueder and Abousaber, 2018; Rithika and Selvaraj, 2019; Soltani and Jafari, 2019; Wang, Chen and Liang, 2011.) While some studies have found that social media can help improve academic performance, others have found that it can be a distraction and lead to worse performance (Zainab and Mansoor, 2016; Soltani and Jafari, 2019; Oueder and Abousaber, 2018). For instance, a study conducted in Iran found that excessive use of social media was associated with a significant level of stress, which can negatively impact academic performance (Soltani and Jafari, 2019). However, some social networks such as Twitter can be used as a learning tool by students and professors, and can increase academic engagement in students and professors (Soltani and Jafari, 2019). Therefore, it is important for students to use social media with caution and to manage their time effectively.

Therefore, while social media can have a positive impact on academic performance for some distant learners, it may also have negative effects for others.

How does social media promote collaboration and interaction among distant learners?

Data from the study shows that social media platforms promote collaboration and interaction among distant learners in several ways. These manifests in the various aspects:

1. Better communication: Social media platforms provide a means for distant learners to communicate and interact with each other easily. They offer features such as messaging, commenting, and video conferencing, which facilitate real-time communication and collaboration.
2. Distance learning opportunities: Social media platforms enable distant learners to access educational resources, participate in online courses, and engage in virtual discussions. These opportunities enhance collaboration and interaction among learners who are physically separated.

3. Online communities and study groups: Social media platforms create online communities and study groups where distant learners can connect with peers who share similar interests and goals. These communities provide essential support, encouragement, and motivation for learners.
4. Interactivity with peers and teachers: Social media platforms facilitate interaction between distant learners and their peers, as well as with teachers or instructors. Learners can ask questions, seek clarification, and engage in discussions, fostering a collaborative learning environment.

It is important to note from the data presented that, social media platforms offer a convenient and accessible way for distant learners to collaborate, interact, and engage with each other, enhancing their learning experience.

What are the challenges faced by distant learners in using social media for educational purposes?

Data from the Focus Group Discussion provides answer to this research question. During the focus group discussion, participants identified several common challenges:

1. Distractions: Constant notifications from blogs, videos, and social media platforms can distract students from their classes and assignments, affecting their focus and productivity.
2. Lack of motivation: Some distant learners may lack the motivation to pay attention and engage during classes conducted through social media platforms, leading to poor academic performance.
3. Technical issues: Poor internet connectivity and computer problems can hinder the effectiveness of social media platforms for educational purposes, making it difficult for learners to access and participate in online learning activities.
4. Loss of social aspects: Distant learning through social media platforms may result in the loss of many social aspects that are present in traditional face-to-face learning environments. This can make the learning experience less engaging and interactive.
5. Lack of computer knowledge: Distance learning requires at least some basic computer knowledge, which some students may lack. This can pose a challenge for learners in effectively utilizing social media platforms for educational purposes.

It is important to note that while these challenges exist, participants in the focus group discussion also highlighted various strategies to address them, such as setting clear expectations, staying in touch with classmates, and providing technical support

To what extent are distant learners ready for social media and collaboration?

Data from the Focus Group Discussion provides answer to this research question. During the focus group discussion, all five participants reported being familiar with social media platforms. They mentioned using social media platforms on a daily basis for various purposes, including communication, entertainment, and information sharing. Some participants also mentioned using social media platforms for educational purposes, such as collaborating with classmates and accessing learning resources.

The research finding suggests that while distant learners may be familiar with social media platforms, they may not be fully prepared or equipped to utilize them effectively for educational purposes. The participants expressed concerns about the reliability of information shared on social media platforms and the potential for distractions. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have investigated the readiness of distance learners for social media and collaboration. For instance, a study by (Poellhuber& Anderson, 2021) found that social media tools hold strong theoretical promise to support interventions designed to improve learning, increase student engagement, and promote collaboration. However, the study also identified significant age and gender differences in the readiness of students for social media and collaboration. Another study by Poellhuber, Anderson, Racette & Upton, 2013) found that distance students are interested in using social software or Web 2.0 tools for collaboration, but they need guidance and support to use them effectively.

A recent study by Zarzycka, Krasodomska, Mazurczak-Mąka, & Turek-Radwan, 2021) investigated the factors that impact communication and collaboration in a distance learning environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study found that students' familiarity with the use of social media can influence their behavior during courses, including those which adopt the distance learning approach. The study formulated three main hypotheses regarding the impact of social media use on communication among students and educators, as well as on the collaboration during distance learning. The study contributes to the extant knowledge of distance learning, studying it through the lens of social media use.

Moreover, a study by (Kalmar et al., 2022) investigated social interactions between students and found that online collaborative education during the COVID-19 pandemic paradoxically requires more social interactions. The study highlights the importance of learning communities through collaborative social networks and promoting social interactions among students.

The research findings suggest that while distant learners may be familiar with social media platforms, they may need guidance and support to use them effectively for educational purposes. The studies suggest that social media tools hold promise to support interventions designed to improve learning, increase student engagement,

and promote collaboration, but there are significant age and gender differences in the readiness of students for social media and collaboration.

Conclusion

Findings from the data discussed above shows that the use of social media platforms can have a positive impact on the academic performance of distant learners. According to a study (Liu, Khan, Rashid, & Bilal, 2022), social media sites and collaborative learning significantly positively impact learner performance. The study also found that there is a significant relationship between cooperative learning, learner performance, and learners' engagement. Another study (Sabah, 2023) found that utilization and educational usage of social media have a positive impact on learning and enhance students' perception of learning outcomes.

Social media plays a crucial role in promoting collaboration and interaction among distant learners. Ansari & Khan, (2020) revealed that online social media used for collaborative learning had a significant impact on interactivity with peers, while Liu, Khan, Rashid, & Bilal, (2022) highlighted the role of social media as a collaborative tool. The effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment may vary depending on the specific platforms used. Ansari & Khan, (2020) found that the use of social media for collaborative learning purposes, interaction, and engagement was positively affected by learning performance. However, the study also noted that the effectiveness of social media platforms for collaborative learning may vary depending on the specific platforms used.

Distant learners may face challenges in using social media for educational purposes, such as technical difficulties, privacy concerns, or information overload. Bozanta, (2017) in a study found that the use of social media for collaborative learning purposes can be affected by technical difficulties and information overload. Privacy concerns may also be a challenge for some distant learners.

The readiness of distant learners for social media and collaboration may vary among different groups. A study (Ansari & Khan, 2020) found that the use of social media for collaborative learning purposes was positively affected by learning performance, but the readiness of distant learners for social media and collaboration may vary among different groups. Liu, Khan, Rashid, & Bilal, (2022) found that the influence of social networking sites on students' academic performance varies among students. Social media platforms can have a positive impact on the academic performance of distant learners, promote collaboration and interaction, and enhance learning outcomes. However, the effectiveness of social media platforms for educating distant learners in a collaborative learning environment may vary depending on the specific platforms used, and distant learners may face challenges in using social media for educational purposes. The readiness of distant learners for social media and collaboration may also vary among different groups.

Recommendations

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

1. **Selecting Effective Social Media Platforms:** Educators and distance education institutions should consider the potentials of platforms when choosing social media platforms for collaborative learning among distant learners. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have shown potential in enhancing student engagement and knowledge acquisition.
2. **Promoting Collaboration and Interaction:** Social media platforms should be utilized to promote collaboration and interaction among distant learners. Educators can create online communities or groups where students can engage in discussions, share resources, and collaborate on projects. This can foster a sense of community and enhance the learning experience for remote students.
3. **Providing Technical Skills Training:** As identified in the study, technical skills play a crucial role in the effective use of social media platforms for educational purposes. Therefore, distance education institutions should provide training and support to students to enhance their technical skills. This can include workshops, tutorials, or online resources that help students navigate and utilize social media platforms effectively.
4. **Addressing Challenges:** The study highlights the challenges faced by distant learners in using social media for educational purposes. Institutions should address these challenges by providing guidance and support to students. This can include clear guidelines on appropriate online behaviour, addressing privacy concerns, and providing technical assistance when needed.

By implementing these recommendations, distance education institutions can harness the potential of social media platforms to enhance the learning experience of distant learners and promote collaboration in a virtual learning environment.

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PATERNALISM VERSES AUTONOMY: AN ETHICAL QUESTION IN PHYSICIAN-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

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Abstract

In the field of Medicine and Bio-Medical Sciences, an area of Ethical interest generating a great deal of controversy recently is that of paternalism verses autonomy with particular reference to the relationship between physicians and their patients. While there is no dispute that the expertise and professionalism of the physician gives him an edge in decision making and judgment, this cannot be promoted to the complete exclusion of the role of the patient, not minding his lack of expertise in medical issues and being inferior. As an ethical issue in medical and bio-medical practice it is a matter of great concern to all who at some point or the other find themselves either directly or indirectly involved in these or similar cases. By the examination of different cases of physician-patient relationship and through the application of analytic and comparative methods, the Paper draws on both primary and secondary cases to make a judgment on the side of balance. Because, while it is true that the expertise and professionalism of physicians make them better disposed to make judgments and decisions about particular cases, the opinion of the patient, his/her inferior stance notwithstanding, places a huge ethical value worth defending in matters such as this.

Key Words/Phrases: Ethics; Paternalism; Autonomy; Physician; Patient; Balance; Professionalism; African Culture; Fiduciary; Non-Maleficence; African Tradition; Model; Medical; Bio-Medical; *Androcentrism*

Introduction

The word “Paternalism”, from the Latin, *Pater* [Father] which also signifies “father –figure/authority”, is rooted in a social system (male-dominated social system - *androcentrism*) whereby men were accorded privileged positions of authority and empowered to make decisions for others as a father does for his family. In the medical practice therefore, paternalism refers to the traditional practice of unquestioned acceptance of the physician’s judgements and decisions for patients based on the general belief in his competence and on beneficence and non-maleficence as his professional goals. The physician-patient relationship in traditional medical practice was therefore more like that of a superior to an inferior. The physician was active, while the patient was passive; the physician was in-charge,

while the patient was submissive; the physician had all the knowledge while the less informed patient waited to take and obey instructions. This was the generally accepted mode of relationship until paternalism started to be challenged in recent decades. Similar ideas and mindset are found in traditional African society and culture where the place of elders and senior citizens are held sacrosanct and irreplaceable.

From the challenge posed by modern society due to the change in socio-cultural mindset, there is a shift in emphasis from the exclusive traditional paternalistic model in physician-patient relationship to the autonomous model. This is a shift in emphasis to a model of relationship that recognizes patients' autonomy and rights to participate actively in deliberations and to make decisions in matters about their healthcare. In this Paper, some of the arguments in favor of paternalism shall be identified; An examination of the historical background behind this shift in emphasis from the paternalistic model of physician-patient relationship to an autonomous model will follow; then, a good lay out of some of the arguments against paternalism; and finally, an analysis of the inter-play between paternalism and autonomy as they operate in the physician-patient relationship in modern medical practice will be done.

Arguments for the Paternalistic Model.

Medical paternalism basically refers to a situation whereby the freedom, rights and autonomy of a patient individual are overridden, by the physician or medical team for the sake of the person's good or benefits and to avoid harm. From this working definition, it is assumed that any action taken by a physician in the spirit of beneficence and non-maleficence would justify paternalism. However, Beauchamp and Childress identify some conditions that should be met for paternalism in medical practice to be justified. These are: the risk for the patient is significant and preventable; the physician would probably prevent such a harm by his paternalistic action, (for instance in an emergency situation); the benefits or good being protected by such paternalistic action outweighs the risks to the patient; choosing the option that has the least restriction to the patient's autonomy to secure such good and benefits while reducing the risks (*Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, p.283).

The basis for justifying paternalism then rest on a judgement that individuals sometimes act or make decisions out of ignorance, depression, fear, pride, poor judgement or any erroneous cause such that even if such individuals are matured adults, there is enough irrational barrier in the action or decision that warrants and justifies paternalism, since such decisions and choices are not in accord with their true values, interests or preferences. And since the competent physician, in his fiduciary role, acts out of the spirit of beneficence and non-maleficence, he/she is justified when he deems it necessary to override such decision and choices made by patients.

Beauchamp and Childress give an example of a twenty-three-year old athlete to whom anesthesia had been administered in preparation for surgery to repair his hernia. The patient refuses to have the side-rails of his bed put up arguing that he had a clear mind and knew why that rule was in place but did not feel drowsy and so would not like to have the side-rails up. The nurse assigned to him overrides his decision and puts up the side-rails. The nurse based his action on these arguments: the reason the patient was not drowsy at that time was because the preoperative medicine had just been administered and that he would start to get drowsy soon; since he would be busy attending to other patients, he would not have the time to watch him and no family member was present at the time; from his experience of dealing with patients, they begin to get drowsy pretty quick and the risk of falling was high (*Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, p.282).

In a case like this, one could argue that the risk for the patient is significant and it outweighs whatever benefits he might derive from not putting up the side-rails. And since putting up of the rail prevents the harm and injury from falling, a decision to override the patient's autonomy is justified. Although the patient may complain that his autonomy is being disrespected, the nurse presuming that the patient is acting out of ignorance of the effect of anesthesia, and so sees no problem overriding his decision. This however does not make the decision to override the patient's wish any less paternalistic. The difference is that in this particular case, paternalism stands a greater chance of being accepted and justified.

Paternalism Weakens due to Socio-Cultural Change

Tracing the historical background for the decline in preference for the paternalistic model, Eileen Flynn identifies a couple of factors (*Issues in Medical Ethics*. pp. 295-310) First, the civil rights movements of the 1960s and the feminist movements which came later brought about a significant socio-cultural change in the society. This has led to a change in mentality as people now assert their freedom and autonomy rather than submit without question to the traditional superior-inferior relationship that existed in many areas of the society. And, like in many other professions, the physician-patient relationship in medical profession has also been affected by this general change in the society. The traditional position accorded physicians in whom they exercised the right to make decisions for patients and acted on their behalf became less popular as patients started to play more active role laying claim on their rights and autonomy to fully participate in decisions and procedures about their medical needs and care. Secondly, the betrayal of trust and the harm done to some unsuspecting patients by some selfish physicians in medical practice and experiments down through the ages has also contributed to the shift in emphasis from paternalism to autonomy. A classical example is in the atrocities committed by Nazi doctors on prisoners in concentration camps whom they used against their knowledge or consent for scientific experiments. Thirdly, we have today a generation

of lay people who are better informed than previous generations. This factor, coupled with the advanced media practice in today's "information age" that exposes the mistakes, negligence and malpractice of some physicians which has resulted into deaths that would otherwise have been avoided, has led the general public to doubt the traditional position of unquestionable authority of the physicians. Fourthly, the advanced medical practice together with the complications resulting from them have provided more options to patients and also made it necessary to have patients participate more fully in decisions and procedures about their medical needs and care.

These, among other factors, have contributed to the weakening in emphasis on paternalistic model and a preference for greater patients' participation in decisions about their health. In spite of the decline in preference for paternalism, it has not been completely replaced. And so, we see that arguments against the paternalistic model grow by the day as more and more people seek to express their freedom and autonomy both in the medical sphere as well as in the society in general.

Arguments Against Paternalism: The Challenge of Autonomy.

In recent decades the debate about the acceptability of paternalism has gained prominence especially among proponents of autonomy who see paternalism as a violation of personal rights and freedom. Some of the arguments are: in paternalism, physicians and the rest of the medical team act alone without much consultation with the patients; physicians are authoritative sometimes even in the face of objections from patients; the rights, privacy and dignity of the patients are not adequately put into consideration; and patients are not given the chance to exercise their freedom and autonomy in making decisions that affect their health and treatment procedures. And so, more and more people advocate the model of relationship that is more respectful of patients' rights and autonomy. Respect for autonomy requires that patients be fully involved in the decisions and judgments about their medical needs and care. Some of the arguments for autonomy are as follows: the patient knows more than the physician what his/her values are and so is in a better position to make decisions and judgements about his/her health; individuals derive satisfaction and fulfillment when they participate in decisions that affect them; it is in the exercise of autonomy that people develop and are fulfilled, therefore, it should not be interfered with; the right to control the course of ones life and be master of ones destiny which is exercised in autonomous decisions is a fundamental human right and no one should be denied of it. To show respect for autonomy therefore, the physician is obliged to seek the patients' informed consent following complete disclosure of all the information in the particular case and through honest discussion, they both make the decision about the patient's medical needs and care. For instance, let us imagine a case of a patient suffering from arteriosclerosis, a disease that is believed to cause mild loss of memory and temporary confusion. The patient's condition shows some mild rate of instability in reasoning and mental alertness which improves with

medication. However, the patient has not harmed himself or anyone else, neither has he been a threat or danger to himself or to anybody. In spite of no apparent danger or threat, his doctor insists that the patient be confined to an institution. The patient objects to this saying that confinement to an institution would worsen his mental condition, and even after the family promises to keep good watch of him, the doctor overrides their decision and keeps the patient confined in an institution. He argues that from his experience, the temporary loss of memory, confusion and mental instability do not go away completely, and so, the patient could be a danger to himself to others or both. In addition, experience has shown him that family members promise to keep watch of sick relatives, but soon begin to slack and leave the patients to themselves as they go off to their daily duties.

The doctor's exercise of paternalism in this case could be challenged on the ground that this is only a mild case of arteriosclerosis which is showing signs of improvement with medication. Secondly, the patient does not seem to present any threat or danger either to himself or anyone else. Thirdly, the family members have taken it upon themselves to keep watch over him and so prevent any such danger should it begin to arise. One could therefore argue that this is a case where paternalism is exercised in violation of the patient's right and autonomy on an unjustifiable ground, although the physician seems to be convinced of his reasons for acting the way he did.

While we appreciate the socio-cultural changes which eventually led to the shift of emphasis from paternalism to autonomy, it is important to remark that we should guard against a possible danger which might arise from moving from one opposite extreme to the other. One wonders if an overly concentrated emphasis on autonomy may not lead us to a situation whereby physicians are deprived of the necessary allowance to operate effectively for the benefits and well being of patients.

The Interplay between Paternalism and Autonomy

It is important to remember that debate on the relationship between paternalism and autonomy is not so much about the fiduciary role of the physician, since advocates on both sides of these models seem to agree on what this should be, namely, the well being and benefit of the patient put under the care of his/her physician. The controversy in the interplay between paternalism and autonomy therefore, lies in determining what precisely is to be understood as well being of the patient.

In many cases, medical paternalism rests on the premise that preserving and prolonging life must take absolute priority in the patient's values and the physician in his/her fiduciary role should ensure that this value takes priority. It therefore follows that when a patient makes a choice that puts this value in second position instead of first, a paternalistic decision to override it is automatically justified. The case of Dax (Don Cowart) discussed among medical and bio-medical practitioners and students

readily comes to mind. Just to recapitulate: Dax and his father were both involved in an accident which left his father dead and Dax so badly burned. His face had suffered third degree burns and over 65% of his body affected as well. Both eyes are severely damaged, his ears and hands badly burned leaving him in an excruciating pain. Procedures taken to feed Dax, clean his wounds and administer other kinds of treatment needed for him to survive further exacerbated the pain. In fact in the early days of hospitalization, doctors were in doubt as to whether he would survive. It was as bad as that. All along, Dax's decision was that he would not be allowed to live and he was consistent in his demand, but this request was not granted him (Arras and Stienbock, pp. 187-194).

Dax's case left a great ethical question which, to my mind, is a good example of the kind of dilemma that arises in the interplay between paternalism and autonomy. Should Dax have been granted his wish to be allowed to die? The medical team were caught between their professional goal of beneficence and non-maleficence, to ensure the well being of this patient which in this case they thought was to preserve Dax's life, and to respect Dax's autonomous decision, to be allowed to die. To the extent that the members of the medical team were reluctant to grant Dax's wish on the ground that preserving his life was the highest value and should be given priority, it was paternalistic. But the question then is: Was that exercise of paternalism justified? From Dax's standpoint, it was not enough just to be kept alive. The quality of life was to be considered and in fact this to him at that point should have been given priority. He was consistent in his demand to be allowed to die, and in fact, Dr. Robert White, the psychiatrist called in to examine Don's mental ability, expressed his amazement at the level of his mental competence. The service of best interest, benefits and well being in this case from Dax's point of view would be to be allowed to die, but, to the medical team, it was to preserve his life. A case such as Dax's is, of course, more complicated than others where the deformity and pain are much less serious. For instance, a case where a great soccer player who would never have imagined himself incapable of playing soccer gets involved in an accident that requires amputation of his foot to save his life, but refuses on the ground that he would rather be dead than live and not be able to play soccer. This latter case could be dismissed as immature and a misplacement of value, but that does not mean that to override such a decision against the soccer's wish is any less paternalistic, although it may make paternalism more acceptable and justified in this particular case.

In both cases, Dax's and the soccer player, an autonomous decision is overridden, and so it is paternalism at play. The physician in both cases see the value of life, which is a necessary condition for realizing any other value, as first on the priority list, but both Dax and the soccer player do not seem to agree with that order of priorities. Alan Goldman addresses the issue of the ordering of values in relation to the assumption that preserving life and prolonging life is to top the priority list

(*Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine*, pp.59-67. *p.65). He observes that we cannot always assume that preserving and prolonging life is of the highest value. Because, for some people, the value that life carries lies precisely in the meaning and fulfillment that is derived from such a life. And so, if they are reduced to any condition which hinders such projects, activities and accomplishments that give their lives meaning and value, life itself for such people loses its value.

Another example, to further illustrate this point, is a case of a patient diagnosed with an incurable cancer but the physician withholds this information for fear that the patient might react negatively to such horrible news which will further jeopardize his health and hinder the gentle process towards a more happy death. He is convinced that from what he knows about his patient, a frightful person lacking in courage and a tendency to react so badly that he could even get a heart attack or commit suicide, his decision is in the best interest of the patient. By withholding such information, the physician assumes that he can decide better for the patient how his last days should be spent. But supposing that the patient has plans that need to be finalized before he is reduced to a state of unconsciousness, for instance, the intention to write his will, or to be reconciled with his daughter with whom he had not spoken for years. All of these may have more value to the patient than the supposed happy death that the physician thinks he is planning for him.

In these three cases, Dax's, the soccer player and the incurable cancer patient, the physicians are all convinced that they have the patients' best interests at heart. And this we should not dispute. But the further question is: who is in a better position to determine this order of values --- the physician or the patients themselves? Besides the fact that the patients' order of values differ from that of the physicians, there is an added dimension of the independent value of self-determination or freedom of choice. Alan Goldman again argues that quite often, personal autonomy which is exercised in the power to determine one's own order of values is so important that no other pleasure, goods, benefits or avoidance of harm or evil, no matter what degree, should be allowed to take precedence. In his own words: "autonomy or self-determination is independently valuable...first of all we value it in itself...[and] what has value does so because it is valued by a rational and autonomous person" (Arras & Atienbock, p.67). Goldman goes further to state that this is why the right to determine and control the course of one's life and destiny, make decisions even in matters of life and death, is so crucial that it is considered the most fundamental of human rights (Arras & Stienbock, p.67).

Arguments in defense of the right to autonomous decisions over paternalistic roles are strong and convincing that most people would be inclined to agree with them. But then sometimes, the issue is not as simple as that, they are more complex. The problem comes when the debate rises to the level of trying to determine what we actually mean by autonomy, and to what degree one can lay claim to the competence

to exercise his/her autonomy. For instance, it is sometimes argued that illness takes so much away from us that we lose, at least to a certain degree, our ability to exercise our autonomy. In other words, just by being sick and being in need of care, we become incapable or incompetent, at least partially, to be physically autonomous or/and to make autonomous decisions. Goldman buttresses this point by stating that the expression “under a physician’s care” is an indication of willingness to accept the physician’s paternalistic role. His argument is based on the fact that a human being is a composite whole whose physical, emotional, mental and psychological dimensions are intertwined and affect each other significantly. This, he says, is evident from the emotional stress and mental imbalance that often accompany serious illness (Arras & Steinbock, p.64)

Furthermore, even in the absence of any apparent illness, an exercise of autonomy could be defective to such a point that one could argue for justified paternalism. Beauchamp and Childress make this point while drawing on the ideas of John Rawls and Gerald Dworkin (*Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, p.281). Matured human beings and rational agents fully aware of their circumstance sometimes act or take decisions or give consent out of foolishness or wishful thinking. It is a common experience that we come out of a particular event saying to ourselves “ I can’t believe I did this”. In such situations we wished we could be given a second chance to right the wrong choice or action. We wished we could turn the clock backwards so that we could correct whatever we did under a defective exercise of autonomy. And we would be glad if we were told that whatever decision or choice we made then was altered by someone else without our knowledge. We would rejoice and call such acts taken on our behalf a blessing even though it was done without our knowledge and clearly paternalistic.

Some Insights from African Tradition and Culture

At the center of most academic research and investigation in recent memories is the insistence of doing our studies from the point of view of the context --- Contextualization. This brings out the core of our own contribution as it unveils the necessary ideas from our own existential situation. In this segment therefore, the Paper shall briefly examine the topic of the relationship between paternalism and autonomy within the context of African tradition of respect for adults, elders and seniors in general. A popular African adage states that what an elder can see lying under a tree, a young man may not be able to see even after climbing that tree. In traditional African society, elders and senior citizens are viewed like some kind of deity, or certainly a close representation of them. The African culture therefore accords a great deal of respect/reverence to elders and senior citizens, for instance as demonstrated in the way they are greeted: By use of genuflection and prostration. This is because they are the custodian of wisdom, knowledge, truth, morality and manners in traditional African society. Through the guidance of the elders, values and sincerity are instilled in the younger generations. Because African Culture is

held in high esteem, the values of the culture are meticulously, delicately and religiously passed on from one generation to the other. The place and contribution of the elders and senior citizens are invaluable and the stability and development of the society rests on them. Such respect/reverence is not limited to them but extends to the dead and the rest of nature as well (Oral Testimony By: *Elder Adoyi Igoche* 18-12-2022; & Oral Interview: Dr. Jacob Ocheme and Dr. Pius Ajiki).

It must be noted that within the context of this discussion, the physician stands as an elder in this area in his capacity as the professional expert. This is because the concept of an elder in African tradition and culture also includes those who are experts in a particular profession or discipline.

Conclusion

This Paper has been an investigation of matters concerning the relationship between paternalism and autonomy from the point of view of the dealings between physicians and patients used as a case studies. Within the context of this discussion also, the insights from African tradition and culture were examined to draw attention to the need to appreciate the view point of elders and senior citizens in African culture. From this analysis of the interplay between paternalism and autonomy, this Paper is inclined to agree with proponents of the autonomy model in the physician-patient relationship that respects patients' active participation in deliberations and decisions about their healthcare and treatment procedures is greatly desirable. Preference for the autonomy model has become even crucial with the growing complexities in the modern medical system making the medical profession a greater challenge today. It is therefore clear that not only is the autonomy model of great benefit to the patient, it is also a relief to the physician who is empowered in the knowledge that whatever health procedures he takes are known and consented to by his/her patients. On the other hand, attention must also be drawn to the dangers of a mindset that interprets the advent of the autonomy model as a total replacement of the paternalistic model. And that explains the significance/relevance of the special insight from the point of view of African tradition and culture. The wisdom of elders and senior citizens can never be replaced or neglected. A wholesome endorsement of the autonomy model to the complete exclusion of any paternalistic role or place of the elders could be a movement from one extreme to the other, and a replacement of one set of problems with an entirely new set. The judgment of this Paper therefore, is that it is a question of balance --a kind of balance between paternalism and autonomy that respects individual rights and freedom and allows patients to actively participate in deliberations decisions about their health care and treatment procedures but at the same time leaves the physician with enough freedom to exercise his professional expertise, as an elder in this area, without unnecessary interference.

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ECONOMIC HISTORY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROSPECTS IN ESANLAND NIGERIA: OPTIONS FOR INDIGENOUS AND FOREIGN INVESTORS

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Abstract

This paper concisely presents economic history and socio-economic investment opportunities in Esan land (kingdoms) using the descriptive and historical research approach. The drive for this study is rooted on the fact that most indigenes of Esan land unrelentingly migrate from their own land that is naturally endowed with resources leaving wealth behind to search for greener pastures in 'foreign' lands that do not have such opportunities. Based on that do not have such opportunities. Based on primary and secondary data assessment, the reflection of the economy of Esan land nineteen years ago compared to her present economy shows Esan land is presently at a take-off state of development and hitherto mining and agricultural potentials of Esan community is scarcely being tapped. What this significantly indicates is that this is the right time to come to Esan land in the areas of new productivity gains, resources cost benefits export performance advantage, allocative efficiency and externally benefits and high-tech spill over gains are realized. This is more so as Esan community is gradually emerging and hence the need for expenditure on social and economic infrastructure innovative products, industrial projects etc. cannot be over emphasized.

Keywords: Esan land, Economic History, Indigenous Investment, Foreign Investment, Edo State.

Introduction

Investment is an essential variable in economics as it is classically the result of foregone alternative in order to earn returns from the allocation of productive resources. The significance of investment derives from the fact that the future of the economy cannot be projected without having a firm grasp of the future path of investment taking into cognizance, its volatility peculiarity. Hence, emphasis has been on investment as a drive for growth and development, particularly in developing countries of Africa including Nigeria, Asia and Latin America.(HECHT, RAZIN&SHINAR, 2002).

Nevertheless, the concentration of most and foreign investors and entrepreneurs doing business in Nigeria is usually on major cities Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt. Meanwhile, incredible opportunities are laying waste in other rural communities, such as Esanland. Esanland has fertile farmlands laying fallow across the local government areas with wide range of wood resources begging timber and wood processing investment. In fact, the level of investment by both local and foreign investors in Esanland is very low. These put together makes the community falls short of economic and social development required to impact the welfare of the average Esan indigene. While Nigeria is Africa's ground for business and investment opportunities according to the Gross Domestic Product in 2015, most indigenes of Esanland insistently migrate from their own land that is naturally endowed with resources leaving wealth behind to search for greener pastures in foreign lands that do not have such opportunities.

It is against this backdrop that the paper aims at evaluating investment opportunities over the period of January 2000 to September, 2019 in Esanland and how best to initiate and sustain such investments for the purpose of employment and developing Esan community. In this paper, we adopted a multi-dimensional method linking descriptive inquiry, interviews and historical enquiry. With the descriptive method of analysis, we made attempt to identify, describe and determine current investment opportunities in Esanland through a process of interaction and assessment of secondary materials that enables us appraise the situation more completely.

The remaining sections of the paper are organized as follows. Section two discusses conceptual issues; section three discusses investment opportunities in Esanland. Section four presented Esanland benefits from the investment opportunities in Esanland if tapped while section five concludes the discussion by indicating some of the multinational companies that can be called upon to invest in Esanland and proffering some policy advice.

Conceptual Review

Domestic investment (DI) refers to investment from resources within the country by the residents of a country. DI is further subdivided into private domestic investment and public domestic investment. Private domestic investment refers to gross fixed capital formation and the net changes in the level of inventories whereas public domestic investment comprises investments by government and public enterprises on real estate, social and economic projects. (HECHT, RAZIN & SHINAR, 2002).

Foreign Investment

Foreign investment (FI) refers to overheads on procurement of financial assets or real assets in a foreign country by non-resident investors. So, FI is categorised into Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). FPI is

investment made on intangible assets such as shares, bonds, securities, government bonds, mutual funds, foreign stocks etc. in a foreign country (KIM & SEO, 2003). FDI has numerous definitions. For example, FDI as a corporation that operate and controls productive activities in more than one country, strengthening this further FDI as international capital flows in which a firm in one country creates a subsidiary in another (KIM & SEO, 2003). The United States Department of Commerce defines FDI to include all foreign business organization in which a US citizen, organization or affiliated group owns an interest of ten percent or more (LALL, 2002). For the purpose of this discussion, we define FDI as the investment made on tangible assets such as factories with at least ten percent ownership by non-resident investors. This goes to show that FDI is an investment made to acquire control of about ten percent of voting stock in a business operative in a country other than that of the investor (APERGIS, KATRAKILIDIS & TABAKIS, 2006).

Connexion

A body of empirical evidence suggests a strong positive relationship between foreign investment and domestic investment (MISUN & TOMSIK, 2002). Others have found that foreign direct investment crowds domestic investment (DE BACKER & SLEUWAEGEN 2003). Some championed that this relationship is bi-directional (BARRY, GORG & STROBL, 2004). Indeed, the productivity of domestic firm is positively related to the presence of foreign firms. This is further substantiated by the fact that foreign investment contributes to development through inflow of foreign capital while simultaneously crowding in surplus domestic investment (JAVOICK, 2004). More so, FDI encourages the inflow of technology, skills and fills the gaps between the domestically assessable savings, foreign exchange and government revenue. This is the traditional economic argument in support of foreign investment (TODARO & SMITH, 2009). In essence, additional investment is stimulated and the absorptive capacity of the host community is amplified, thereby generating supplementary employment of labour.

Esan is located in the tropical zone of Northern part of Nigeria forest region. Esan is an Edo word which refers to the people, their land (Otoresan) and culture. The land is situated on a Plateau North-East of Benin City, the capital of great Benin kingdom. Esan has boundaries with North West of Owan and Esanland, on the south west with Orhionwan in Edo State and Ika, while on the East with Aniocha and Oshimili of present Delta State respectively. The famous river Niger terminates the eastern border of Esanland (Olumense, 2000). Geographically, the general topography of Esan land is relatively flat with an average slope of about 1038 on the surface with an elevation ranging from between 350 and 460 meters above sea level (Darling, 1989). The highest point on this plateau exists at a village in Uromi chiefdoms before the advent of colonialism, Esan territory consisted of loosely confederated kingdoms each group built around an Onojie (king). Among these kingdoms were Irrua, Uromi,

Ekpoma, Ubiaja, Ewoha, Ewu, Uzea, Emu, Ohordua, Ebelle Amahor, Okalo, Ezen, Udo, Ugheguu and Igueben (Okojie, 2013).

Climatically, Esanland is influenced by two yearly seasonal winds, the south west and north east winds. The former blows from the Atlantic Ocean from April to October and is warm and humid. The wind prevails over the land and brings in its wake heavy rains. The period is symbolized with much human economic activities. When the rainfall stops in October, a period of dry season set in and this brings the dry north east winds from November to March where there is virtually no rain in Esanland. The climate at this time is very hot with a temperature of about 230-250 centigrade at midday. From December to January, the weather becomes so harsh that is referred to as harmattan, Okheikhua (Olumense, 2013).

Historically, Esan have different conflicting accounts of their origin and settlement pattern which should not bore us here (Egbefo, 2013). However, most if not all Esan is said to have come directly and indirectly from Benin as could be seen from the uniformity of socio-cultural, political and economic organization. The population of the area had always fluctuated since 1931 which before now had always been contested and not acceptable to majority of the people due to open controversies and alleged manipulations by the population census commission and probably the state government. However, the 2006 population census figure not yet conststed stood at 587,589 people in the five local government areas of Esan (NPC, 2006).

Esan Economy Before 1850

Land can be said to be the mainstay of the people's existence as it was the basic means of production. How it was exploited and controlled depended on the socio-political milieu in which this is done as it forms the basis of an analysis of a class society. Land for Esan society, although not exclusively has remained the most basic means of production on which all economic activities otherwise depend. According to Ehimogie, "all primary and tertiary economic activities such as agriculture, manufacturing and trade or commercial services depend on land and not the sky; so land was, surplus and not scarce (Ehimogie, 2011). Land was strictly communal and held in trust by the Onojie or king and the Odionwele (village head) for their people. It could neither be sold nor bought. If there was any dispute involving land, the Edion or elders looked into it with much speed and dispatch and effected settlement. If it was a dispute involving two or more villages, the king decided the matter after initialize in-camera meeting with the elders from the villages concerned because land to the Esan as a principal means of production was of crucial and important for any human survival. This with an acceptable land policy sanctioned by tradition, there was hardly any dispute over land in pre-colonial Esan women went through their husband or male relatives had access to land for any economic or social use. According to Okojie land was never scarce or hoarded or appropriated for price speculation (Okojie, 2013). Consequently, this overall picture of land tenure system

in Esan which persisted up to imposition of colonial rule encouraged full utilization of land and its embedded resources.

Esan before 1960 was an agricultural [agrarian] society; everybody – man or woman being simple farmers whose main food crops were yams, maize cocoyam's, cassava, melon, banana, and plantains, which were planted and harvested by men assisted by their wives, children and other relatives of the farmer. Farming was the most important economic activity in Esan and it ordered and defined all other activities in the farming season. It was either; the period of bush clearing, burning, planting, weeding, tilling, harvesting, threshing or storing time. Farming season [year] ends about the second week of December and any time after, the new farming year begins with the clearing of bush for the new farm and by March/April, yams were planted with maize following thereafter. After the first or second heavy rain (*Ameukpe*) usually the third week of April, the women engaged in the planting of melon, beans, groundnut, corn designated as “subsidiary” or “women corps”. Cultivation and harvest were usually carried out using simple implements such as hoes (*egue*) knives (*ukpoghai*), axes, (*uze*) and cutlasses (*opia*) etcetera. These farming tools were produced from economic trees such as kolanut trees, coconut trees, palm trees, rubber, cotton among others (Edeki, 2011). Some other agricultural activities which provided food and nutrient for the people were hunting, animal husbandry, mushroom and reptile gathering and fishing among others. Fishing was the preserve of the people living in communities on bank of the River Niger such as Ozigono and Idoia. Here men engaged in fishing; leaving the preservation and marketing to the women. The fish caught added to the people's protein and others not immediately consumed were preserved either by smoking, drying or salting and later sold to traders from immediate and distance neighbours such as Igbo, Afenmailand, Benin, Igala, Nupe, Yoruba, Okeneland among others (Edeki, 2011).

Apart from agricultural production, there also existed the manufacturing sector involving the use of simple and complex technology for transforming raw materials obtained from immediate environment or imported into finished products. Examples were blacksmithing, textile production, soap production, pot making, leather works, wood carving, mats and baskets weaving, herbal medical practice among others (Ambrose, 2012). Soap making was a major occupation of Esan women. The soap due to its popularity was named *Ebakhoesan* (Esan soap). The need for the soap was informed by the necessity for bath and wash. The *Ebakhoesan* was itself very medicinal as it was used for curing measles and all kind of skin diseases. Another important of manufacturing activity in which Esan women were involved was mat weaving. Mat (*ewa*) was woven from special weeds found in the wild forest. The need to relax and to be comfortably seated when holding meeting, eating and sleeping inspired mat making among Esan women. Locally produced mat was for wrapping the dead before burial and for separating of sacred places and shrines from the uninvited or uninitiated.

Esan people were also engaged in domestic and long-distance trade in pre-colonial period (Obasogie, 2013). Agricultural and manufactured products were exchanged in the domestic markets on market days and durable or less perishable items exchanged in long distance trade. Domestic markets varied in sizes as there were small markets called *Ekioto* and large markets *Ekiote*. Initially, medium of exchange was the reciprocal obligation which later developed into trade by barter and the use of cowry, *Ikpigho*, the British colonial officials (Obasogie, 2013). From the above, it could be deduced that economic activities in Esan in precolonial era were elaborate, developed by dynamic. Thus, when the British colonial agents introduced new economic policies to serve as their imperial interest, the basic structures of Esan indigenous economy were not totally altered. The new economic systems however integrated the economy of Esan into the main stream of western capitalism (Egbefo, 2006).

On the political sphere, which many said had its origins from Benin Kingdom after all Esan war leaders (*Okakulo*) were invited to Benin by Oba Ewuare “the Great”, who gave them staff of office (*ada*) knife and (*eben*) spiritual sword with the titled Onojie or kings. Following this new relationship with Benin Kingdom, anew political institution, that is, the Onojie-ship and its paraphernalia comprising the titled chiefs or nobles [*Ekhaimon*] and empowerment of elders, *edion* became the focal point of political authority in Esan (Egbefo, 2006). However, the highest and most reverend in the political structure in the management of the villages was the *edion*, headed by the *Edionwele*, the oldest in the council-of-elders. This age-grade of elders (*Out-edion*) was the main repository of custom and values within the village. Its members were exempted from any manual labour, taxes, tributes or any condition demeaning of an elder. By rights, they constituted the organ in charge of legislative, judicial and executive in the village. They were also the repository of customs, tradition, other societal values and the sole custodian of spiritual activities of the people. (Egbefo, 2006). The other set in the Out or age-set were the Igene, middle-age men between the ages of 25 and 45 whose responsibilities included execution of policies formulated by the *edion* and the *Eghonughele*, or youths of between 10 and 24 years who were responsible for menial jobs such as running errands and sweeping of streets and footpaths. These socio-political tripartite set up, facilitated the maintenance of law and order in the Esan society (Dike, 2009).

Socially, the people prevented inter-communal distrust and crises through and *Okoven* or common oath system. This helped in checking the numerous inter-village rivalries and competition for scarce resources and in confronting a common enemy. According to Dike, “the use of common oath among the Esan was one of integrative instruments of intra and inter-Esan relationship before it relegation by the colonial masters” (Anthony, 2009). Besides, there were a number of other social instruments of cohesion among the various autonomous kingdoms. These included annual festivals, ceremonies, and inter-village/kingdom marriages, mock-wars and worship of

common ancestors, spirits, idols and the supreme God (*Osenobua*). The most popular festival; the new yam festival (*Ihioban*) involved all families which attracted people from neighbouring communities and kingdoms. Ceremonies such as Funerals, naming, coronation of kings, giving of titles to Esan and non-Esan acted as binding links between Esan and her immediate and distant neighbours. There was also the evidence of inter-village pacts, Akota, Akughe for defense, trade, surveillance and the use of markets, trade routes, rivers, farm land and several other natural endowments (Anthony, 2009).

Investment Opportunities and Employment (Wealth) Creation in Esanland

The content of the natural resources of a people impacts the amount of their output. For Esanland, output is determined by key subsectors where Esanland has comparative advantage, that is mining and agro-products such as cassava cultivation, plantation farming, groundnut farming, oil palm & oil mills plantation forestry and fisheries. The investment opportunities in Esanland are explained thus:

Table 1: Mining & Agro-Industry Opportunities in Esanland

Agro-Industry	Investment Opportunity
Cassava farming	Cassava processing plant/factory: cassava chips, cassava starch, cassava flour, cassava bio-ethanol, cassava derived foods etc.
Rice Farming	Rice milling industry
Plantation Industry	Plantain plantation, banana plantation, yam plantation, kola nut plantation, Chocolate cultivation, coconut oil business, etc.
Cocoa Farming	Cocoa production
Cashew farming	Cashew processing industry
Groundnut farming	Groundnut cultivation industry, groundnut oil processing industry
Tomato farming	Tomato production industry, tomato seeds processing, tomato nurseries and fresh tomato processing into tomato pastes, purees, ketchup
Livestock industry	Cattle farming (milk production, beef, etc.), goat farming, sheep farming, piggery, snail rearing etc.
Poultry farming	Poultry farming (egg production, meat production, hatchery or day-old-chicks production)

Flour Mill Industry	Bakery industry, flour mill industry capable of manufacturing eight hundred tons of flour a day, flour mill business plant
Pineapple/Juice Industry	Pineapple farming, fruit juice industry
Sawmill (Timber) Industry	Timber business, wood processing industry etc.
Acquaculture Industry (Fishery)	Fish farming with fish tank, pumps, aeration devices, net, handling and grading equipment
Mining Industry	Investment Opportunities
Minerals	Limestone, Marble, Clay, Kaolin, Gypsum, Granite, Sandstone etc. Limestone mining, coal mining, mining of iron ore, bitumen mining etc.

Source: Authors' compilation

Discussion of Table 1: Options for investors

From Table 1 above, it becomes apparent that mining and agriculture constitutes the foremost proportion of natural resources that contribute significantly to the economy of Esanland. In effect, Esanland is well positioned for agriculture and mining. For example, cassava cultivation is suitably viable in Esanland due to decent soil nutrient, organic fertilizer, organic pesticide etc.

In Tanzania, cassava production is estimated at 5.4m tons and 84% of cassava is produced for consumption, animal feed, alcohol brewing and starch production(FAOSTAT,) .³¹ The investment generates annual profits of about US \$1 08970, which is equivalent to 14.8 percent of the invested capital(CRAIGWELL, 2006).

It is no longer news that the Nigeria government import rice from Thailand and China almost every year and billions of dollars goes into importation of this product because the local farmers are unable to meet up the demand due to poor funding and limited knowledge. In 2011, Nigeria spent billion on rice importation(UNECA 2007) and early 2017, a bag of rice sold for about N23000. So, investing in rice production in Esanland where there is enough acre of land is profitable and it is capable of generating employment for the teeming youths. Esan has fertile soil that is rich and naturally fertilized for plantation investment. India, Philippines and Indonesia are the leading producers of coconut oil and their individual shares comprise 27%, 22% and 23% respectively. With about ten acres of fertile Esan land made available to local and foreign investors, numerous jobs would have been created in the rural regions of Esanland. Also, Esanland has comparative advantage in cashew farming and so

investing in Esanland cashew would yield high returns. Approximately two million cashew farmers across Esanland are at the base of the value chain(CBN, 2017).

Esanland is endowed with cocoa and with about fifty acres of fertile Esanland made available to domestic and foreign investors, cocoa production would flourish and jobs would have been created in all the five local government areas of Esanland. The investment opportunities in pineapple farming include investment in pineapple farming, fruit juice industry etc. Accordingly, a foreign investor with huge capital could invest in fruit juice in Esanland and earn high returns. For example, Australia is well known for the huge income that is generated from pineapple farming annually and this is validated by the fact that Chivita fruit juice firm makes billions of Naira annually as well.

At present, there is no tomato industry in Esanland whereas Nigeria spends up to US \$500 million every year to import tomato paste(CBN, 2017) making Nigeria one of the main importers of tomato paste in the world. Today, Tomato Jos operates across the entire tomato value chain (farming, logistics, and processing) and it employs over two thousand smallholder tomato farmers. Aliko Dangote, the Nigerian billionaire is a tomato farmer.

Poultry farming is portable and both local and foreign investors can make huge gains especially in a country of about one hundred and eighty million people, a poultry farm with about fifty thousand birds could be initiated and thereafter make millions annually as turnover on investment begins to come. So, multinationals with good technical know-how and modern equipment can make huge profit from this industry in Esanland. Esanland is endowed with natural rivers which could make an aquaculture industry worthwhile. Partnership between local and foreign investors with an indispensable fish tank, pumps, aeration devices, net handling and grading equipment's and water testing equipment's would profit the aquaculture industry in Esanland. Esanland has wide range of timbers in the forest and a multinational company can build about US\$ 500 million timber industry in Esanland West where there is timber)' forest. This investment would ultimately create more than one thousand direct jobs.

Regarding flour mill industry, the only Ewu flour mill in Edo State is out of operation for over a decade. The Inter-flour Group is one of the biggest flour milling companies in the world with seven flour mills in Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey. A flour mill offers a wide range of manufacturing opportunities for local and foreign entrepreneurs and it is high profit generating industry.

A case in point is the roller flour mill which is a process industry that mills gains and provide endosperm as countless segments such as maida, sooji, and atta serves as factory location for the manufacturing operation of a flour mill. In Esanland, great

deals of mineral are deposited by nature. For example, Lime stone is located in Esanland East. Marble in Esanland East, Clay in Esanland East and Esanland Central, Granite in Esanland East, Esanland Central and Esanland West and Sandstone in Esanland East and Central(AZELAMA, 2018). In effect, Esanland has great deposits of minerals. The land itself presents the best opportunities for investors. MNEs with financial capacity and a team can embark on these investments.

Development Result on Esanland Community in Edo State, Nigeria

New Productivity Advantage: In accordance with the New Growth theory, the developmental impacts of multinational companies are directly driven by the linkages they create. This goes to show that the greatest developmental impact of foreign investment on Esanland could be envisaged on the basis of stronger positive spill overs from foreign firms. The major channel that permits such positive spill overs from foreign firms to the host community of Esanland is technology gap, entry and exit behaviour in the market(SARKAR&YU-CHENG 2009). In other words, it increases investment and promote higher growth of industrial productivity in the community of Esanland.

Resource Cost Advantage: The crux of the Flying Geese model is that foreign investment is shifted from high labour cost home countries to low labour cost host countries(RIZVI& NISHAT, 2009).Accordingly, the optimizing behaviour of MNEs is guided by cost minimization such that investment by multinational companies is capable of satisfying not only the local market in Esanland and environs but also international market.

The benefit lies in the fact that foreign companies seek lower resource cost and this benefit the host community through the augmentation of the level of knowledge via labour training and skill acquisition, that is, training (learning) of local workers in foreign-owned companies.

Export Performance Advantage: Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) increase the export performance of the host community by using the host community's factor endowments to produce at lower cost. Esanland is endowed with minerals and agricultural produce. Consequently, spillover effects of foreign investment serve to stimulate exportation by local firms due to manufacturing expertise.

Allocative Efficiency and Externality Benefit: From the Neo-classical point of view, Esanland benefits from the allocative efficiency expertise of MNEs, with the condition that the distribution of gains be ascertained by talks between the foreign firms and local governments or the state government as the case may be. Also, the Esanland community benefits from externalities in the practise of licensing,

imitation, employee training, managerial expertise and execution of new production processes by multinational enterprises (foreign firms).

High-tech Spill over Advantage: There is also the technology adoption benefit (YEAPLE, 2003) whereby firms in Esanland adopt the technologies of multinational companies through either forward or backward linkages, subcontracting or reverse engineering. Through forward and backward linkages with the economy of Esanland made possible by investment of MNCs, employment and supplementary economic activities are stirred and also the domestic revenue generation gap (DRGG) is engaged.

A forward linkage indicated that a multinational corporation sells intermediate inputs to domestic firms in the host community while backward linkage denotes that the MNC, buys intermediate goods from domestic supplier (MILE VA, 2008) Esanland stands to benefit from the backward linkage exclusively when it is the case that such MNC can provide technical advice resulting in an international spillover of technology that increase Esanland's productivity. In effect, Esanland benefit from the increasing returns on knowledge about the technology that is used in the production function (process).

Conclusion and Policy Options

The paper evaluates the economic history and socio-economic investment opportunities in Esanland over the period of eighteen years using the descriptive approach. As indigene of Esanland, over reflection on the economy of Esanland nineteen years ago compared to her present economy shows Esanland is presently at a take-off stage of development and yet the mining and agricultural potential of Esanland community is scarcely being tapped. An indication of the precise time to invest in Esanland. Indeed, Esanland community is gradually emerging and so the need for expenditure on social and economic infrastructure, innovative products, industrial projects etc. cannot be overemphasized.

With foreign investors operating with a local foremost program which denotes striving to support the wellbeing of individuals in local communities of Esanland by hiring and training local workers wherever possible founding agro-industries and mining firms, sourcing product from Esanland farms and suppliers, substantial investments in infrastructural projects that benefit Esanland, the developmental outcome on Esanland communities would be sustainable.

Moreover, persistent investment in Esanland by both domestic and foreign investors would drive the employment opportunities in Esanland and hence increase wealth creation in Esanland. So, Edo State government should strive harder to attract more multinational companies into Esanland to establish agricultural firms/companies and

provide agricultural machinery. The leading options for facilitating investment in Esanland are agro-industry and mining.

Colossal investment is needed mining and agriculture across Edo State to enhance production and increase the contribution of the sector to GDP. Investment is essential in cassava farming, cocoa farming, groundnuts farming, pineapple farming, oil palm farming, rubber, coconut farming, kola nut farming, coffee production, cotton farming, cashew farming industry, timber etc.

Esanland local government authorities and by extension, Edo State government should embark on the following:

- a. Courteously set up Esanland Chamber of commerce, industry, mines and agriculture (ETCCIMA) to take advantage of Esanland comparative advantage in agro-products and mineral deposit. There is need for Public Private Partnership (PPP) in diversifying tile economy of Esanland by' capitalizing on government policies targeted at instituting agro-industries.
- b. Drastically implement economic policies aimed at boosting local content production and small-scale enterprises. Such policies aimed at boosting local content production and small-scale enterprises. Such policies could take the form of tax holiday, incentive and duty-free import policy for those willing to invest in agriculture in Edo State. The government should withdraw licenses from every dormant investor who were granted mining licenses but are not utilizing it.
- c. Adopt the use of greenhouses for farming tomatoes as it better monitor and control weather conditions and pests which significantly affect tomato production in open farmlands. The local governments of Esanland should channel significant attention to promoting farming in Esanland to help boost food production in the country and minimize food importation. Edo State government and all the local governments in Edo State should seriously engage agriculture for all as it was engaged during the Green Revolution (GR) and Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in the past.
- d. Organize Local Investing Opportunity Networks (LIONs) in local community to link local businesses with resident investors. There is need to develop Esanland Community Development Loan Funds (ECDLFs) for the purpose of making loans obtainable to local businesses without access to modern bank financing.
- e. Farm settlements should be set up in all the local government areas in Edo State. The Edo State government should inspire mechanized agriculture and farming and supply farming implements to all the local government areas of Edo State. The local government authority should develop and fabricate appropriate small-scale mechanized technologies for on-farm and secondary processing of agricultural produce in Esanland,

Multinational agribusiness and mining firms such as Banks of industry; World Bank; Karturi firm; Forestal Neltume Carranco S.A.; Glencore Xstrata Company; Barrick Gold, a Canadian multinational mining company and BHP Billiton can be called upon to drive investment in Esanland.

Bank of industry with its mandate to provide financial assistance for the establishment of large, medium and small projects as well as expansion, diversification and modernization of existing enterprise; and rehabilitation of ailing ones can be called upon for the establishment of agro-industries and mining industries.

The World Bank is a major source of funding agribusiness in poor countries. So, World Bank can provide investment funds to establish appropriate conditions to mobilize resources for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), infrastructure finance, and climate mitigation and adaption finance in Esanland. The World Bank Group and Development Partners can be reached for financing micro, small and medium agro-industries and mining industry. This will contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for growth and employment (SDGS) and resilient infrastructure (SDG9).

Karuturi Firm is an Indian agribusiness company and grows cereals, rice and sugar from its one hundred-thousand-hectare farm in Gambella province in Western Ethiopia. Similarly, Thai Farm is a cassava processing company which processes cassava into baking flour cassava. Forestal Neltume Carranco S.A is a timber merchant with activities in Chile. Panguipulli, Region de los Rios etc. Golden Agriculture-Resources Ltd operates palm oil plantation industry, palm oil mills, palm and laurics, oilseeds and other fragments.

Glencore Xstrata Company is the world's leading mining company headquartered in Switzerland. The company's mining operations encompass over one hundred and fifty mining and metallurgical sites around the world. Glencore Xstrata also produced 138.1 million tonnes of coal in 2013 recording industrial revenues exceeding US\$10bn(ASIEDU, 2012). Barrick Gold is the world's biggest Canadian gold mining company. Barrick Gold earned US\$12.5bn revenues in 2013. Also, Anglo American is a British multinational mining company headquartered in London, UK. The company produced 42.4 million tonnes of iron ore, 97.8mt of coal, 34400t of nickel, 2.32 million ounces of platinum and 31.2 million carats of diamonds in 2017(UNECA, 2007).

BHP Billiton is an Australian miner and the world's second biggest mining company. The major mining commodities produced by the company include aluminium, coal, copper, iron ore, manganese, nickel, silver and uranium. Fortescue

Metals Group (FMG) is also an Australian mining company and the world's fourth biggest iron ore producer after Vale, Rio Tinto and BI-IP Rilliton.

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LE NOUVEAU ROMAN FRANÇAIS FACE À UNE ADAPTATION ROMANESQUE AFRICAINE: LE CAS DE *VERRE CASSÉ* D'ALAIN MABANCKOU

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Résumé

Avec l'esprit d'innovation et de rénovation, Alain Mabanckou rejoint ceux qui proclament la nécessité d'un changement dans la production littéraire en général et romanesque africaine en particulier. Pour cette raison, l'appétit littéraire d'Alain Mabanckou vis-à-vis du nouveau roman français est une chose favorable à savourer. Mabanckou propose à travers Verre cassé, l'établissement d'un point de vue distinctif dans l'aspect du nouveau roman français lancé en France par Alain Robbe-Grillet, Michel Butor, Nathalie Sarraute, entre autres. Dans cet article, nous allons examiner le courant littéraire du nouveau roman français et l'identité du roman africain chez Mabanckou. Nous allons relever les points de confluence que l'écrivain franco-congolais établit avec des auteurs français du mouvement de nouveau roman. Mabanckou l'identité romanesque africaine. Il reste toujours cohérent en donnant une nouvelle orientation esthétique à la production du roman francophone africain. Avec Verre cassé, nous pouvons dire que Mabanckou explore un nouveau courant en guise d'annoncer un nouveau message artistique en ce qui concerne le nouveau roman d'origine française.

[Mots-clés: esprit d'innovation, le nouveau roman, le style classique, le style lâché, l'écriture moderne, l'hybridité romanesque]

Introduction

En tant qu'une activité intellectuelle chez l'homme (terme générique), la littérature évolue comme toute activité dans la société humaine. En ce qui concerne l'identité de la littérature africaine, Alain Mabanckou et les nouveaux romanciers français choisissent la voie commune. Avant de commenter le roman choisi d'Alain Mabanckou, il est nécessaire de dévoiler les points de que l'écrivain établit avec ses homologues français du mouvement du nouveau roman. Au lieu de concentrer sur l'idéologie de l'engagement animée par Jean-Paul Sartre en France et amplifiée en

Afrique par Mongo Béti, Ousmane Sembène, Ferdinand Oyono, entre autres, Mabanckou ne se focalise pas seulement sur le fond littéraire mais il travaille aussi la forme littéraire de façon totalement nouvelle, unique et étrange. Mabanckou fait une hybridation du roman africain qui partage certaines caractéristiques littéraires avec le nouveau roman français. Il est donc un réformateur qui ne se limite pas seulement à la perspective traditionnelle du roman classique africain comme *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba*, *Le Vieux Nègre et la Médaille*, mais il côtoie aussi ce qu'on peut décrire comme un véritable nouveau roman africain avec ses *Verre cassé*, *Mémoires de porc-épic*, entre autres de ses romans.

La position de Mabanckou ne déjoue pas la fonctionnalité ou le rôle didactique de son œuvre dans sa société. Néanmoins, comme les nouveaux romanciers français, l'objectif principal de Mabanckou est de rejeter les règles façonnées et employées par les romanciers classiques et copiées par les romanciers africains. Ce qui est important à Mabanckou c'est la personnalité de son œuvre caractérisée par la structure ou la manière de présentation. En plus, Mabanckou essaie d'ajouter un sens à la définition du roman africain. La différence spécifique de ses œuvres par rapport à l'étude littéraire inclut la présentation structurelle, l'usage du langage flexible, la déchronologie, le refus de l'analyse des sentiments, le refus de l'usage du point grammatical pour ponctuer et finalement le refus de l'usage de lettre majuscule. Nous pouvons à ce niveau tracer des lignes entre *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou et les autres œuvres du mouvement de nouveau roman qui sont similaires mais pas nécessairement identiques.

Le nouveau roman et ses apports à la littérature comme domaine de connaissance

Le nouveau roman est un roman post-camusien né dans les années 1950. Les fondateurs du nouveau roman sont Alain Robbe-Grillet, Michel Butor, Nathalie Sarraute, entre autres. C'est un roman qui est à l'opposé de toutes les conventions classiques qui influençaient la production du roman traditionnel. L'attitude de nouveaux romanciers est plus étrange. Le nouveau roman un style plat et. L'objectif est de rejeter les règles conventionnelles considérées périmées. La forme du nouveau roman devient une arme révolutionnaire contre le roman traditionnel. L'intrigue du nouveau roman est complexe. Nous avons constaté l'influence du nouveau roman français dans *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou et nous l'analyse formaliste de ce roman.

Une considération biographique brève d'Alain Mabanckou

Alain Mabanckou passe son enfance et son adolescence au Congo Brazzaville, à Pointe Noire. Il arrive en France en 1989 pour poursuivre des études de droit à l'Université de Nantes et commence à publier ses premiers textes poétiques. En 1995, il reçoit le prix de la Société des Poètes Français tandis que son premier

roman, *Bleu-Blanc-Rouge*, paru en 1998. Désormais, il ne cessera de publier romans, essais et poèmes. En 2001, il quitte la France pour les Etats-Unis où lui sont proposés une résidence d'écrivain, puis un poste de professeur assistant de littératures francophone et afro-américaine et de la création littéraire. En 2006, alors qu'il vient d'obtenir le Prix Renaudot pour son roman *Mémoires de porc-épic*, l'Université de Californie-Los Angeles (UCLA) lui propose une titularisation au Département de Littérature Française et d'Études Francophones, poste qu'il occupe jusqu'à ce jour.

Il a été finaliste en 2015 du « Man Booker International Prize » en Grande Bretagne et du « Premio Strega Europeo » en Italie. L'ensemble de son œuvre a été couronné en 2012 par l'Académie française (Grand Prix de littérature Henri Gal), puis en 2013 par la Principauté de Monaco (Prix Littéraire Prince Pierre de Monaco pour l'ensemble de l'œuvre). Son roman *Lumières de Pointe-Noire* qui vient d'être traduit aux Etats-Unis a reçu à New York le Grand Prix *French Voices* en 2016.

Les caractéristiques du nouveau roman africain face à *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou

Dans la lecture de *Verre cassé* le lecteur moderne voit la déchronologie dans la narration, le refus de l'usage de ponctuation comme le point (.), la technique du début *in media res* du roman, la présentation du personnage éponyme comme anti-héros dans le roman, des personnages, l'usage de langage familier et le manque de sentiments et d'émotions dans la narration. Ces caractéristiques sont typiquement spéciales au nouveau roman français.

La déchronologie dans la narration de *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou

La déchronologie c'est le refus de l'intrigue traditionnelle. *Verre cassé* est un roman anthologique. C'est un roman éponyme qui raconte l'histoire des personnages, ayant un vrai penchant pour l'alcool. Ces personnages sont des clients assidus d'un bar du Congo-Brazzaville nommé « Le Crédit a voyagé ». Le patron du bar, L'Escargot Entêté, va un jour confier la tâche à Verre Cassé d'écrire les différentes histoires racontées par ses autres clients. L'auteur présente aussi la réclamation de la fermeture immédiate et sans condition de « Le Crédit a voyagé ». On parle aussi de dictateurs africains qui passent leur temps à concevoir des slogans démagogiques au lieu de travailler pour le bien du peuple. Voici ce qu'en dit le narrateur:

le gouvernement en a discuté au Conseil des ministres, et certains dirigeants du pays ont réclamé la fermeture immédiate sans conditions de l'établissement, mais d'autres s'y sont opposés avec des arguments à peine plus convaincants, du coup le pays a été en deux pour cette petite querelle de lézards, et alors, avec l'autorité et la

sagesse qu'on lui connaissait désormais, le ministre de l'Agriculture, du Commerce et des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises, Albert Zou Loukia, a élevé la voix, il a fait une intervention mémorable, une intervention qui est restée ici comme un des plus beaux discours politiques de tous les temps, le ministre Zou Loukia a dit à plusieurs reprises « j'accuse », et tout le monde était si médusé que dans la rue, pour un oui ou pour un non, pour une petite dispute ou une injustice mineure, on disait « J'accuse ». (17)

Après avoir présenté la querelle sur la suppression du bar parce qu'il contribue à la décadence morale dans la société, le narrateur présente les portraits des clients du bar. Tout le roman est donc une succession de différents portraits des personnages narrés par Verre Cassé. Nous avons, par exemple, l'histoire d'un homme dénoncé par sa femme à la police comme étant un pédophile. Il sera incarcéré sans aucun procès. En prison, il est abusé par ses co-détenus et par certains gardiens de prison. L'homme perdra alors le contrôle de ses muscles et doit porter les couches, d'où son surnom de « l'homme aux Pampers ». L'Imprimeur ayant vécu et travaillé en France, dont sa femme est devenue l'amante de son fils aîné né lors d'un premier mariage avec une Antillaise, tombe dans la déprime. Il est alors interné dans un hôpital psychiatrique en France. Sa femme et son fils l'accusent de folie. C'est alors que l'Imprimeur est renvoyé quelques mois plus tard dans son pays d'origine qui est le Congo. Le style de ce roman est tantôt truculent, tantôt pittoresque. Même si toute l'histoire est écrite au bar « le Crédit a voyagé », les histoires de ces hommes nous emmènent parfois hors de l'Afrique, et dans tous les coins du monde.

Le refus de l'usage de ponctuation comme le point (.)

Il n'y a pas de point tout au long de la présentation de *Verre cassé*. Ceci nous rappelle de la forme de *La Modification* de Michel Butor dans laquelle il y a aussi des phrases kilométriques sans ponctuation. On peut dire que *Verre cassé* est un roman à une seule phrase ou bien un roman composé des groupes de mots tels que:

« j'avais pas bien vu, mais c'est vraiment le désordre dans ce cahier, y'a pas de points, y'a que des virgules et des virgules, parfois des guillemets quand les gens parlent, c'est normal, tu dois mettre ça un peu au propre, tu crois pas, hein, et comment moi je peux lire tout ça si c'est collé comme ça, faut laisser encore quelques espaces, quelques respirations, quelques moments de pause, tu vois, » (239)

La première lettre du mot qui commence la narration est écrite en minuscule et au cours de la présentation du message, il n'y a que des virgules. L'auteur refuse d'employer le point (.) tout au long de la présentation romanesque. Ceci est en

conformité avec la personnalité du narrateur qui écrit l'histoire des clients de « Le Crédit a voyagé » sous l'influence d'alcool.

La technique du début du roman: *in media res*

Verre Cassé commence la narration de l'histoire comme si le lecteur a une connaissance préalable du bar, « Le Crédit a voyagé » et du patron L'Escargot Entêté. De plus, le lecteur ne sait pas exactement le lieu où la narration commence. Le narrateur emploie le monologue antérieur pour présenter la tâche le propriétaire du bar. La narration au-dessous marque le début du roman:

disons que le patron du bar Le Crédit a voyagé m'a remis un cahier que je dois remplir, et il croit dur fort comme fer que moi, Verre Cassé, je peux pondre un livre parce que, en plaisantant, je lui avais raconté un jour l'histoire d'un écrivain célèbre qui buvait comme éponge, un écrivain célèbre qu'on allait même ramasser dans la rue quand il était ivre, (11)

Dans la citation, nous pouvons voir que le roman n'a pas commencé comme un roman traditionnel où on présente le lieu et même le temps d'action. Cette façon d'ouvrir la narration correspond au commencement de *La Modification* de Michel Butor.

Verre Cassé comme anti-héros dans *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou

Le personnage principal de ce roman éponyme est un fracas en quête d'une identité unique et étrange. La personnalité de Verre Cassé est caractérisée par les comportements totalement étranges. Ceci est la motivation pour sa démission comme professeur. Ses actions ne sont pas dignes d'émulation. La particularité de l'univers romanesque de Mabanckou est qu'il met en évidence des sujets ayant pour projet la déchéance morale. Il dédie toute sa vie à l'alcoolisme et ne se soucie même pas de sa famille. Evidemment il vit au bar; d'ailleurs, il a la liberté de boire n'importe quoi même s'il n'a pas d'argent pour payer avant la consommation comme d'autres clients:

j'ai pris une bouteille au hasard en faisant signe à L'Escargot Entêté que je paierai demain, il a dit « y a pas de problèmes, Verre Cassé, si c'est toi je n'ai pas à m'inquiéter, si c'est les autres, je leur réponds que le crédit est mort, il a voyagé depuis longtemps », et c'est ça l'amitié, la grande amitié entre L'Escargot Entête et moi. (215)

Verre Cassé projette aussi sa nature de la déprimé. Il donne la définition de sa personnalité ou identité avec les mots suivants et ceci est totalement étrange. On découvre que le narrateur se met à l'écart des conventions sociales et les valeurs socioculturelles africaines:

quand j'étais encore instituteur, il paraît même que j'arrivais toujours en retard en classe chaque fois que j'avais bu, il paraît que même que je montrais alors mes fesses aux enfants pendant le cours d'anatomie, il paraît même que je dessinais des sexes géants au tableau, il paraît même que je pissais dans un coin de la classe, il paraît même que je pinçais les fesses de mes collègues hommes et femmes, il paraît même que j'avais fait goûter du vin de palme aux élèves, et comme il n'y a pas de petite querelle dans ce monde qui s'effondre, l'inspecteur régional a été mis au courant de mes mœurs de primitif. (172)

De la citation ci-haut, nous que Verre Cassé ne respecte pas les conventions sociales. Il vit sa vie comme conséquences de ses actions. L'alcool l'aide à créer dans son intérieur un monde différent dans lequel il vit. Psychologiquement, Verre Cassé vit dans un univers différent qui lui permet d'agir selon sa volonté personnelle. A travers ce portrait autobiographique de Verre Cassé, on peut voir qu'il était un brillant instituteur qui est devenu aujourd'hui un buveur chronique et client assidu de L'Escargot Entêté. Cette déflagration identitaire est clairement montrée dans ce récit: « je m'en fous des stylos, je m'en fous des craies, je m'en fous des règles et je m'en fous aussi de la carte de notre pays parce que ce pays c'est de la merde, » (174). De cette façon, Mabanckou présente la décadence morale et son but est d'exposer autant que possible sa société à la risée de tout le monde.

Étude onomastique des personnages dans *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou

Presque tous les personnages dans *Verre cassé* sont appelés par les noms différents que leurs propres noms. Ceci est une technique étrange aux lecteurs du roman traditionnel. Ces personnages ont des pseudonymes à travers lesquels l'auteur dévoile leur comportement. Plus précisément, nous entendons illustrer l'idée que les noms des personnages obéissent à un certain nombre de mécanismes inspirés des cultures de ces peuples.

Nous avons constaté la *désidentification* ou la substitution de noms des personnages, la situation où les personnages sont identifiés par d'autres noms que les leurs. Néanmoins, ceci aide le lecteur de trouver l'information supplémentaire sur le personnage. L'auteur ôte une appellation originelle aux personnages pour leur en attribuer d'autres. Ces pseudonymes qui leur sont donnés par le narrateur projettent

une identité qui renvoie aux actions des personnages. De plus, l'identité permet le dévoilement d'une personne dans le récit.

Dans *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou, on observe que l'ensemble des personnages échappent à la catégorisation sociale d'appellation et on pourrait croire que les noms qui leur sont donnés dans le roman sont véritablement leurs noms d'origine. Mais en étudiant profondément, on découvre que c'est une nouveauté littéraire de l'auteur. Verre Cassé, par exemple, est un nom descriptif qui expose la capacité débordée de la consommation de l'alcool de ce personnage éponyme. De plus, lorsque ce dernier parle de son ex-épouse, il expose sa personnalité en évoquant des souvenirs d'une personne dangereuse. Il dit:

...Angélique c'est le prénom de mon ex-femme, mais quand je parle d'elle, je l'appelle Diabolique, et tout au long de mon cahier je vais l'appeler Diabolique, oui je l'appellerai comme ça, elle n'a rien d'un ange, mêmes dissipés, agissent, car Diabolique, elle a passé plus de quinze années à mes côtés, (155).

À travers la citation ci-haut, on nous a fait croire que son épouse lui a fait subir le mal. Cette façon d'appellation s'applique à tous les personnages. Ces personnages sont Le type aux Pampers, L'imprimeur et Robinette. Le narrateur nous donne des explications sur ce changement de noms. Pour ce qui est de L'imprimeur, on découvre qu'il était imprimeur en France. Le narrateur nous le présente en ces termes:

tu peux vérifier, on te dira, et donc j'avais un bon travail, un travail bien rémunéré, je te jure, on imprimait Paris-Match, VSD, Voici, Le Figaro, Les Écos, j'étais un homme bien, je m'étais marié avec Céline, une Vendéenne bien foutue du derrière comme une vraie Nègresse du pays, (67).

C'est Verre Cassé lui donne le nom de L'imprimeur. En ce qui concerne le type aux Pampers, c'est la point culminant d'une expérience marquante que lui ont fait subir ses codétenus en prison, voulant lui faire payer le fait d'avoir abusé de sa fille. Il est clair que ces noms ne sont pas attribués de manière arbitraire, mais cela suit bien une logique des personnages. Robinette, par exemple, est aussi donnée ce nom est donnée ce nom à cause de sa personnalité. Le narrateur nous la présente ainsi:

Robinette boit, boit encore sans même se souler, et quand elle boit comme ça elle va derrière le bar comme tout le monde, et quand elle pisse derrière le bar au lieu d'aller aux toilettes comme tout le monde, et quand elle pisse derrière le bar elle met au moins dix minutes à uriner sans

s'arrêter, ça coule et coule encore comme si on avait ouvert une fontaine publique, c'est pas du bluff, c'est incroyable mais vrai, tous les gars qui ont essayé de la concurrencer en matière de pisse à durée indéterminée ont fait l'adieu aux armes, ils ont été vaincus, écrasés, laminés, ridiculisés, roulés dans la poussière, dans la farine de maïs. (94)

Dans *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou, les personnages nous sont présentés sous les caractéristiques que sont leurs professions ou encore leurs comportements. De plus, ce nom substitué est la conséquence du vécu du personnage. Partant de cela, le narrateur tire argument d'un fait de la vie du personnage pour conférer à celui-ci une nouvelle appellation. En fait, l'appellation de presque toute la totalité des personnages du roman de Mabanckou s'inspire dans cette logique. Nous avons « Mama Mfoa » qui est connue d'une autre appellation, la « Cantatrice chauve ». Ce nom justifie un trait physique de la dame et le fait qu'elle chante durant son activité pour ses clients. Le narrateur la présente de cette manière:

y'a Mama Mfoa qui vend des brochettes de viande juste en face du Crédit a voyagé, elle est chauve et chante de temps à autre pour nous amuser, c'est pour cela qu'on l'appelle affectueusement La Cantatrice chauve, elle vend des soles grillées, du poulet-télévision parce que ça se prépare au four à micro-ondes, (149).

Nous avons aussi le type aux Pampers injustement emprisonné à cause de fausses accusations de sa femme. Dans la prison, il devient victime de la sodomie et perd le contrôle de ses muscles. Ceci est bien présenté par le narrateur:

comment pourrais-je oublier ce père de famille chassé de chez lui comme un chien enragé et qui m'a bien fait rire il y a plus de deux mois, disons que c'est un pauvre gars qui en est réduit aujourd'hui à porter des couches Pampers comme un nourrisson, je ne voudrais surtout pas rire de sa condition, mais c'est la triste réalité, (41).

Cette technique d'appellation de personnages n'est pas employée dans le roman traditionnel, qu'il soit africain, européen ou américain. Ceci projette l'évolution de la présentation romanesque africaine. Par le biais de ces noms, l'auteur donne l'image ou la personnalité de ses personnages.

Le manque de sentiments et d'émotions dans la narration dans *Verre cassé*

Le narrateur de *Verre cassé* d'Alain Mabanckou est omniscient comme le narrateur de *La Modification* de Michel Butor. *Verre cassé* narre l'histoire sans faire voir ses

sentiments ou émotions comme c'est le cas avec la narration du roman traditionnel. Le narrateur et les personnages ne peignent pas leurs émotions dans la narration du roman. Ils cachent leurs émotions et projettent même les événements tragiques de façon comique. On voit ceci après avoir narré l'histoire tragique du type aux Pampers:

après qu'il a eu terminé de me raconter sa vie, le type aux Pampers a soulevé son verre pour me dire « tchao », il a bu d'un trait, il s'est resservi tout de suite, puis il a bu de nouveau d'un trait et s'est enfin levé en disant « bien, bien, bien », j'ai alors pu voir de près son derrière bombé par les quatre couches épaisses de Pampers qui se superposaient, un derrière humide, y avait des mouches qui bourdonnaient autour, (59).

La situation du type aux Pampers est pitoyable mais à cause de l'influence de l'alcoolisme, les émotions des personnages ne sont pas montrées.

La personnification de riverain dans la narration dans *Verre cassé*

Dans *Verre cassé*, l'auteur utilise le riverain de la rivière Tchinouka comme personnage pour peut-être faire exposer l'effet d'alcoolisme sur Verre Cassé. Le narrateur se retrouve à quatre heures du matin au bord de la rivière. Là, l'ivrogne commence d'imaginer beaucoup de choses, y compris comment se venger la mort de sa mère qui selon lui a été avalée par la rivière. Selon lui, il profite de cette occasion pour se mettre à l'aise sous un manguier et dans ses mots, « c'est à ce moment qu'un riverain qui passait par là m'a dit » (135):

Le riverain: Pauvre connard, vieux con des neiges d'antan, pollueur des espaces publics, à ton âge tu chies encore au pied des arbres, tu n'as pas honte.

Verre Cassé: Je m'en fous, le con des neiges d'antan t'emmerde.

Le riverain:(et le riverain, furieux, a ajouté) C'est à moi que tu parles comme ça, espèce de soulard, crève donc, imbécile.

Verre Cassé:(et j'ai encore dit tout haut) Je m'en fous, tu crèveras avant moi, les cimetières de ce quartier sont bourrés de jeunes cons de ton espèce. (et le riverain m'a menacé) Le riverain: Ramasse ta merde ou je te balance dans la rivière. (136)

A travers le dialogue que nous avons théâtralisé ci-haut, on peut voir deux personnages en train de communiquer mais en réalité les mots du personnage du

riverain n'existent que dans l'imagination de Verre Cassé qui est sous l'influence de l'alcool. Verre Cassé dit « il (le riverain) avait décidé de faire ce qu'il avait dit, et moi je ne voulais pas me noyer idiotement à cause d'une histoire de merde au pied d'un manguier...et je me suis mis à la ramasser, et le riverain m'a dit:

Le riverain :qu'est-ce que tu fais, vieux, tu ne vas pas quand même ramasser ton caca à mains nues, tu peux le faire à l'aide d'un bout de bois, bordel de dieu. (136)

Verre Cassé nous présente qu'après avoir utilisé ses mains pour ramasser la merde, le riverain a vomi. Selon lui: « donc j'ai plongé mes mains dans mes excréments, le riverain a vomi, il s'est barré parce qu'il ne pouvait plus supporter cette scène scatologique, moi je me suis mis à rire et à rire sans m'arrêter » (136). Pour comprendre ce que l'auteur nous présente à travers les personnages du riverain et de Verre Cassé, il faut d'abord comprendre le statut mental du dernier qui est un ivrogne qu' imagine et agit selon les ordres du riverain qui est personnifié dans la narration.

Le langage familier employé dans la narration de *Verre cassé*

Verre cassé est présenté avec le langage familier. La version de la langue française employée dans la narration est familière. Les mots et les expressions dans le roman ne sont pas exotiques. Avec cette technique, l'auteur dévoile la triste réalité des personnages du roman. La réalité de l'Afrique post-indépendante est racontée par Alain Mabanckou avec beaucoup d'humour et parfois en se servant des citations de différentes personnalités de l'Afrique et du monde pour faire passer son message. Peut-être, pour se moquer des intellectuels africains qui croient que le niveau de leur intelligence s'exprime à travers l'usage des mots complexes, l'auteur nous présente les différents débats politiques actuels du continent africain. Bien sûr, Monsieur le président dont le vrai nom, *Lokuta Elik Mingi*, veut dire: « Excès de mensonges » en langue lingala fait partie des élites politiques africaines qui utilisent les expressions pompeuses pour faire intimider les masses populaires. Pour en donner évidence, on se recourt à cette longue citation à cet égard:

« Mesdames et Messieurs du Conseil, j'accuse, je ne veux pas être le complice d'un climat moribond que le nôtre, je ne veux pas cautionner cette chasse à l'homme par mon appartenance à ce gouvernement, j'accuse les mesquineries qui s'abattent sur une personne qui n'a fait qu'imprimer un itinéraire à son existence, j'accuse l'insipidité des agissements rétrogrades de ces derniers temps, j'accuse l'incivilité des actes barbares orchestrés par des gens de mauvaise foi, j'accuse les outrages et les défis qui sont devenus monnaie courante dans notre pays, (...) Mesdames et Messieurs du Conseil, voyez comment le

quartier Trois-Cents est devenu une cité sans sommeil, avec un visage de pierre, or cet homme qu'on appelle désormais L'Escargot Entêté, en dehors du fait qu'il ait été un de mes anciens camarades de classe, très intelligent par ailleurs, cet homme qu'on traque aujourd'hui est victime d'une cabale, Mesdames et Messieurs du Conseil, concentrons plutôt nos efforts à traquer les vrais bandits, j'accuse donc ceux qui paralysent impunément le fonctionnement de nos institutions, ceux qui brisent ouvertement la chaîne de solidarité que nous avons héritée de nos ancêtres les Bantous, je vous avouerais que le tort de L'Escargot Entêté a été d'avoir montré aux autres compatriotes que chacun, à sa manière, pouvait contribuer à la transformation de la nature humaine... (19).

Avec la citation ci-haut, nous avons confirmé que le seul personnage qui utilise le langage complexe est Monsieur le président et il utilise les expressions pompeuses dans la scène politique pour montrer son niveau intellectuel et pour aussi impressionner le public. D'autres personnages du roman s'expriment de façon simple et familière. Nous avons découvert que l'auteur ne se concentre pas seulement sur le fond mais pour lui la forme d'une œuvre littéraire joue un grand rôle dans la compréhension de l'œuvre. On a raison de penser que l'auteur envoie indirectement un message aux écrivains africains qui pensent que l'œuvre littéraire africaine doit être écrite avec le langage complexe. Pour Alain Mabanckou, ce qui est plus important c'est la communication et malgré le fait que les personnages de son roman ignorent quelques règles grammaticales de la langue française, ils sont toujours compris.

Conclusion

Avec la forme de *Verre cassé*, on constate que l'auteur apporte un nouveau style au roman africain; et le style montre une distinction claire entre son œuvre et le roman classique comme c'était le cas dans l'œuvre de Mongo Beti et d'Ousman Sembène. Ceci propulse le lecteur moderne de feuilleter des pages dans les annales de l'histoire à la recherche du nom pour ce type du roman. On se rend compte finalement que Mabanckou fait entendre le coup de gong du nouveau roman fondé au 20^e siècle en France. Il y a un manque de la linéarité dans la narration de *Verre cassé* comme c'est le cas dans *La Modification* de Michel Butor. Cette œuvre de Mabanckou ne se focalise pas sur Verre Cassé mais plutôt c'est une anthologie des histoires des personnages. Cette structure romanesque est à l'opposé de l'histoire de Révérend Père Drumont de *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba* qui est un contestataire classique et roman exemplaire dans l'aspect de l'engagement littéraire. Il convient de dire que la littérature comme domaine épistémologique change tous les temps. Pour annoncer ce

message du changement, Alain Mabanckou nous présente *Verre cassé* à travers lequel le style ressemble à la structure du nouveau roman français. Avec le roman, nous avons présenté les points de confluence que l'écrivain établit avec ses homologues français du mouvement du nouveau roman. L'auteur ne concentre pas seulement sur l'idéologie de l'engagement animé par Jean-Paul Sartre en France et stimulé en Afrique par Mongo Béti, Ousmane Sembène, entre autres, mais, il fait apporter une forme unique et par le biais de son œuvre, on peut dire que la production romanesque n'est pas totalement un engagement du fond mais aussi de la forme. Mabanckou projette le roman africain qui partage certaines caractéristiques littéraires du nouveau roman français. La différence spécifique de ses œuvres par rapport à l'étude littéraire inclut la présentation structurelle totalement étrange, l'usage du langage flexible, la déchronologie, le refus de l'analyse des sentiments, le refus de l'usage des règles grammaticales dans la composition de phrases, le rejet de l'usage du point pour ponctuer et finalement le refus de l'usage de lettre majuscule pour commencer les phrases. En tout, Alain Mabanckou ajoute quelque chose de nouveau à la définition du roman africain et le coup de gong de cette nouvelle structure romanesque nous fait penser au nouveau roman français.

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THE JOHANNINE CONCEPT OF SIGN: AN EXPLANATION FOR THE REAL PRESENCE OF JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST (JOHN 6:1-15, 22-58)

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Abstract

*Today, belief in the **real presence** of Jesus in the Eucharist as testified to in the Gospels, Tradition and Magisterium of the Church, is beginning to wane. Some of this is caused by the scientific and empirical mindset of modern society that puts more emphasis on knowledge acquired through the use of the sense organs. However, a more crucial reason is the lack of knowledge and investigation into the actual doctrine of the **real presence** as supported by biblical, traditional and theological research. This article, which is though both a biblical and theological paper, is also a scholarly exposition of the doctrine of the **real presence** of Jesus in the Eucharist. Its aim is to enhance and re-kindle the belief in the **real presence** of Jesus Christ, but more especially, in those whose belief is has begun or is beginning to wane. By use of historical, comparative and exegetical methods, the paper draws on both primary and secondary sources to represent the reality of the Eucharist that is symbolically present in the minds of people around the world.*

Key Words/Phrases: Real Presence; Eucharist; Jesus Christ; Symbolic Reality; Symbolic, Representation; *Symbolon*; *Magisterium*; Sign; Johanne;

Introduction

This paper shall be approached from two main aspects: Exegetical and Theological aspects. From the point of view of exegeses, the paper shall examine the Johannine symbolism in the context of the Eucharistic Discourses of Chapter Six. This begins with the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves (6:1-15) which is the 'sign' itself and the bread of life discourses which begins from vs. 22 - (opening with the discourse in the synagogue of Capernaum) and ends with Peter's profession of faith in verses 67-69. But then, the Paper shall put more emphases on vs. 51-58 which is the high point of the discourses and which has a more Eucharistic (Sacramental) undertone. In this analysis the focus shall then be on the concept of sign in John with particular reference to the various layers of meaning which we see in John's Signs. The understanding of this different layers of meaning brings one to the second aspect of the Paper which is the theological aspect, where the Johannine concept of Sign (the various layers of meaning) shall be used to attempt to explain the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. This will then be followed with an examination of the implications (spiritual and social)

that the believe or lack of believe in the real presence of Jesus has for our faith, and then the conclusion.

The General Concept of Sign

Among the many words used in the dictionary to define sign are - 'indication', 'representation', 'symbol', 'pointer', 'impersonate', 'signal', and 'direction'. Each of these words has a connotation of one thing being an indication of another, or representing another, or pointing to another, symbolizing another, being in the place of another, or giving direction to another. From the point of view of Anthropology, signs and symbols are modes of expression. Human beings depend on signs and symbols for the expression of their nature and being. Symbols help us to know, love and relate to others and through these we make ourselves known and also get to know ourselves better. Signs and Symbols are the first of all languages.¹

From the point of view of revelation as we see in the Scriptures through which God reveals Himself, Sandra Schneiders gives an analysis of the nature and meaning of symbol as a medium of encounter and of mutual self-giving. A symbol, says Schneiders, is not just an ordinary sign like a signpost giving direction to a particular point or place away from itself, nor is a symbol a mere substitute standing in place of another which is absent at that moment. A symbol, she says, is rather the mode of presence of something that cannot be encountered in any other way.² Schneiders goes on to give four main characteristics of a symbol: a) **Perception** - a symbol by the very essence of its form is capable of being perceived either directly by the sense organs or indirectly by way of an image or an idea in the mind and through this activity it mediates to the perceiver a reality that cannot be perceived in any other way. b) **Active Presence** - a symbol makes itself very active as it renders the reality which it symbolizes present to those who encounter it. The presence of the symbol is therefore so active that it evokes an irresistible response. Like Schneiders puts it: "We cannot not be implicated in his or her active presence to us."³ c) **Direct Participation** in the presence and power of that which it symbolizes. Schneiders also compares a symbol to an ordinary sign. An ordinary sign does not constitute the essence of that for which it is a sign. It is a separate entity which stands for something else other than itself. A sign, therefore, stands in between the reality for which it is a sign and those who encounter it. A symbol, on the other hand, participates directly in the reality that it symbolizes and shares in the very essence of that reality in an inseparable way. Unlike the sign, therefore, a symbol does not stand between the reality and the perceiver but mediates directly to the perceiver the reality which it symbolizes. Schneiders is however careful to say that even though the symbol participates in the reality, it never fully exhausts nor

¹ J.H. McKenna, *Symbol and Reality: Some Anthropological Considerations@ Worship* 65 (Jan. 1991 pp2-27.

² Sandra Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text*, San Francisco: Harpers (1991), p. 35

³ Ibid. loc. cit.

fully expresses the reality that it symbolizes. d) the fourth characteristic of a symbol is that a symbol **Embodies and thereby brings to expression**. This is closely related to the third characteristic for it states that since the symbol embodies the reality it symbolizes it therefore expresses it in a very profound way. But here again, Schneiders cautions that even though the symbol expresses the reality it symbolizes the meaning which the symbol reveals is still ambiguous because the symbol, by its very nature, is ambiguous hence capable of various levels of meanings none of which is exhaustive or completely adequate. Schneiders puts it this way: "The symbol always invites to new and deeper and more adequate encounters with the real, and new because our own development puts us in touch, through the symbol, with different aspects of the reality it is trying, with ever-ambiguous success, to bring to expression."⁴

This analysis of the nature and meaning of symbol given by Schneiders, provides a very rich background and prepares us to understand better the Johannine concept of sign.

The Johannine Concept of Sign-The Double Meaning

In John's Gospel, the term 'sign' is a theological term which the evangelist has deliberately chosen to describe the miracles of Jesus.⁵ However, we can see a great deal of relationship to the dictionary meanings and the analysis of Sandra Schneiders given above. John uses the term 'Sign' in his literary device to explain the various layers of meanings which lie within the miracles of Jesus, since "In John, the primary function of the miracles seem to be one of symbolism."⁶

According to some scholars, John's literary device - double meaning, is a reflection of Hellenistic influence which had already become part of the Jewish tradition at the time the Gospel of John was written. Ray Brown in particular sites the example of Platonism (Platonic dualism) in which there are contrasts between the real world which is invisible and eternal, and the world of appearances here below. We see a semblance in John's contrasts between what is above and what is below (3:31); spirit and flesh (3:6; 6:63); eternal life and natural existence (11:25-26); the real bread from heaven (6:32) and natural bread and between the water of eternal life(4:14) and natural water. But then, other scholars, for example, Schnackenburg, cautions that we "be careful not to refer to this doctrine at once to a platonizing concept of image". He is of the opinion that "the 'signs' are not 'forms' or figurative processes which have a symbolic value and

⁴ Ibid. p. 36

⁵ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John*. 3 Volumes. New York:Crossroad, 1968-1982. p. 515

⁶ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)*. Anchor Bible 29. Garden City: Doubleday, 1966. p. 526

can thus summon up a profounder picture; they are not 'things and events in this world' which "derive what reality they possess from the eternal ideas they embody."⁷

It is however probable that since the Hellenistic literary practice had become part of the Jewish tradition at the time that the Gospel of John was being written, it may have had an influence on John the evangelist. We can therefore identify some semblance to certain concepts in Aristotle's *Poetics*⁸ where Aristotle develops the notion of representation (the universal in the particular) which corresponds to the universal salvific significance of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves that was itself a particular, local event; Aristotle's concept of 'thought and language' in poetry and drama which examines the concept of imagination in relation to symbolism formed at the level of thought and expressed in language, with the aim of evoking a response (an emotional response), which corresponds to Jesus' signs meant to evoke a response of believe in the person of Jesus; and the whole pattern of dialogue and monologue format which John the evangelist uses widely could all be traced to Hellenistic literary style.

Scholars also maintain that John was influenced by the Old Testament concept of sign—the Egyptian signs of the days of Moses right into Exodus, and the signs of the prophets in the Israelite prophetic tradition, but then, other scholars like Raymond Brown and Rudolf Schnackenburg observe that John's unique contribution is that he gives the signs a Christological interpretation.

In relation to the Synoptic Gospels, where the term 'miracle' is used instead of 'sign', we notice that the Synoptic Gospels emphasized the intervention of divine power (dynamis) in the struggle against Satan to bring about the reign of God. In John however, the 'Signs' of Jesus reflect the presence of the reign of God already here (realized eschatology). In John therefore, the primary function of the miracles seems to be that of symbolism and the miracle of the multiplication of loaves appears to be one of the classical examples of this. D. Moody Smith puts it this way: "The miracles or signs of Jesus are transparent or symbolic of that work as Jesus himself represents or symbolizes God in the precise sense that a true symbol participates in the reality it symbolizes but is not identical with it".⁹

The Multiplication of Loaves, and Jesus, "The Bread Of Life" (6:1-15, 26-58)

The miracle of the multiplication of loaves is the fourth of the seven signs in John's Gospel. John situates this sign at 'the other side of the sea of Galilee (or of Tiberias). A large crowd, impressed by all the signs that he had been working, especially the curing

⁷ Schnackenburg, *op. cit.* p. 521

⁸ Aristotle, *Aristotle's Poetics* translated by James Hutton, W.W. Norton and Co, Inc (1982). pp. 6-20

⁹ D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (New Testament Theology: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) p 166.

of the sick, came flocking all around him. Jesus, concerned about their need, gave them bread to eat. A crowd of about five thousand men (women and kids not counted) were fed out of five barley loaves and two fish, at the end of which twelve basket full of left-overs were collected . Doubly impressed this time, the crowd came after Jesus to Capernaum, the other side of the lake. Jesus then engaged them in a series of lengthy discourses which has two main parts. The first part (26-50) focuses more on *belief* in Jesus as the bread from heaven and the second part focuses more on the actual *feeding on the body and blood of Jesus as food and drink from heaven* and through these to have life eternal.

Bread of Life Discourse I

(Belief In Jesus As Bread From Heaven - 6:26-50)

The primary theme of the first part of discourse is that of knowing and 'believing' in Jesus. We have the word 'belief/believe' in at least four places between verses 35-50 (35, 36, 40, 47). Only once, in verse 50, that the word 'eat' appears in this session. But this does not mean that the evangelist had a complete separation of the two themes: the Sapiential theme, (35-50) and the Eucharistic theme (51-58). Both themes were present all through the Eucharistic discourses but while verses 35-50, the Sapiential theme, focuses more on belief in Jesus as bread from heaven, verses 51-58 has the actual eating of Jesus' body and drinking his blood, the Eucharistic theme, as its main focus.

The clearest reference to the Sapiential symbolism is found in verse 45: It is written in the prophets: They will all be *taught* by God. This is rooted in the Old Testament or Jewish background where the themes of divine word and wisdom are presented sometimes under the symbolism of food or bread.¹⁰

Bread Of Life Discourses Ii

(Eating Jesus' Body And Drinking His Blood -Eucharist- Vs. 51-58)

Scripture scholars are divided in their opinion on vs. 51-58. Among those who attribute this text to a later redactor are Rudolf Bultmann and Gunther Bornkamm. Verses 51-58 appears to contradict the text which follows - Vs 60-65, because while vs. 51-58 seem to focus on the importance of eating the flesh of Jesus, projecting the significance of "flesh", vs. 60-65 seem to focus on the importance of the spirit as opposed to flesh. Many scholars, therefore, hold that vs. 51-58 are an interpolation which was motivated by ecclesiastical anti-docetic interests at that time. Closely related to this is the view of other scholars like James D.G. Dunn who goes so far as to say that verses 51-58 do not have a Eucharistic undertone at all. Others who are more inclined to defend the unity of the whole chapter - chapter 6, for example, Edward Schweizer and Ray Brown, point out that vs. 51-58 do have a Eucharistic undertone. However, the main emphasis is not to defend or deny the originality and authenticity of this text (vs. 51-58) in this Paper. The focus here is that, based on the assumption that verses 51-58 are part of the text

¹⁰ Brown, *op. cit.* p.273

and that they do have a Eucharistic undertone, how can the Johannine symbolism be used to explain the relationship between the “Sign” narrated in verses 1-15 and the text of vs. 51-58 in order to bring about a better understanding of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist?

Ray Brown actually believes that all of the Eucharistic discourses -vs. 26-58 are related to the “Sign” of the multiplication of the loaves and he sites the scene of vs 23 as a connecting link. He argues that the evangelist had the Eucharist in mind in both vs 26-50, which is the first part of the discourses and vs 51-58 which is the second part. The difference however, says Ray Brown, is that in the first part (vs. 26-50) the Sapiential motif was primary and the Eucharistic motif was only secondary, while in verses 51-58, the Eucharist motif becomes the primary one. In these verses (51-58) we are no longer told that eternal life comes through knowing and believing in Jesus, but that it comes through actually eating his body and drinking his blood. So we have these words occurring over and over again “eat”, “body” “food”, “drink” “flesh”, “blood”.¹¹

Taken as a whole therefore, Chapter six of John’s Gospel which begins with the multiplication of the loaves and ends with Peter’s confession of faith displays three main layers of meaning in line with Johannine symbolism: the first is the physical layer (the physical bread of verses 1-15), the second is the Sapiential level, the knowing and believing in Jesus as the Bread from heaven (26-50) and the third level is the sacramental (Eucharistic) level, the actual feeding on the body and blood of Jesus all of which are related themes which the evangelist had in mind at one and the same time. Just as in the sign of the cure of the man born blind (9:1-41) Jesus revealed himself as “Light”, and in the sign of the raising of Lazarus, (11:1-44) Jesus revealed himself as “Life”, so also in the sign of the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus revealed himself as the “Bread from heaven”(the Bread of Life).

Leon-Dufour traces the root of the word “symbol” to the Greek verb “Syn-ballo” which means, “to put together”. And he goes on to say that : To recognize the unity of two separate elements (in this case, the miracle of the multiplication of loaves and the discourses which follows a way of becoming sensitized to the language of John, a “symbolic” reading , therefore, must maintain a dialectical relationship between the two symbolisms (the historical and the Christological) as they emerge, and thus respect the singularity and proper weight of one and the other - Johannine Symbolism often invites the reader to look beneath the word and behind the gestures of Jesus for a deeper meaning which some interpreters regard as sacramental.¹² The unique power of the symbol lies precisely in the fact that it has the ability to hold together the various layers of meanings.

¹¹ Brown, *op. cit.* p.284

¹² Leon Xavier Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic Bread: The Witness of the New Testament*. Translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. New York: Paulist, 1986. p.2 & 248

The Sign In John As A Symbolic Reality (Re-Thinking The Theology Of Real Presence Today)

Down through the centuries, the Church has suffered from the crisis of the **real presence** of Jesus in the Eucharist. In the early Church, it was not a problem as such. Because, Jesus is the Eucharist was considered to be too obvious to be debated. It was just there for all the people to see, and hear and feel. The crisis however, started to creep in when, like Lucien Deiss says, people began to shift from symbol *and* reality, to symbol *or* reality. Today therefore, we have in addition to the crisis of lack of faith in the **real presence** of Jesus in the Eucharist, the problem of discarding the traditional term *transubstantiation* for newer ones like *transignification* and *transfinalisation*; the problem of downgrading the private mass in favor of communal celebrations and others.¹³

In this final chapter therefore, this Paper shall examine the theology of symbol in Karl Rahner which is similar to the concept of symbol analyzed by Sandra Schneiders, except that in Rahner's theology of symbol, the symbol is inseparably linked with his sacramental theology, thus bringing the connection between "sign" and "sacrament", which is the focus of this Paper. In the next segment, the Paper shall therefore explain how Rahner's analysis of the theology of symbol is a further explanation of the concept of symbolism in John with the aim of bringing our readers to a better knowledge, a better understanding and greater appreciation of the **real presence** of Jesus in the Eucharist which is at the very center of our faith as Catholics (maybe all Christians too).

THE THEOLOGY OF SYMBOL (KARL RAHNER)

In the theological investigations (vol. IV) Rahner presents a philosophical as well as theological exposition of the concept of symbol. This work is analyzed under six principles. In the second principle Rahner explains that: "The symbol, strictly speaking (symbolic reality) is the self realization of a being in the other, which is constitutive of its essence".¹⁴ A symbol is therefore an external manifestation of the reality which is symbolized and which reveals that reality, actualizes it and brings it to fulfillment. Rahner applies this concept to his teaching on the Trinity, Christology, Ecclesiology and Sacramentology. The *logos* as the highest and most fundamental symbolic reality of God, which is the absolute image and total expression of God, renders God present, and through him, God expresses himself.

¹³ Lucien Deiss, C.S.Sp, *It is The Lord's Supper: The Eucharist of Christians*. New York: Paulist Press, 1996. p.1

¹⁴ Karl Rahner "The Theology of Symbol" *Theological Investigations IV* (Baltimore, 1966) p.234

In the same way, the Church is the presence of the Incarnate Word in space and time, because the symbolic reality and function of Jesus in the world is continued in and through the Church. In a similar manner the symbolic reality of the Church is affected in the life of the individual members and in the community in and through the sacraments which embodies the grace of Jesus Christ for all humanity. This refers to all sacraments but in particular the Eucharist which in a special and unique way is the symbolic reality of the presence of Jesus. All of these are possible because a symbolic reality participates in the reality that it symbolizes and renders that reality present. This distinguishes a symbolic reality from a mere symbolic representation which is only an ordinary “sign” that does not render the reality itself present. For instance, a wedding ring given by a husband to his wife on the wedding day renders the love of the husband present to the wife, hence a symbolic reality, but in the event of divorce the same ring can no longer render the reality of the husband's love present, so it becomes a mere symbolic representation.

The “sign” of the multiplication of loaves (vs. 1-15), a physical and local event, whose Sapiential and Sacramental meaning are explained in the discourses - vs. 26-50, and 51-58 respectively, is the same “sign” which makes the reality of the risen Christ present at every Mass (every Eucharist) which is celebrated today. This is possible because the Johannine concept of “sign” is that of a symbolic reality, not a mere symbolic representation.

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR FAITH (SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS)

Faith in the Person of Jesus which then leads to eternal life is the fundamental aim of the signs performed by Jesus. This is clear from the words of Jesus himself during the Eucharistic discourses: “I am the bread of life”, “he who *believes* in me” --and “I tell you most solemnly, everybody who *believes* has eternal life” (6:35; 47). The concluding part of the Eucharistic discourses thus has an interesting point for our reflection. As the crowd started to disperse because they could no longer cope with his “intolerable language” Jesus turned to his disciples and said: What about you, do you want to go away too?(Jn. 6:67) Peter then made a confession of faith, which is John's equivalence of the profession of faith recorded in the Synoptic Gospels (e.g., Matthew 16:17): “Lord who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe, we know that you are the Holy One of God.” (Jn. 6:68-69).

The first conclusion to the Gospel of John, chapter 20, also re-echoes the basic aim of the signs worked by Jesus: “There are many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name” (20:30-33). If, as mentioned above, we agree that the Eucharist is at very

center of our faith and our life as Catholics, then we must be very careful not to allow any doctrine which may water down the true meaning of the Eucharist.

Theologians distinguish three levels of the presence of Jesus – Christ's presence in the Church; Christ's presence in the Word; and Christ's presence in the Eucharist, but then, most of these theologians also talk about the degrees of the presence of Christ. Most of these theologians agree that even though Christ is present in the Church, in the Word, in the Community and in the hearts of the individuals who make up the community as well as in other people, the highest level of his presence is in the Eucharist. It is in the Eucharist that the reality of Jesus which it symbolizes is most effected. The highest possible degree of making the reality of Jesus present in the world today is in and through the Eucharist. And since the Eucharist is the sign (symbolic reality) which renders the reality of Jesus himself present in the community, it is necessary that that very function of sign - to bring people to believe and to have eternal life (20:30-31) must be a singular motivating factor in all Eucharistic celebrations for the Eucharistic community.

If any doctrine which undermines the **real presence** of Jesus in the Eucharist is allowed to infiltrate into the community, the people will begin to lose that link through which to identify with the presence of Jesus in that unique way, and this will have negative implications for our faith which means that the original aim of the sign as explained by John - to bring people to believe and have eternal life - is defeated. The community will then cease to exist as a Eucharistic community bound together by that sign -- symbolic reality -- through which Jesus is made present to them in a unique way. Consequently the social and communitarian spirit which should manifest itself in a relationship of love and of brotherhood and sisterhood in the community is also affected in a negative way. This links the spiritual implications to the social implications.

Commenting on the place of precedence which the faith-community must enjoy, Ray Brown in his book on the community of the beloved disciple¹⁵, states the mind of scholars on how the Gospel of John should be read and interpreted. He says that many levels of meaning should be kept in mind while we read the Gospel of John. One level would be to read the Gospel as the story of Jesus as such, and another level would be to read the Gospel as the story of faith in this Jesus, of the community who have now come to know and believe in him through his presence among them, in and through the signs (symbolic reality) and under the leadership of the beloved disciple.

CONCLUSION

The Gospel of John has more symbols than any other Gospel. Behind the apparent routine happenings, Jesus' words and actions, lie a deeper meaning and a more

¹⁵ Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* New York: Paulist Press, 1979, p.17

profound spiritual significance. The words and actions convey one layer of meaning which are meant to be the sign of, and to lead to the second layer which is the Person of Jesus himself. The community is therefore challenged to go beyond the first layer of meaning to meet Jesus himself, so that through believing in him, they have eternal life. This is what a sign is meant to bring about in the community.

A symbol is understood as a vehicle which mediates to the community the meaning of life in the society and indeed in the cosmos as a whole. A symbol is understood to participate in the reality that it represents and to mediate that reality to those who participate in the symbol.¹⁶ This, in the context of this Paper, sums it all up --- through the Eucharist, symbolic reality, that reality in which it participates, Jesus himself, is rendered present to the community who have come to know and believe in him in and through the sign.

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¹⁶ William R. Crockett, *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation*, New York: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1989, p.236

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TAX AVOIDANCE PRACTICES AND EARNINGS MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

This study examines tax avoidance practices and earnings management. The secondary source of data collection was adopted in the study and the purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample size of thirty (30) listed non-financial firms in Nigeria. Ordinary Least Square regression analysis (OLS) was used in this study and the findings revealed that effective tax rate has no significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria and also that non-debt tax shield has significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria. The study concluded that aggressive tax planning or strategic tax behaviors are activities generally designed to reduce tax liability that includes tax evasion and legitimate saving of taxes, and these activities have significant effect on debt and non-debt tax shield of the firms. The study recommended among others that listed companies in Nigerian should embrace tax optimality as this will improve their after-tax- profit and that Nigerian government needs subsidize cost of debt-financing for the companies operating in the country's capital market.

Keywords: Tax Avoidance, Effective Tax Rate, Debt Tax Shield, Non-Debt Tax Shield.

Introduction

Taxes are a substantial expenditure and burden for businesses and their owners. Investors prefer tax minimization since it increases accessible cash as well as profit after taxes. As old as taxes themselves, tax dodging is a problem that affects every culture today (Bashir & Zachariah, 2020) Mgbame et al. (2017) tax avoidance is any of the various, potentially criminal, practises management engages in to reduce taxable income with the goal of maximising income. As a result, tax avoidance becomes a crucial consideration for business management. This is due to the fact that managers might utilize tax avoidance to pursue personal interests in addition to increasing the profitability of their companies (Desai & Dharmapala, 2016).

Managerial efforts aimed at minimising business taxes through tax-aggressive operations are common in the corporate landscape of many nations across the world. These actions have costs and advantages for management, shareholders, the government, and society at large that cannot be ignored. The benefits of tax avoidance according to Chen et al. (2019) include larger tax savings, which is the most evident benefit, and rent extraction, which can be covered up by tax aggressive actions. Managers also profit if they are paid by shareholders for their efforts in efficient tax management. Shareholders immediately gain from such tax savings. Rent extraction occurs when managers engage in actions that do not maximise corporate value at the expense of shareholders.

Tax avoidance is a tactic used by tax managers to lessen the amount of taxes due by banks. Banks incur significant tax costs. Similar to operating costs, tax liabilities are a manageable expense that can be reduced. Managers frequently utilise their fiduciary responsibility and devotion to the shareholders to lessen the tax burden on the bank by engaging in tax evasion. In the belief that this reduction is in the banks' best interests, it is carried out with considerable care, attention, and experience (Mahfoudh et al. 2015). Legally, banks are required to pay the tax that is stipulated within the parameters of the tax enabling act. In order to pay less tax and release money for use by shareholders and improve the bank's financial performance, bank management might take advantage of provisions or loopholes in the tax laws through proper tax avoidance (Silvio & Rezende, 2016). To encourage investment in particular sectors of the economy, the government uses a variety of tax schemes to reduce taxpayers' tax burdens. In order to take advantage of these tax reliefs and reduce their tax burden, taxpayers who are aware of effective tax avoidance should plan their company activities accordingly. The use of tax avoidance strategies necessitates a thorough knowledge of and application of pertinent tax shelters and incentives in the tax laws, such as rewards for pioneer status, regulations for the

beginning and ending of a business, and allowances for the purchase of assets used for the operation of a business. Paying less tax lowers the bank's cash outflow and frees up funds that can be put back into other profitable endeavours.

Taxes are a substantial expenditure and burden for businesses and their owners. Investors favour tax efficiency since it boosts accessible cash as well as earnings after taxes. According to Uadiale et al. (2014) tax avoidance is a problem that affects all societies and is as old as taxes themselves. According to Mgbame et al. (2017) tax avoidance is any of the various, potentially criminal, practises management engages in to reduce taxable income with the goal of maximising income. As a result, tax avoidance becomes a crucial consideration for business management. This is due to the fact that managers might utilise tax avoidance to pursue personal interests in addition to increasing the profitability of their companies (Desai & Dharmapala, 2016).

Analysts, lawmakers, researchers, and other financial experts have long been interested in the extent of earnings manipulation. Companies manage their earnings both before and after the issuing of their public securities. The performance of the company and, consequently, the value of the company to shareholders are negatively impacted when management of the firms manipulates profits to present positive financial circumstances. These show that the company's profitability and corporate governance are lacking. The accuracy of the information in the financial reports would be questioned if managers' pay were dependent on the company's success, especially if the information was highly positive. We may focus on the auditor's report when there are any questions regarding the validity of a company's qualitative financial disclosure.

Due to poor and incompetent tax administration in Nigeria, tax compliance costs have increased and the tax system is now unpredictable (Maiye, 2015). This inefficiency is evident in the way the tax authority approaches obtaining money from businesses. There is confusion in the system since the tax authorities occasionally assign this duty to outside parties who employ strange techniques like locking off business premises (Maiye, 2015). There is also the problem of taxes from many levels of government overlapping, which could lead to multiple levies.

However, occasionally the government employees in charge of such deductions forget to remit the money, therefore firms are forced to pay additional cash amounts for taxes that they had already paid at source (Nwaobia & Jajeoba, 2016). Due to the financial incentives they will receive or because they want to avoid the inefficiency of the tax system, firms will therefore employ strategies that will allow them to minimise their tax burden. They accomplish this by using every lawful means permitted by the tax laws to increase their income after deductions. As a result, companies start to tax aggressively.

The objective of earnings management can vary, but it often involves portraying a more favorable financial performance, meeting earnings projections, or triggering executive compensation incentives. Companies may engage in earnings management through various techniques, such as: revenue recognition, expense manipulation, manipulating the valuation of assets, such as inventory, investments, or intangible assets, to influence reported earnings. This can involve altering the useful life or fair value assessments of assets. It is important to note that while some earnings management practices may be within the boundaries of accounting standards, others can be considered fraudulent or misleading. Regulators and accounting bodies, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB), actively monitor and enforce regulations related to financial reporting integrity.

The majority of previous research that looks at the connection between tax evasion and earnings management concentrates on developed economies (Antonakis, et al. 2014). However, for poor nations like Nigeria, there is a severe lack of study in this field. According to Oyeleke et al. (2016) and Ilaboya et al. (2016), the majority of studies on tax avoidance in Nigeria place an emphasis on CSR performance. It is important to pay attention to the connection between tax evasion and earnings management, particularly with regard to agency conflict in a rising economy. Understanding this relationship might be useful in assisting businesses with internal tax administration and in minimising tax evasion in Nigeria.

Therefore, this study aims to close this gap by examining Nigeria's tax avoidance and earnings management practises

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Tax Avoidance

When a firm manages its revenue and expenditures with the intention of avoiding, minimising, or postponing tax within the parameters of the tax laws, it is said to be utilising tax avoidance methods. Umeh et al. (2020) posit that the practise of structuring one's activities to postpone, reduce, or eliminate taxes owing to the government. Tax avoidance is the term used to describe the lawful measures that taxpayers adopt to lower their tax liability and produce tax savings. Tax avoidance refers to the application of appropriate incentive arrangements for corporate tax payers based on enabling legislation such as the Company Income Tax Act, Personal Income Tax Act, Value Added Tax Act, and other enactments. Incentives like the pioneer status incentive, the commencement rule, the cessation rule, the investment allowance, and the roll-over loss relief tax exemptions, deductions, rebates, and other tax concessions allowed by tax statutes were provided by these laws, and they can be used as a foundation for business tax avoidance. Depending on the taxpayer's

objectives when carrying out a transaction, tax avoidance actions might be either active or passive.

Odunayo and John (2019) define tax avoidance as a financial arrangement made by individuals, trusts, businesses, or other entities to ensure that all tax exemptions, rebates, allowances, and other benefits or reliefs allowed by law are utilised in full, without necessarily breaking the law in any way. It is regarded as the deliberate actions and a crafty manner of managing an individual, trust, or company's financial affairs with the aim of obtaining the desired tax benefits, while keeping in mind the legislative and judicial position.

Contrary to tax avoidance, which is an intentional attempt to evade taxes, tax avoidance does not involve taking advantage of gaps inherent in tax laws and administration. It is a methodical action taken by a tax payer to lessen their tax liability within the bounds of the law.

A series of zealous actions made by businesses to lower their public indebtedness includes tax evasion. The goal of tax avoidance is to maximise income after all firm liabilities are paid to the government and other stakeholders (Boussaidi & Hamed, 2015). Tax avoidance is a management approach. Depending on how far the manipulation of tax expense is done within the parameters of tax legislation, tax avoidance measures or activities performed by management to lower tax expense may be legal or illegal. Therefore, the goal of tax avoidance is to save money on taxes in order to ensure that wealth is transferred from the government to a company's owners.

Earnings Management

In contrast to fraud, managing earnings include choosing accounting practises and projections that follow generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). That is, any businesses that practise earnings management would show signs of accounting method manipulation within the recognised range (Rahman & Ali, 2017). Earnings management does not always accurately reflect the underlying success of the company, which may cause investors and shareholders to draw the wrong conclusions about the organisation. Therefore, when the incentives for such manipulations are large, effective board oversight is crucial in lowering the incidence of profits management.

Due to the litigious environment in the United States, management teams often avoid talks that even ostensibly connect the ideas of management fraud and earnings management (Brown, 2019), despite the fact that managers view earnings manipulation as a legitimate practise (Chung, 2015). There hasn't been much study supporting earnings management in the literature. Instead, the majority of academics embrace negative perspectives towards revenue management. This tendency can be explained by the fact that either earnings fraud or creative accounting is mistaken for

earnings management. The following four accusations against earnings management are well-known. Earnings management is a scam, to start. Second, earnings management contributes to the financial statements' representational inaccuracy. Third, as it aims to deceive or mislead consumers of earnings information, earnings management involves cunning and immoral behaviour (Brown, 2019). Fourth, wealth is redistributed among linked parties as a result of earnings management, such that managers benefit at the expense of shareholders.

Earnings manipulation is frequently regarded as a negative action (Ziv, 2018), but this is only partially accurate. The three types of earnings manipulation are earnings fraud, creative accounting, and earnings management, all have negative effects. The concept of representational faithfulness is only relative, earnings management is not dishonest and does not inflate the worth or position of the firm economically, the wealth transfers brought about by earnings management are acceptable, and earnings management can add value.

This shows that there is a continuum between complete validity and fraud at the two ends of the large spectrum of earnings management operations, which cannot always be simply classified. Studies on earning management "examine whether managers act as if they believe users of financial reporting data can be misled into interpreting reported accounting earnings as equivalent to economic profitability (Fields et al. 2016). Naturally, practitioners and regulators as well as academics are interested in research on earnings management.

Effective Tax Rate and Earnings Management

The percentage of a company's tax burden that is decreased without having a negative effect on its accounting income is known as the effective tax rate. Real corporate tax burdens are compared to the ratio of a firm's tax expense to its earnings before tax to determine how well firms do in terms of paying their fair share of taxes. The avoidance of a firm's tax avoidance strategy was reflected by the effective tax rate. The effective tax rate is the average tax rate for a company or an individual. The average tax rate on earned income is known as an individual's effective tax rate, whereas the average tax rate on pre-tax income is known as a corporation's effective tax rate. A company's tax efficiency is assessed using its corporate effective tax rate. It is therefore the most accurate method for estimating actual company tax expenses. According to Rafiu et al. (2017) one often employed statistic for assessing a company's tax burden is the effective tax rate.

The effective tax rate, which compares a company's tax burden to its profit before taxes, is a key summary measure of tax performance. This measure illustrates intentional tax evasion that results in ongoing tax differences. By dividing the tax paid by the profit before tax, the effective tax rate is determined. The effective tax rate is used in financial reporting to determine the total tax paid as a percentage of

the company's accounting income rather than a percentage of taxable revenue. The effective tax rate is the typical rate at which a corporation's pre-tax profits are taxed; in contrast to the statutory tax rate, which is the legal percentage determined by legislation. The overall tax liabilities of an individual or business are better represented by the effective tax rate than by the marginal tax rate. The effective tax rate, which is used as a gauge of tax avoidance, lowers a company's tax obligation without necessarily lowering its accounting income (Pratama, 2017). The main objective of using the effective tax rate as a stand-in for tax avoidance is to raise the firm's worth, which is directly tied to the organizations managerial planning and calibre. To generate tax savings or boost shareholder capital, managers are looking for ways to reduce their tax liability.

Eneisik and Moses (2021) conducted an empirical investigation on the connection between tax avoidance tactics and the financial success of Nigerian quoted banks. Theoretical, conceptual, and empirical literatures on tax avoidance tactics and financial performance were evaluated in order to accomplish this goal. Secondary data was gathered from the 2006–2019 audited annual financial reports of Nigerian listed banks. The study uses descriptive statistics for its univariate analysis, while E-view 10's econometric statistical software was used to test hypotheses using ordinary least square regression. The research demonstrates that the return on equity of listed banks in Nigeria is negatively and negligibly impacted by the effective tax rate, thin capitalization, and capital intensity. Against the above backdrop, our first proposition is thus:

Hypothesis 1: Effective tax rate has no significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria

Debt Tax Shield and Earnings Management

Initially, the Modigliani and Miller trade-off theory argued that businesses favoured debt financing due to the benefit of tax-deductible interest payments. Therefore, it was anticipated that leverage and effective tax rate would have a positive connection. The literature claims that there is dispute over the impact of tax rates on leverage. Tsado and Gunu (2016) investigated a trade-off model that took the effect of debt tax shields into account while determining the ideal capital structure. This interest tax break encourages businesses to use debt financing, because paying back debt interest costs increases a company's value. Similar research by Temitope et al. (2019) offered proof that businesses could reap significant tax advantages by switching from tax-nondeductible regular preferred stock to tax-deductible trust preferred stock. Later research that focused on incremental financing choices discovered evidence that high marginal tax rates encourage the usage of debt.

The impact of ownership structure on tax evasion of listed non-financial enterprises in Nigeria was examined by Bashir and Zachariah (2020). It seeks to identify the ownership structure that enhances tax evasion and lowers the firms' tax obligations.

Data for the study was taken from the ten-year (2008–2017) annual reports and accounts of the companies. Multiple regressions and descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data that had been obtained. The study finds that institutional and management ownerships have no discernible positive effects on tax evasion, whereas foreign ownership has no discernible negative effects.

Lei (2020) studied the effect of the tax shield effect on the capital structure of corporations. The research empirically investigates the association between the corporate income tax shield effect and company capital structure in China using a random-effects model and 224 listed companies in China from 2002 to 2017. The debt tax shield and business capital structure are proven to be very beneficial. Additionally, there is a strong inverse relationship between the business capital structure and the non-debt tax shield. In addition, each industry has a unique effect on how debt tax shields and non-debt tax shields affect corporate capital structures. The link between the debt tax shield and earnings management arises from the potential alignment of tax planning objectives and the manipulation of financial statements to optimize tax positions and comply with debt-related obligations. Against the above backdrop, our second proposition is thus:

Hypothesis 2: Debt tax shield has no significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria.

Non-Debt Tax Shield and Earnings Management

Interest tax shelters may encourage businesses to take on debt. For instance, non-debt tax shields are tax advantages of debt financing, and businesses are advised to utilise less debt financing if their financial statements show significant non-debt tax shields. Leverage may, however, be positively or negatively impacted by excessive non-debt tax shelters, depending mostly on the type of debt involved. According to Setiadharm and Machali's (2017) analysis of the impact of tax on debt financing, businesses with significant non-debt tax shields, a stand-in for tax, use less debt to finance lucrative prospects.

Depreciation and the tax deduction from investment tax credits are examples of non-debt tax shields. Razali et al. (2018) incorporated non-debt tax shelters, expanded Miller's analysis, and further suggested that non-debt tax shelters should be used in place of tax shelters from debt funding. Therefore, it is projected that businesses with larger non-debt tax shields will have capital structures with lower levels of debt.

Many researchers use the non-debt tax shield as one of the factors to determine how it affects the capital structure decision. In addition, if a company has a greater non-debt tax shield with lower taxable earnings while non-debt tax shields are deductible, non-debt tax shields may have various effects depending on the level of short- and long-term debt.

Benjamin (2020) identifies the elements that affect the methods used by financial institutions listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange to manage their revenues from 2010 to 2018. Under a 5% level of significance, the regression model's results show that the board's size and financial leverage are the variables determining how listed financial institutions manage their earnings. Results from the correlation model also show a negative link between financial leverage, auditor side, and earnings management, whereas a positive correlation is seen between earnings management and board size, firm size, and firm age.

Otuya and Omoye (2020) looked on the performance and low capitalization of MNCs in Nigeria. The study used an ex post facto research design and gathered pertinent information from sampled MNCs' financial statements for the years 2014 to 2018. Descriptive, correlational, and regression analyses were used in the study to analyse the data. The results showed a positive but negligible relationship between MNCs' financial performance and thin capitalization, interest expenses rate, effective tax rate, and capital intensity. The nexus between non-debt tax shields and earnings management lies in the strategic manipulation of financial statements to optimize a company's tax position, qualify for tax incentives, and utilize tax benefits such as deductions, credits, or allowances. Hence we proposed that:

Hypothesis 3: Non-debt tax shield has no significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework and model specification

Theories relevant to this study abound (Tax deterrence theory by Allighan and Sandmo, 1972; Agency theory by Michael Jensen and William Meckling, 1976 and Stewardship theory by Donaldson and Davis in 1991. This study is hinged on the agency theory because, ownership and control on the business are separated hence the managers ensure that the funds of the providers are well managed to enhance the value of the firm.

Data

The secondary source of data collection was used for this study where data was gathered from audited annual reports of selected non-financial firms listed on the Nigeria Exchange Group (NGX). However, for the purpose of this study, 10 years (2011 – 2020) annual reports of the 35 selected non-financial firms were adopted. The basic criteria of selecting these firms are the capitalization prowess and their specialization. In selecting the sample, purposive sample technique was used to derive the sample size. The **purposive sampling** was used to ensure that the sample represents a diversity of perspectives.

Model Specification

The study employed multiple regression technique of analysis using Least Squares regression estimation. This method was adopted because it enhances easy presentation and interpretation of data. The empirical model of the study is economically expressed as follows;

$$ACTL_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 NTAX_{it} + \beta_2 DTAX_{it} + \beta_3 EFFT_{it} + \epsilon_{it}$$

Where;

β_0	=	Constant
$\beta_1 - \beta_3$	=	Coefficient of parameters estimated
ACTL	=	Earnings Management
NTAX	=	Non Debt Tax Shield
DTAX	=	Debt Tax Shield
EFFT	=	Effective Tax Rate
ϵ_{it}	=	Error term

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Pr(Skew)	Pr(Kurt)
ACTL	299	-.06449	.1227532	-.4905	.4797	0.9550	0.0000
NTAX	299	4.35719	3.647923	0	26.369	0.0000	0.0000
DTAX	299	2.18377	2.264201	0	11.3165	0.0000	0.0002
EFFT	299	-4.79104	209.5672	-804.1857	2520.393	0.0000	0.0000

Source: Researcher's Computation Using STATA

Table 1 presents the summary of the descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables for ninety-nine (299) observations. It shows that earnings management measure has a mean value of about -0.0645 and a standard deviation of about 0.1228. The maximum value of the variable is 0.4797 while the minimum is -0.49. The maximum values for all other variables are 26.37, 11.32 and 2520.4 the minimum for all the variables are 0, 0 and -804.2 respectively.

For effective tax rate, mean value is -4.79 and standard deviation of 209.57. The corresponding values for the others are: Debt tax shield, 2.184 and 2.264 respectively; non-debt tax shield, 4.357 and 3.648 respectively. The p-values of the skewness and kurtosis statistics show that in all the cases the data are judged to be normally distributed at 5% level of significance, being 0.0000.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

	ACTL	NTAX	DTAX	EFFT
ACTL	1.0000			

NTAX	-0.3850	1.0000		
DTAX	-0.2207	0.2870	1.0000	
EFFT	0.0567	0.0181	-0.1197	1.0000

Source: Researcher's Computation Using STATA

Table 2 shows that there are mixed correlations between the various variables used in the study. The table shows positive correlations between earnings management measure and effective tax rate but negative between earnings management and the other two. No two of the explanatory variables are perfectly correlated or nearly so. Thus, the problem of multicollinearity is absent in this model.

Table 3: Explanatory variable

Variable	OLS Regression	ROBUST Regression
NTAX	-.0119(0.000)	-0.0110(0.000)
DTAX	-.0061(0.044)	-0.0084(0.000)
EFFT	.00003(0.358)	0.00003(0.235)
_cons	.0009(0.935)	0.0058(0.500)
F-Stat	19.20(0.0000)	31.67(0.0000)
N	298	298
VIF	1.07	
Heteroscedasticity	10.62(0.0011)	
R-Squared	0.1638	
Adj R-Squared	0.1553	

Source: Researcher's Computation Using STATA

Table 3 shows that the explanatory variable does not account for much of the systematic variations in the dependent variable. The table shows very moderate value of R-squared of 0.1638.

This value of the R-squared statistic shows that the explanatory variables are collectively able to explain a moderate proportion of the variations in the dependent variables meaning that other variables are minimally useful in explaining changes in the dependent variable. For the model, the p-value of the F statistic (0.0000) shows that the model overall is suitable for estimating the stated model.

The VIF test (1.07) shows that there is the absence on multi-collinearity and so there is no need to drop any variable. Also, the heteroscedasticity is 10.62 with p-value of 0.0011, showing that there significant heteroscedasticity problem and so the need for a robust regression.

Hypothesis One

H₀: Effective tax rate has no significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria

Computation

The test statistic is computed by STATA software and the results are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Regression Results on Effective tax rate and Earnings Management

Variable	Coefficient	p-value
EFFT	0.00003	0.235

Source: Extracted from STATA Computations

Decision

With a coefficient of 0.00003 the results indicate that effective tax rate positively impacts earnings management, while the probability value of 0.235 indicates that the negative impact is not significant. This leads to the rejection of the alternative hypothesis, thus acceptance of the null hypothesis that effective tax rate has no significant impact on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria, and the impact is positive.

Hypothesis Two

H₀: Debt tax shield has no significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria.

Computation

The test statistic is computed by STATA software and the results are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Regression Results on Debt tax shield and Earnings Management

Variable	Coefficient	p-value
DTAX	-0.008	0.000

Source: Extracted from STATA Computations

Decision

With a coefficient of 0.008 the results indicate that debt tax shield negatively impacts earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria, while the probability value of 0.000 indicates that the negative impact is significant. This leads to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, thus the rejection of the null hypothesis. The researcher accepts that debt tax shield significantly impacts earnings management of industrial goods firms in Nigeria, and that such effect is negative.

Hypothesis Three

H₀: Non-debt tax shield has no significant effect on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria

Computation

The test statistic is computed by STATA software and the results are as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Regression Results on Non-debt Tax Shield and Earnings Management

Variable	Coefficient	p-value
NTAX	-0.0110	0.000

Source: Extracted from STATA Computations

Decision

With a coefficient of -0.0110 the results indicate that non-debt tax shield negatively impacts earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria while the probability value of 0.000 indicates that the negative impact is significant because it is less than 0.05. This leads to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. The researcher accepts that non-debt tax shield significantly affect earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria.

The results indicate that almost all the variables are significantly normally distributed at 5% level of significance. The correlation matrix indicates the variables have mixed relationships. The results also indicate the absence of multi-collinearity.

Essentially, the findings of the study are: with a coefficient of 0.00003 the results indicate that effective tax rate positively impacts earnings management, while the probability value of 0.235 indicates that the negative impact is not significant. This leads to the rejection of the alternative hypothesis, thus acceptance of the null hypothesis that effective tax rate has no significant impact on earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria, and the impact is positive. The result agrees with consistent with the findings of Ilaboya *et al.*, (2016) and Ogbodo and Abuomwan (2021), but was not consistent with the findings of Izevbekhai and Odion (2018). This inconclusiveness may have resulted from the existence of varying degrees of institutional backdrops.

Similarly, with a coefficient of 0.008 the results indicate that debt tax shield negatively impacts earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria, while the probability value of 0.000 indicates that the negative impact is significant. This leads to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, thus the rejection of the null hypothesis. The researcher accepts that debt tax shield significantly impacts performance of listed manufacturing firms in Nigeria, and that such effect is positive. The result agrees with the findings of Lei (2020) but not consistent with the findings of Lanis *et al.* (2017) and Odunayo and John (2019).

And, with a coefficient of -0.0110 the results indicate that non-debt tax shield negatively impacts earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria while the probability value of 0.000 indicates that the negative impact is significant because it is less than 0.05. This leads to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. The researcher accepts that non-debt tax shield significantly affect earnings management of listed industrial goods firms Nigeria. The result agrees with the findings of Otuya and Omoye (2020), but not consistent with the finding of Benjamin (2020) and Omar (2020). This might have been as a result of using different industrial sectors.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Earnings management interacts with the corporate taxation where several potential implications may exist. It could be argued that corporate tax acts as a corporate governance mechanism by discouraging those behaviors that are contrary to the interests of the company or the interests of the company's stakeholders. In addition to another set of these, issues are ways to ensure the quality of management decisions in general and transparency of decisions related to the tax area in particular. Furthermore, the board of directors and stakeholders must be aware of the risks of tax administration.

Since taxes are considered as an additional cost to the firm and its shareholders because these taxes reduce the available cash flow, firms tend to employ different tax aggressiveness techniques. Aggressive tax planning or strategic tax behaviors are activities generally designed to reduce tax liability that includes tax evasion and legitimate saving of taxes, and these activities have significant effect on debt and non-debt tax shield of the firms.

The following recommendations are hereby made:

- i. It is recommended that listed companies in Nigerian listed firms should embrace tax optimality as this will improve their after-tax- profit
- ii. Nigerian government needs subsidize cost of debt-financing for the companies operating in the country's capital market.
- iii. Stakeholders should develop the financial markets and make it accessible for firms to obtain long-term financing for economic growth and development

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IMPACT OF TRADE UNIONISM ON NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: A STUDY OF AUCHI POLYTECHNIC, AUCHI 2010 – 2022

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of Trade Unionism on Nigerian Tertiary Institutions, with Auchi Polytechnic as its focal study. Although, existing literatures on this area of study seem to have dwelt much on impact made in the area of Staff's Welfare, which undoubtedly is the primary motive for the formation of Trade Unions, the attention of this paper is focused on the rarely noticed impact they have made in other areas like maintenance of a relatively stable academic calendar on campus, through the prevention of strikes, staff and infrastructural development, fight against injustice and oppression, and championing the course of Due Process in staff related matters,. The design adopted is Historical and based on a critical analysis of oral interviews, documents from staff unions, as well as extant literatures on the related area of study. The paper concludes that Trade Unionism in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions has also impacted on other areas aside its traditional role of fighting for workers welfare.

Keywords: Staff's Welfare; Trade Union; Tertiary Institutions; Infrastructural Development

Introduction

Generally, Trade Unions are believed to represent the vanguard of working class whose interests they protect from the exploitation of their employers and government. For this reason, a substantial proportion of people in the society, specifically the working class decide to join trade unions. Many of these individuals have their socio-political and economic conditions transformed due largely to the intervention and influence of their respective unions. In this respect, many workers have enjoyed increase in wages, improved working conditions, including better safety and enhanced participation in the decision making process

that take place in their workplace. Emmanuel, Ismaila and Mustapha acknowledged this in their work, “Trade Unionism and employees’ welfare” that Trade Unions are leading agents of class struggle and socio-economic transformation that represent the interest of the workforce against the mistreatments of the capitalists (Emmanuel, O.D, et al 2020). For this reason, Trade Unionism has turned out to be an indispensable tool which is meant not only to enhance the living standard of workers but also perform other tasks. As observed by Kenneth in his work, “Trade Unionism and Governance in Nigeria: a Paradigm shift from Labour Activism to Political opposition”, Trade Unionism in contemporary times, especially in developing countries including Nigeria, have come to assume roles that transcend their traditional function of championing the course of workers welfare (Kenneth, C. 2019, pp.139-152). Similarly, Yusuf, has pointed out that Trade Unions have assumed the role of formidable pressure groups in the larger society where they struggle for the attainment of fundamental socio-economic and political change (Noah, Y. 2023). In the same vain, Okechukwu, argued that labour unions in Nigeria have wielded much powers and social influence and acting as a vigilant watchdog for the people. He added that over the past decades, Nigeria has been experiencing a phenomenon politicization bordering on general strikes against price hikes on state subsidized petroleum products, anti- third term rallies and other socio and economic issues called for by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC). This he said has equally led to the creation of a trade union supported Political Party (Labour Party) which participated for the first time with its own candidates in the local election in 2004 (Okechukwu, U.F. 2016, pp. 28-37).

It is against this background that this study discusses the impact of Trade Unionism in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions, with its focus on Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi. The discussion is preceded first by a conceptual clarification.

Labour Union and Trade Unionism in Nigeria

As a concept, Labour Union has been variously defined by different scholars. Also referred to as Trade Union (Encyclopaedia Britannica), Labour Union according to Thomas is a constant group of wage recipient who have the resolution to maintain in addition to improving the situations of more than six persons with the principal aim of constituting and regulating the relationship between the employees and employers which may take account of negotiating on employees’ remuneration and compensation, rules of work, procedures for complaints in the workplace, rules and regulations, having to do with hiring, firing and elevation of employees together with safety at work (Thompson, A.J. 2011, pp.213–223). In the same manner, Odey & Young, see Trade Unions as a continuous and permanent democratic organization that workers voluntarily form with the intention of guaranteeing adequate protection for the members and to as

well enrich the situation of their works via mutual agreement, campaigning, lobbying, education and membership, and to as well offer operative and appropriate avenue for making employees opinion known over the subsisting challenges in the society (Odey, S. A. et al 2008, pp.81– 91). Similarly, Dalhatu (2007), describes Trade Unions as the Association of Trade Unionism and Employees that provide medium in which joint agreement is adopted regularly to obtain enhancement or betterment in the remuneration and general work situation of employees (pp.21–25). It is an association of workers whose purposes include the regulation of relations between workers and employers and employers' association. The definition recognises or captures a wide variety of organisations each of which has its different commitments to the general principles and ideology of trade unionism. Josephine & Henry opine that the formation of trade union structures began as decision groups which were formed along professional organisational lines for the purpose of negotiating better wages, working hours, and working conditions for their members (Josephine, ^{et al} 2011). They maintain that Labour movements arose as an outgrowth of the disparity between the power of employers and the powerlessness of individual employee.

The origin of Labour (Trade) Unions in Nigeria appears to be controversial. In disputing the claims by some Authors that Labour Unionism is a part of the legacy of colonisation of Nigeria and that it was introduced by the British Colonial masters, Olusoji, et.al argued that there was already in place some forms of Labour Unionism in the country before their arrival. Organisations of people who engaged in Crafts or Trade were already in existence. These Organisations according to them, could be referred to as Trade (Labour) Unions because they were organized to regulate trade practice, offer mutual aids and to fix prices / wages for their services. Such organisations included organisations of Hunters, Blacksmiths, Carvers and Weavers. The organisations consisted of Tradesmen and their children or other blood relatives, particularly their sons. They learned the trade and took over from their fathers. There were no employment contracts as known today. The functions of these organisations, some of which exist today in the villages, include: settling of disputes, regulation of relationship between tradesmen, fixing of prices and organising the payment of tributes to the Oba-King (Olusoji, J.G, et al, 2012). The opinion of Efosa suffices at point. According to him, the various trade organizations of professionals such as guild of Blacksmiths, Woodworkers, Hunters, Cotton and Cloth weavers, Iron, Mongers, Bronze casters, Leather workers etc, cannot be regarded as Trade Unions but mere association of entrepreneurs or business owners. This is so because; they lacked employer/employee relationship. Moreover, the businesses were owned by families in partnership with people they engaged their services as apprentices. In ancient Benin for example, such organizations or guilds were also a form of social group, comprising mainly of artisans who wielded some measure of political influence and privilege (Efosa, B.E, 2002, pp.14 - 17). In the same vain, Web and

Web argued out that what came to be known as Trade Unions both in Nigeria and other parts of Africa did not evolve from the Guilds. According to them, the pre-literate Nigerian economy was largely subsistence and as such, did not encourage wage labour. It was at the point where a fairly standardised means of exchange was introduced, e.g Copper, Cowry Shells, Bar and Manila, that the wage working class evolved. They added that wage-earners emerged in modern Nigeria due to the activities of European Explorers, Traders and Colonialists who engaged the services of Nigerians as Guards and Porters. Mungo Park was one of such explorers who was said to have employed two Guides in the course of his assignment. Similarly, the missionaries hired paid interpreters, Clerical staff and domestic servants. Also, not less than two thousand five hundred European merchants were employed by European merchants when they established different businesses in the oil palm zones of Delta, Nigeria. The number of paid workers in Nigeria was again boosted with the Charter granted the Royal Niger Company in 1886 and this also led to the employment of many Nigerian workers (Web, S. et al, 1902, pp.14-17). As it was in other parts of West Africa, Nigerians were also employed in the Mining Industries, Transport and Communication. All these wage-earning employments brought with them the need for quality change in the lives of the wage-earners. Most of them were not only perceived to be inferior to anything known in the western countries but were also victims of racism, discrimination, deprivations and widespread poverty. There was also a growing gap between the privileged employers of labour, European workers in establishments and government officials on the one hand and the majority of indigenous Nigerian workers and the entire populace on the other hand (Dike, K. O. 1956, p.198). All these according to Efosa (2002), warranted the need for Nigerian workers to be better organised (p.17).

According to Pitan & Akindele, Organised Labour Unions officially started on Monday 19th August, 1912 when workers in then Civil Service organised themselves into Trade Unions as was done in Sierra –Leone (Pitan, O.O. et al 2016, pp.33-47). Olusoji, et.al also share this same view. The aim of the Unions was to promote the welfare and interests of indigenous workers of the Nigerian Civil Service. It was initially known as the Civil Service British Workers' Union but later changed to the Nigeria Civil Service Union shortly before Independence. Later, from 1931, Unions like those of the Railways, Public Works, Marines, began to spring up. According to Owei, "A salutary point that has to be made is that, Trade Unions came into existence from 1912, some two decades before any law legalising their existence". Olusoji et al (2012), believe that Trade Unions had been in existence before the advent of the British in Nigeria but only became more organised in 1912. They differ a little from Owei, who believe at this point that, the first recorded Trade Union in Nigeria, namely, the Nigeria Civil Service Union (NCSU), was inaugurated on August 19, 1912. This was corroborated by Tokunbor who claimed that "the first modern Trade Union in Nigeria was formed

in 1912” (Owei, L. 2012). With the passing of the Nigerian Trade Union Act in 1938, the number of registered Trade Unions as well as membership increased. In 1941, According to Owei, the rising cost of living that was brought about by the raging World War II, got Unions in the Public sector together and founded the African Civil Servants Technical Workers Union (ACSTWU) Its president was Michael Imoudu, while Enitan Brown was the Secretary. Agitations by the federation of these Unions led to the Colonial Government’s inauguration of an 18 – person committee of inquiry, chaired by A.F.B Bridges, a senior District Officer, with members including, the Secretary of ACSTWCU, (Enitan Brown) and the President of the Civil Service Union, (J.A Ojo) (Olusoji, J.G . et al 2012) according to the Department of Labour’s Annual Reports of 1940 and 1941, additional fourteen (14) Unions were registered with 4,629 members. By 1944, they had increased to 91 (ninety-one) with over 30,000 members. By 1975, under the military regime, of General Murtala, Muhammed, 1,000 (one thousand) Trade Unions were registered, and in that same year, the Unions were restructured into 42 (forty- two) along industrial lines and a labour centre named Nigeria Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity was created. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) was established in 1978 and the 42 (forty-two) Industrial Unions were affiliated to it (Tokunbo, M.A. n.d. p.15). The point needs to be made that Trade Unionism was not founded in Nigeria but, developed through the determination and efforts of Nigerians, as earlier pointed out.

The Evolution of Auchi Polytechnic

Auchi polytechnic was founded in 1963. It was one of the first four Technical Colleges namely, Yaba Technical College Lagos, Institute of Management Technology, Enugu and the Polytechnic of Ibadan. Auchi Polytechnic as it is known today was said to be a parting gift from the British Government to the then Mid-West Region. The school which is sited in Auchi, a Local Government Headquarter in the present Edo State, attained a Polytechnic status vide Edict No. 12 of 1973 and was then known as Mid-West Polytechnic. As a multi-campus institution then, it had its headquarters in Benin City, where the departments of Accountancy and Company Administration were domiciled, while the department of Engineering remained in Auchi (Owei, L. 2012).

In 1974, the name of the institution was changed to Auchi Polytechnic and its first Board of Governors was inaugurated (Olusoji, J.G. et al 2012). In 1975, the Headquarters of the institution was moved back to Auchi. According to Balogun, the military government decided to restructure the Polytechnic and made it a one-campus institution based on an expanded campus at Auchi. This accomplishment he opined was facilitated by retired Brigadier General Agbazika Innih of blessed memory, whom he argued has not been acknowledged in any of the literatures on Auchi polytechnic. He described him as “the one sent to carry out the sacred duty at

the time it was right and ripe to do so” (Balogun, F.U. n.d.). Brigadier Innih was the military Governor of Bendel State (now Edo State) from August 1975 – March, 1976. He was moved out of the state as soon as he accomplished the “sacred duty” of relocating the headquarters of the institution back to its chosen location. Corroborating Balogun, this researcher believes that the role played by General Innih in the establishment of Auchi Polytechnic, deserves some more attention as a key player. This of course, is one of the tasks of a Social Historian whose duty it is, among others, to investigate specific aspects of everyday life of those who make history. As a sub-discipline of history, Social History is concerned with studying specific, well-demarcated aspects of the past, like social structures and processes among others. The role played by General Innih in the evolution of Auchi Polytechnic ought not have been over-sighted. This researcher is passionate about it and looks forward to investigating this aspect in future.

The first board of governors in Auchi Polytechnic was inaugurated in 1974. In the same year, the name was changed to Auchi Polytechnic. The school was taken over by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1994 with the National Board of Technical Education (NBTE) as its regulatory body. The Board is charged with the responsibility of accrediting and regulating courses offered across all the Polytechnics in Nigeria as well as their manpower and facilities (Olusheun, E. 2015, pp.63-77). The extant law which established Auchi polytechnic clearly assigns to it the task of producing well trained and highly skilled middle level manpower for the National Economy in the areas of Engineering Technology, Science, Environmental Studies, Management Studies and Art and Design. The Polytechnic from time to time reviews and updates its curricula and re-orientate students to be self-employed and create jobs on graduation. Entrepreneurial courses have been introduced in most programmes offered in the institution. Little wonder then that, the Polytechnic’s Motto is: Hands and Brain for Development” (Balogun, F.U. n.d.). The School has many potentials which successive administrations have not only been unlocking to its advantage, but has also made the institution be rated as a first generation Polytechnic, as submitted by Eshiotse. “The Rector, with Midas touch transformed Auchi Polytechnic from the rustic and rusty institution with nothing to announce it other than its paper rating of being a first generation polytechnic” (Olusheun, E. 2015, pp.63-77). All of these are evident in the increased number of Schools from its initial figure of four in 1976, to nine as at 2022, with over twenty eight courses offered at both Ordinary National Diploma (OND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) levels. The Polytechnic runs three programmes, Morning, Evening and Degree. While the first two offer courses leading to the award of Ordinary National Diploma (OND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) Certificates respectively, the third offers courses leading to the award of Bachelor’s Degree in affiliation with Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. It has three campuses, all of which are sited within its expanded landmass along km 5.4, Benin-Okene expressway (Eshiotse, S.G. 2012).

Labour Unionism in Auchi Polytechnic

The formation of Trade Unions in Auchi Polytechnic, dates back to 1978 when the federal Military Government decided to restructure over eight hundred unions in the trade union sector as a result of what Efosa described as the need for exigencies (Balogun, F.U. n.d.). Thus, the Official Gazette of the Federal Government which gave legal backing to the formation of these unions, recognised the existence of some Trade Unions across the country of which Auchi Polytechnic workers union was listed as the 33rd out of a total of 34, under the non-academic staff union of Educational and Associated Institutions regardless of salary levels. In other words, the union comprised both senior and junior non-academic staff in universities, university teaching/specialist hospitals (federal and state) colleges of education. (Federal and State) College of Aviation, Technology, Nigerian Institute of Trypanosomiasis Research, Schools of Islamic and Legal Studies, National water Resources Institute, Research Institute for Chemical Technology and Project Development Institutes, Institute for international Affairs, National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Libraries (national and State) Nigeria Institute for Transport Technology, West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and other Research Institutes, Schools and Colleges. Like every other Polytechnic and Tertiary Institutions in the country, Auchi Polytechnic Workers' Union was to serve the interests of the Senior Non-Teaching Staff and the Senior Teaching Staff of their respective institutions. Similar Workers Unions' representing the Junior Staff category were also cited in the official gazette, including the non-academic staff employed in all Educational Research and Associated Institutions. The names of unions were initially peculiar to the various institutions. But overtime, according to oral account given by Idugie Friday (Efosa, B.E. 2002, pp.180 - 181) and Ben Onyemuze (who later became prominent leaders of ASUP and SSANIP respectively), the need later arose to harmonise the names of all the workers' unions in accordance with the categories they represented, in a manner that will make them have both national or regional outlooks. Accordingly, all the Senior Staff Workers Unions in the entire Polytechnic sector came together in 1983 to form the Polytechnic Senior Staff Association (POSSA) at the national level while at Auchi Polytechnic Local chapter or level, it was referred to as Auchi Polytechnic Senior Staff association (APOSSA). POSSA had elected officers who coordinated the affairs of their local chapters. This according to this informant marked the beginning of active trade unionism in Auchi Polytechnic (Official Gazette, 1978, p.165). Their aim was to represent the interest of their members. They were to engage management and government on issues that bother on their members' career progression, better salaries, in-service training, provision for research facilities and general welfare of members. Both POSSA and APOSSA continued to grow in strength and size until the need arose for them to separate in 1993.

IMPACT OF TRADE UNIONISM IN AUCHI POLYTECHNIC

One of the cardinal objectives of Trade Unions as stated in ASUP Constitution, on page 33, item 12, is that: “Trade Unionism serves to promote members’ interests. They can do this only if the undertakings in which their members were employed prosper. They therefore have an interest in the success of these undertakings and an essential contribution which they make to it, by contributing in no small measure to promote increased productivity and efficiency. They also share with Management the responsibility of good Industrial Relations.” (Com. Idugie, F. 2022, interview) This simply suggests that the task of achieving the promotion of workers’ interest can only come to reality when the employer prospers. It therefore beholds on the union members to cooperate with their employer to ensure the prosperity of their organization. The collaborations of ASUP with other unions in Auchi polytechnic in this regard have some impact. The unions rarely considered the option of going on strike whenever they had disputes with Management. Rather, they chose to negotiate. The only recorded Strikes within this period of study (1993-2022) were in 2016 and 2017. In 2016, the three Unions ASUP, SSANIP and NASU, united under the platform of Joint Action Congress (JAC), to protest the alleged refusal by management to pay Staff’s Salaries for three consecutive months, as well as the non-remittance of Check-Off Dues to the Unions. Similarly, in 2017, they collaborated to protest alleged Management’s refusal to enrol Auchi Polytechnic Workers on CONTISS 15 migration (Consolidated Tertiary Institutions Salary Scale). Apart from these, all other issues between Management and the unions were usually resolved through dialogue. According to the Chairman of ASUP then, Mr Justine Momodu, the reason why Staff were left with no other option but the Strike, was because Management refused to negotiate with the union leaders (Com. Ben O. 2022, interview).

As reported in ASUP Minutes of Meeting held on 1st November, 2018, members did not also join the strike called by Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and this did not go down well with the National Executive Council (NEC) of ASUP (ASUP, 2021, p. 33). If there was a serious commitment on the part of Management to dialogue with the unions, this researcher believes that the strike would have been averted. The interview granted by Igiemhe (an ASUP member) revealed that, most ASUP members, including himself, have a dislike for Strikes because it will rob them of the opportunity of selling Academic Text Books to students thus, preventing them from earning additional income to support their salary (Justin, M. n.d. interview). Apart from this, when there is a stable academic calendar, businesses both within and outside the campus thrive. There are a lot of business shop owners on Auchi Polytechnic campus whose patronage and business survival depend largely on students. Businesses like typing/photocopying, sale of sachet/bottled water, snacks, soft drinks, Recharge Cards etc, only thrive better when students are in session. Madam Bose, a business centre owner (shop BQ 2) at Idogho market, campus 2,

attests to this. According to her, anytime students are on holidays or are compelled to go home indefinitely as a result of strikes embarked upon by union members, her business usually experiences a lot of set backs. The campus becomes empty and nobody patronises them. For this reason, she and most shop owners in school prefer staying back at home rather than coming to waste their time in the shops and at the same time wasting money for transport to and from school. But the situation is better when students have uninterrupted session in school (ASUP, 2018). This is one major thing that the unions in Auchi Polytechnic have succeeded in achieving in the last few years. The academic calendar has been relatively stable, owing to the conscious efforts of avoiding strike actions.

The unions have also been very active and resilient in their pursuit of programmes that benefit members. In an interview granted by Jimoh a former Chairman of ASUP (between 2018 and 2022), he enumerated some of his achievements while in office in conjunction with his Executive members. ASUP successfully registered the union with the Federal Mortgage Bank, thus, fulfilling a major criterion of doing business with the bank. The registration opened doors of opportunities for ASUP members. With this, according to him, the Union was able to facilitate the process of registering all members who were willing to obtain the one Million Naira (N1,000,000) Home Renovation Loan in 2018. By 2020, the sum of One Hundred and Eighty-Two Million, Four Hundred Thousand naira (N182,400,000) was released by the bank for the first set of beneficiaries, numbering one hundred and ninety-one (191) members. The loan was with one of the cheapest interest rates compared to others. An additional amount of one hundred and forty one thousand six hundred thousand naira was released in 2022 for the second batch of one hundred and twenty-three (123). With this money available to the beneficiaries, many of them could buy land to build houses, some were able to continue with their already started building projects, while others bought cars and some invested in personal businesses that could support their monthly income from the polytechnic.

Similar to this, ASUP was able to resuscitate its Staff Welfare Scheme in 2019 which had witnessed some setbacks for so many years. The Welfare Scheme was set up to offer loans to interested members at relatively cheaper interest rates. The body has its own Board of Trustees who manages the Scheme on behalf of ASUP. The union has also helped Retirees in facilitating the process of getting the refunds of their monthly contributions in the form of Savings.

The issue of CONTISS 15 Migration of staff in the lower cadre of Federal Polytechnics is another area where the Union's impact in Auchi Polytechnic can also be noticed. The Acronym 'CONTISS' means Consolidated Tertiary Institutions Salary Structure. It has to do with the migration or movement of all Staff from one salary level to the next higher level as directed by the Federal Government, provided

that the staff meets with the necessary conditions stipulated by NBTE (National Board for Technical Education) The Conditions are:

- a. Such staff must have been employed before 1st August, 2009
- b. He/she must possess the basic Academic/Professional or both qualifications applicable to his /her competence in addition to compliance to Institutional Policy.
- c. Such Staff must have spent a minimum of two (2) years on current position before the year of migration (Igiemhe, O. L. 2023, interview). This issue has been on since 2013 when the Federal Government gave the directive. But, it eventually came to fruition in 2021 in Auchi Polytechnic. As revealed in the interview granted by Ben, it took the combined efforts of ASUP, and other sister Unions namely, SSANIP and NASU who fought tirelessly to achieve the goal (Madam Bose A. 2023).

ASUP has also taken up the responsibility of showing concerns and love to the bereaved family of its members. This according to Jimoh, is a way of letting them know that they have a family to lean on (i.e ASUP) whenever the unexpected happens. ASUP recognises the fact that the issue of Feeding, Payment of School Fees for Children, House Rent Fee etc, are usually challenges of the immediate family members whenever the unexpected happens to a bread winner. For this purpose, ASUP has been giving out a cash benefit of N1,000,000 (One Million Naira) to each of the affected families. In the same vain, the Union is also committed to giving financial assistance to distressed members. Those who suffered severe ill-health, victims of accidents or Natural Disaster at one time or the other have all received the attention of the union. The Executive members of ASUP usually mobilised all its members to raise funds for their support. Evidence of this can partly be found in ASUP's Statements of Income and Expenditure (Justin Momodu' n.d. interview) of 1st July, 2021 – 30th September, 2021 and also 1st October, 2022 – 31st December, 2022. The statements show that within these periods, a total sum of N2,436,300 was disbursed to distressed members and the families of some deceased members. Similarly, the sum of N473,400 was paid to members as welfare / burial benefits.

Retiring Staff members have also benefited from the activities of ASUP. Before 2020, the union gave a retirement benefit of N100,000 (One Hundred Thousand Naira) to each of its retiring members. But from 2020 to date, the union decided to increase the benefit to the sum of N500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand Naira), this is to enable them cushion the effects of the present economic challenges as they get settled for life after active service. This is funded by the monthly Dues paid by members. Apart from these, the unions have always ensured that Salaries and Allowances due to members and other Staff were paid whenever there were delays by rising to the task. For example, when there was a delay in paying salary for the

month of September, 2020 the union's Executive Members of ASUP and SSANIP made moves to know the reason and eventually, they were able to rectify the problem after a number of visits to the Accountant General's Office in Abuja. Similarly, the late chief Executive of the Institution at that time, Dr. Sanusi S. Jimah insisted that the payment of Peculiar Academic Allowance would no longer be funded by Management, claiming that it was the responsibility of Federal Government to pay, ASUP met with the sister union, SSANIP and fought to resist it. The unions interfaced with Management and the Institution of Government in charge (i.e, IPPIS), pointing out that it was the right of all Academic Staff to earn Academic Allowance and its equivalent for the non-Academic staff, regardless of who pays it. At the end, IPPIS began to pay the Allowance. Arrears for the previous months were also paid (ASUP, n.d.).

In addition to this, each of the three unions have Cooperative schemes established for their members. Members contribute a token amount monthly to this scheme in the form of savings, and it is usually deducted at source from their salaries. These monies are loaned out to interested members at very minimal interest rates and are made available to interested staff of the Polytechnic, irrespective of the union they belong to, as long as they are able to produce guarantors and at the same time have a minimum of 25% of their net salary left after the loan has been granted. According to Iredia, chairman of ASUP Welfare scheme, management frowns at excessive loans that reduce a staff's take-home salary to amount less than 25% of his / her net salary (Igiemhe, O. L. 2023). From the opportunities offered by these loans, a lot of staff have been able to build their personal houses, buy cars, paid their children's school fees and carried out other essentials things of life. Some beneficiaries of these loan schemes that this researcher interrogated testified to how the loan schemes have helped them to accomplish one task or the other. Alli Aminu, an academic staff of the polytechnic, told this researcher that, from the first loan he got from SSANIP welfare scheme he was able to buy his Mercedes Benz C-class which he still drives till date. From the next one he obtained, he bought a piece of land and has already commenced the process of building a 3-Bed room apartment for him and family. (Madam Bose A. 2023, interview). Similarly, Bolarin a senior staff (non-academic) confessed that he's a proud owner of a 4-Bedroom Bungalow today because of the multiple loans him and wife (who is also a senior non-academic staff) were able to access from the various staff welfare schemes in Auchi Polytechnic. From these loans, he went further, "I was able to buy a car for myself and another for my wife. I wonder how all these would have been possible if these loan opportunities from the staff welfare schemes were not available. Although it has not been easy paying back these loans, because we're now left with very meagre sums from our monthly salaries, but I still thank God. In a couple of months from now, precisely, January next year, I would have completely paid back all the loans and I can bounce back again financially." (Federal Polytechnics (Amended) Act, 2019)

It is evident that, anytime these loans are released or even salaries are paid to staff of the Polytechnic, there is usually a boom in business activities in Auchi and its environs because so much money is injected into circulation. Market women and all category of traders who deal in items like building materials, foodstuffs, provision items etc experience large volume of sales. Churches too are not left out, as they equally raise huge sums of money from offerings and tithes during this period. In all of these credit must be given to the Unions in Auchi Polytechnic and their activities.

ASUP under the leadership of Jimoh commenced the organisation of an annual National Conference and Seminars in 2019 at a much subsidised fee. The aim is to encourage both Academic and non academic staff as well as students of the institution, develop passion for, and also acquire the necessary skills for Research writings as well as obtain the requisite number of Journal publications and Conference papers needed for the promotion of academic staff. Since these conferences are 'National' they attract participants from all parts of the country, with Auchi Polytechnic ASUP playing host to them. Apart from this, it has also helped ASUP members tremendously in obtaining the requisite Journal Publications and Conferences for their promotion.



ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF POLYTECHNICS (ASUP) Auchi Polytechnic Chapter



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Poster of 3rd National Conference Organised by ASUP
26th – 28th April, 2022

Similarly, according to Jimoh, the union hosted the Centenary National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of ASUP between 12th and 16th July, 2021 in Auchi Polytechnic (Com. Ben O. 2022, interview). All participants in both the National Conference and the Centenary NEC meeting of ASUP were lodged in different hotels in Auchi and environs. This implies that the business of the Hoteliers boomed within these periods. The credit for this should be attributed to trade unionism in Auchi Polytechnic, particularly, the efforts of ASUP.



Banner of National Executive Council (NEC) Centenary Meeting of ASUP

Hosted by ASUP, Auchi Polytechnic Chapter (12th - 16th July, 2021)



ASUP National President, Comrade Anderson Ezeife, addressing participants at the National Executive Council (NEC) Centenary Meeting of ASUP Hosted by Auchi Polytechnic Chapter (12th - 16th July, 2021)



Participants at the National Executive Council (NEC) Centenary Meeting of ASUP

Hosted by Auchi Polytechnic Chapter (12th - 16th July, 2021)

Sometimes too, the unions jointly organise Symposia on Unethical Practices as spelt out in the extant rules contained in the Polytechnic's Staff Manual. Through this, the Unions remind all staff of the dangers associated with flouting them (Statements of Income and Expenditure of Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics, 2022). Since this is largely an Administrative exercise, it naturally falls within the purview of the senior non-Academic Staff of the Polytechnic. In this regard, SSANIP plays a very vital role.

In terms of Infrastructural Development in Auchi Polytechnic, the unions also made some impact. The NASU for example has its building, part of which serves as its administrative office, while other parts are rented out for commercial purpose, to generate income for the union. Mrs Dada who rented one of the shops, claims she uses the shop as one of her outlets for the sale of ice cream and yoghurts to meet up primarily with students' demands for the products on campus. She has other sales points in the heart of Auchi (Comrade Jimoh, L.F. 2023, interview). Apart from serving as a source of income to the purse of NASU, those who rented the stores also benefit by using it to carry out their commercial activities. ASUP on its part is also presently embarking on the building of an edifice called "ASUP House", in addition to an already existing one, which is presently being rented out to Mrs Obiorah. She is a Restaurant/Bar operator whose patronage is mainly from members of the Polytechnic Community (Iredia B. 2023. Interview). She's happy doing the business in ASUP Building while ASUP also benefits from the rent fee she pays. The new ASUP house according to Jimoh, is a project that is being carried out through direct

Labour. The building comprises of an Events Hall with a seating capacity of five hundred (500), Shops, Fourteen (14) Offices, Stores, a Conference Room, Restaurant/Kitchen and the required Conveniences. The project is almost at its full completion stage (Alli A. 2023. Interview). When fully completed, it will also be of tremendous benefits not only to ASUP, but also to members of the Polytechnic and Auchi community at large.



The Main ASUP Building



Front view of Attached Shops to the Main ASUP Building



Side view of ASUP Building with Attached shops

There were a number of cases where Auchi Polytechnic Staff Unions made their impact felt in ensuring that justice was served to some persons alleged to have committed one offence or the other and unjustly dismissed without Due Process. Apart from this, there was also an alleged case of management of the institution fronting for the appointment of a candidate that was said to be the least qualified among the list of those seeking for the position of Rectorship of the Polytechnic. Some of these cases will be discussed one after the other.

According to Idugie, “I entered into active Unionism specifically to redeem the image of late Dr. Edemode and others who had unjustifiable and repressive actions against them from management.”(Bolarin P. 2023. Interview) He pointed out that among the rules for a student to qualify for writing an examination in Auchi Polytechnic is that such students must not only be registered but must also meet up with 75% attendance in class lectures. But, there was a student who didn’t meet up with these criteria and at the same time, was not present for the examination at all. The student claimed to have had accident at Ore on her way coming back to school and was also robbed at the same time. The matter was investigated and was discovered that nothing of such happened. In spite of this, Management insisted that, a make-up examination be conducted for her and the Head of Department then, (Late Dr. Edemode) was directed accordingly. T. O Osazuwa who was Director of school and Edemode, stood their grounds that such a thing was wrong. This led to the termination of Edemode’s appointment without Due Process.

Similarly, there was an allegation of N500 (five hundred naira) extortion from a student levelled against an academic staff by name Dr. Igbafe. Even though the allegation could not be proved, he was summarily dismissed. When this researcher interrogated Igbafe, he confirmed that he personally went to court to challenge his dismissal which spanned through a period of seven years, seven months and seven days. He commended the unions for taking up his case and those of other staff members that faced the same unjust dismissal from management (Com. Jimoh, L.F. 2023. Interview).

While litigations were going on in court, Idugie added that, The Federal Government coincidentally set up a visitation panel to all the Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria in August 2004. The union (ASUP) quickly took advantage of this and presented the cases of the affected staff and eventually, they were all reinstated. The union committed its time and resources towards getting justice for the affected staff. All the costs of litigations were borne by the union (Obagah N. 2023. Interview).

Also, in the appointment of a succeeding Rector in 2007 at the expiration of the tenure of the incumbent, Sir O.F Eboreime, the three unions, (ASUP, SSANIP, and NASU), jointly wrote a letter to the Minister of Education informing him of their

preference for a candidate among the contestants as the most qualified, going by the provision of the Federal Polytechnic Act. The outgoing rector also had his preferred candidate, Dr Idogho who according to the union members was not even qualified to be short listed for the interview. They argued that she did not have academic qualification in a core area of study in the Polytechnic as required by the Polytechnic Act, whereas, other two candidates did. The unions wrote a petition to the minister, requesting that the already conducted interview by the Governing Council be cancelled. Moreover, they also frowned at the outgoing rector being a member of the interview panel. Unfortunately, upon arriving at the office of the minister where the case was to be presented, one of the unions (NASU) sold out, claiming that they were not part of the decision of ASUP and SSANIP. But with all the facts presented to the minister, he was convinced and consequently directed that the interview be cancelled and the Governing Council should re-advertise for the position. This was another breakthrough for the union (Mrs Dada, 2023. Interview).

Conclusion

Trade Unionism emerged from the efforts of workers to seek improvement on their existing working conditions through Collective actions. They function to negotiate Social, Economic, Political and Psychological benefits for their members in the industry. In contemporary times, and with particular reference to Nigerian Tertiary Institutions, Trade Unions are seen to have assumed more roles beyond protection of workers' welfare as mentioned above. Specifically, this study on Impact of Labour Unionism in Auchi Polytechnic reveals that there is an expansion in the traditional functions involved in labour unionism to include aspects such as contributing towards the attainment of a peaceful workplace, staff and infrastructural development and championing the course of Due Process and Justice in staff-related matters.

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LANGUAGE USE IN POST-COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The outbreak of Corona Virus (COVID-19), which began in Wuhan China, sent frightening waves across the globe. The virus disrupted social and economic relations. As a measure to control its spread, lockdown; stay at home approach was observed around the world. Nigeria had its first case in February 2020 through an Italian national in Lagos. With this, the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) set up a multi-Sartorial National Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to oversee national response to COVID-19. Consequently, the Presidential Task Force (PTF) was inaugurated and charged with the responsibility of regulating interstate movements and ensuring that travelers from the 13-COVID-19 high-risk countries were not allowed into the country. To curtail the pandemic, the Federal Government in August, 2021 received 4 Million doses of Corona Virus vaccines although only 2.5% population of Nigerians has received complete vaccination. Majority of the unvaccinated population reside in the rural areas who may not have been exposed to adequate information on the dangers of the virus. There is every need for Development Communication which plays a major role in information dissemination and influences behavioural change. In this era of pandemic the right behavior should be practiced and imbibed. On one hand, the people must be convincingly made aware of the relevance of being vaccinated and their willingness on the other hand confirmed. It is on this note that this paper seeks to explore the relevance of Development Communication as the requisite language tool, to facilitate effective information on the virus and possible ways of mitigation. Some of the aspects of language/communication channels are outlined in this paper. The Interactionist/social theory and the Participatory Communication theory are used in this analysis. The findings revealed that language and communication are inseparable and both played a crucial role in fighting the pandemic. It is recommended more studies be considered in this area for effective results in combating subsequent pandemics.

Keywords: Language, Development Communication, Pandemic, Corona Virus, Vaccination.

Introduction

Language is a strong force in human existence. It is a system of vocal sounds or symbols by which human beings communicate experiences. It is also an identity which distinguishes the cultural activities of one group from the other. Language is a self-contained system of words, sounds and meanings linked to each other in various complex ways. Whatever may be one's view, it still hinges around the fact that language is the process through which human beings communicate their feelings and desires.

Human beings cannot accomplish set goals; solve any emerging problem if language is not effectively utilised. Sapir (1921:1) sees language as “a non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, desires and emotions by a means of voluntarily produced symbols.” This means that language is specie specific and every human society needs a functional language. He explained further that language is said to be dynamic in the sense that it changes as the society in which man lives also changes. It is this dynamics which reflects the nature and character of language that has given scholars and researchers sufficient cause to search and attain self – knowledge about the nature and manner of the change that takes place in language. Aleyebo (2015:1) says that language “is by all means the most enduring and about the most dynamic artifact of human history.” Language is an enduring artifact because apart from being human specific, it is an integral part of human culture, and therefore, as old as human existence. To Robbins (1985), language as a symbolic system based on pure or arbitrary conventions...infinitely extendable and modifiable based on the changing needs and conditions of the speakers.

The waves of COVID-19 pandemic that swept across the globe from 2019 to 2020 sent the world into panic. Therefore the conscious need to protect the lives of the vulnerable in such circumstance became paramount. Most rural settlements are more vulnerable during the times of pandemic, because they lack the basic amenities and adequate information towards effective language/communication.

Rural dwellers are a part of a whole system and society; therefore it requires a whole societal approach to limit the spread of Corona virus and to cushion the potentially devastating impact it has on people and the economy. It is on this note that the researchers seek to appraise language use in the fight against the dreaded pandemic -COVID-19.

From the aforementioned, it is clear how the flexibility of language allows for the intake of new words and concepts to be able to serve the needs of its speakers. COVID-19 pandemic which broke out in November 2019 in China has brought quite a lot of words into language across different races and ethnicities. The language here

is a persuasive language of enlightenment where the aim is to bring to people the knowledge and understanding about the term COVID-19.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in China in November 2019 and its spread to the rest of the world in 2020 took the world by storm. The pandemic has compelled languages of the world to improve their morphological, syntactic as well as semantic inventories. This is especially true for languages that easily accommodate linguistic inventions like the English language. The concepts of language and communication are inseparable because one entails the other. This idea is clearly woven in this paper as an appraisal of language/communication channels, in view of the global pandemic – COVID-19.

Conceptual Clarification

Languages generally adopts certain terms in function one of which is compounding of words. Certain words loose old forms and pick new forms; loose meaning and pick new meanings and in most cases, already existing independent words are joined together by a process known as compounding in order to accommodate novel situations or ideas. According to Yule (2006:54), compounding is the combination of two distinct words to produce a single form. The most popular word formation process in English language is compounding. It is from Latin words “*com pono*” directly translated as “putting together.” Compounded words are often written as a single word, hyphenated terms, or separated terms. Below is the table of some compounding words which have become dominant in register of COVID-19:

Words	Process	Morphemes
Handsanitizer	Hand + Sanitizer	Hand + Sanitize
+er		
Lockdown	Lock – down	
Coronacoma	Corona + Coma	
Self – quarantine	self + quarantine	
Social – distancing	Social+Distancing	Social + Distance
+ ing		
Facemask	Face + Mask	
Elbow + bump	Elbow + Bump	
Droplets	Drop + Let	
Outbreak	Out + Break	
Essential – Service	Essential + Service	
COVID- 19- palliative	Covid19 + palliative	

The above illustration shows that there are some Compound words, which are “Handsanitizer, Lockdown, coronacoma, selfquarantine, social–distancing, Facemask, Elbow–bump, Droplets, and Essential–service among others which serve significantly in the awareness creation on precautionary measures against the spread

of the virus. In lucid terms, these have become household names for English language users in the area of communication in regards to the pandemic. To expatiate:

- i. **Handsanitizer:** The word consists of three morphemes. The two are free morphemes “hand” and “sanitize,” and the last is the bound morpheme /-er/. One cannot break these three components further into smaller parts because doing so will not amount to any semantic notes. This is stated always as a word, merging with the derivative marker and forming a new “handsanitizer” of words. Handsanitizer is a form of liquid or gel commonly used to reduce pathogens on the hand. The substance according to health experts can stop the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic through handshake.
- ii. **Lockdown:** But for a few countries, there was lockdown across the globe. This is some kind of curfew of restriction of human movement with a territory or internationally. The word “Lockdown” has two morphemes, ‘lock and ‘down’. Each can stand alone and has its meaning. Besides, they cannot split into smaller meaningful pieces. Thus, both can be mentioned as the word’s morpheme. The “lockdown” policy was deployed by government authorities to prevent the spread of infection/pandemic from one person to another or from transporting the pandemic from one location to another.
- iii. **Self-quarantine:** The word “Selfquarantine,” that is self+quarantine” is a noun. The term comes from two morphemes of the word “self” and “quarantine.” This kind of compounding is also a popular term that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic and spread to most nations. Self-quarantine is a process in which a suspected carrier of the disease is kept away from other people for a period of time to ascertain his or her status. The same term in use for someone who is undergoing treatment in a designated medical facility.
- iv. **Coronacoma:** The word “Coronacoma” has more than one morpheme. The first is the free morpheme “corona” and the second is the free morpheme “coma.” The word “corona” in this case is a free morpheme that is combined with the other free morpheme “coma” and produces a new word “Coronacoma.” This word has already been verified as a common word in English, as it occurs during the pandemic. “Coronacoma” means the economic equivalent of a medically induced coma that deliberately shut down certain brain functions to give the patient time to recover (Krugman, 2020).
- v. **Physical – distancing:** The compounding of the word ‘Physical’ which means relating to the body, as distinguished from the mind or spirit and ‘distancing’ which is to move away or give space. The practice of physical

distancing means giving another individual the necessary space required, as much as possible to help prevent spread of COVID-19. The practice of social distancing encourages the use of online video and phone communication instead of persons contact. Physical distancing help limit the spread of COVID-19. Distance of at least one metre from each other and crowded gathering was discouraged.

- vi. **Facemask :** Facemask refers to an item or protective equipment that primarily guards the airways. The word facemask is the compounding of face which is the part of the body where the eyes nose and mouth are found and mask is a protective materials or tool utilised for prevention. With COVID-19 Facemask is formed meaning a preventive tool used against the spread of the pandemic. Note however that while it is called Nosemask in other climes, Nigerians prefer to call it facemask. Apart from the surgical use of this tool, it became a popular term in the surge of the pandemic.
- vii. **Elbow-Bump:** The elbow bump is an informal greeting where two people touch elbows. Interest in this greeting was renewed during the avian flu scare of 2006, the 2009 swine flu pandemic, the Ebola outbreak of 2014, and the COVID-19 pandemic when health officials supported its use as an alternative to hand-shaking to reduce the spread of germs. During the latter pandemic, authorities advised that even an elbow bump was too risky, and suggested greeting from a distance.
- viii. **Droplets:** The word ‘droplet’ is a combination of the word ‘drop’ which means to let go of something and ‘let’ which means to allow or to prevent. With the COVID-19 the two ends are compounded to form ‘droplet.’ A respiratory droplet is a small aqueous droplet produced by exhalation, consisting of saliva or mucus and other substance derived from respiratory tract surfaces.
- ix. **Essential-Service:** The word essential-services is the compounding of essential and service. The word ‘essential’ which means something that is necessary or very important and ‘service’ which is an act of being of assistance to someone. Essential-services now as a single word refers to a class of occupations that has been legislated by a government to render special assistance to individuals during the course of the pandemic.

Theoretical Framework

The two fold nature of this analysis also requires two theoretical approaches, thus language and communication theories. On the aspects of language, this analysis stems from Vygotsky’s Social Interactionist theory of language. The basic idea of this theory is that language has a social origin. In other words, the craze for

communication breeds a new language where the words or terms needed for discourse does not exist. The theory affirms that a child from birth is continually engaging in social interactions, which allows him to develop higher cognitive functions like language and thought. According to Vygotsky's theory, social development model, socio-cultural interactions comes first, then cognition and language development.

The Interactionist/social theory outlines that language exists for the purpose of communication and can only be learned in the context of interaction with other people. There has to be an environment, tradition or situation where the language thrives. He says language is the root of culture and individuals learn and develop within their roles in the community. The theorist believes that language harps on: cognitive, motoric and sociocultural variables. The components of social interaction are actor, partner, relation, activities, context and evaluation. This theory has three branches: classical interactionism, ethnomethodology and holistic interactionism. This theory is apt in this discourse based on the new form of language that has come to occupy the world's linguistic milieu, due to the outbreak of the dreaded COVID-19 Pandemic.

On the other hand, participating communication theory propounded by Paulo Freire in 1970 is also adopted. The assumption of the theory is that, knowledge should not be imposed from developed societies but rather knowledge and local capability be encouraged and promoted. This theory encourages and supports resident communities to develop their own plans, strategies and proffer solutions to problems which will in turn encourage self determination and empowerment.

This theory is relevant to this study because it facilitates collaborative interaction between and among people. Perhaps what is required in an era of COVID-19 pandemic. For health innovations and interventions to succeed, rural dwellers suggestions, actions and reactions or inputs are required as this will help relieve their tension, anxiety and pull them out of ignorance.

Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive analytical method through the words identified in relation to the pandemic. The area of focus is Nigeria and as explained ab intio, the words had existed prior to the pandemic. What is striking is the compounding of the terms to arrive at of words that guarantee effective communication in relation to what became a new normal. The Interactionist/social theory is used in this analysis as said earlier.

Language/Communication Channels and COVID-19 Pandemic

The communication channels used in the fight against the pandemic in Nigeria include the radio, television, text messaging, printed documents and the social media. In most instances, the local languages played an important aspect in this messaging. Language is paramount for effective communication as earlier highlighted. As a result, it was necessary for stakeholders and the general public to have a holistic knowledge of certain terms to be able to carry out effective awareness campaign and control against the spread of the pandemic. The extent of successes recorded against the widespread of the virus and death toll in the first wave of the pandemic was largely due to the effective language/communication through the proper channels. It is still imperative that the linguistic arsenals be employed in the vaccination programme by the health personnel, to not only convince or persuade the citizens on the need to be vaccinated but also be sure of their willingness to be vaccinated.

Communication facilitates social, human and infrastructural development. From the rural dwellers perspective, communications is seen as a social process designed or organised to bring together every community member through a two way process where people, the change agents are both senders and receivers of information and creators of knowledge. Vygotsky's Social Interactionist theory of language involves some level of participatory communication, which plays a very significant role in the field of development. The view of Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) clearly states that participatory communication is an approach based on dialogue which allows sharing of information, perceptions and opinions among the various shareholders and thereby facilitates their empowerment especially those who are most vulnerable and marginalised. In contemporary usage, participatory communication focuses on involving, engaging and empowering the poor to take charge of their development (Thomas, 2013). It also focuses on strengthening peoples' capacity to identify their own priorities and to organise themselves on how to best tackle challenges.

Language/communication between and among people in a community is crucial in preventing misgivings and misunderstandings that may lead to conflict. This is because communication is flexible in its utilisation and application because it has no specific pattern application but can be applied to harmonise with the context or situation being addressed, Van de Fliert (2010). The terms were employed to address a situation and the result was quite encouraging.

Rural dwellers are those populations of men, women and children residing in remotest locations in a particular community. This remotest location is characterised by poor road network, lack of electricity, poor health care system, poor education structures and lack of potable water.

The emergence and spread of COVID-19 pandemic that overwhelmed the health and economic system of the country, health workers have been equipped to expand the country's COVID-19 vaccination campaign to remote areas and to create awareness

on the pandemic. This becomes imperative as the world is a global village, globalisation aided COVID-19 transmission. Man by nature is a global being. The rural population is predominantly farmers who usually visit urban areas to trade their goods and services for livelihoods. Their constant movement to and fro urban areas expose them to risk of being infected with Corona virus. However there is no evidence that COVID-19 has done more damage to rural dwellers than Malaria, Cholera, HIV/AIDS, Cancer and Hepatitis. But the dangers this pandemic has exposed mankind to, have catalysed the urgent need to curtail its spread among rural dwellers and enhance collaborative interaction for adequate behavioral change. This calls for more literature and concern through language/communication channels that could guarantee effective control of the pandemic.

It has been observed from the study that even with the lockdown measures imposed at various times, the awareness of the pandemic in rural communities was very low. This was due to poor publicity from the health workers and the ineffective communication into the remote areas. The poor result observed could be as a result of poor utilization of participatory development communication strategies. However, flexible in application with no specific pattern being adopted in its use but has to be relevant to the context or issue being addressed. Language/communication focuses on people centeredness and response to problem solving and the needs of the people in different societies. The researchers however stated that there is no standard rule of specific media for its implementation.

Most Nigerians had knowledge of the vaccines but cannot access, although many even in urban settings still hold onto their beliefs about the pandemic. Language/communication can be better channeled through the community leaders. The presence of social actors, religious and indigenous leaders and community based facilitators have capacity for transformation that will facilitate change in their respective domains.

Conclusion

With the gravity of the pandemic, a lot of people from communities were unaware of this deadly virus. However, the percentage of knowledge on the vaccine was high but access to it was poor. Reaching out to rural communities through the language is crucial. Since there are no strict strategies towards actualising this, it behooves on the change agent to involve credible selfless community leaders as bridges towards reaching and impacting meaningful health innovation for behavioural change, this paper recommends the use of persuasive language to amplify the spread of the virus as well as the administration of the vaccines. However, the researchers suggest voluntary participation from the rural dwellers rather than an obligatory participation. In addition to the five channels listed above, the town criers and national orientation agency can engage in one on one interface for aggressive campaigns in the face of another such gruesome killer disease.

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RETURNS ON INVESTMENT AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NIGERIA: ISSUES AND INSIGHTS

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Abstract

The study examined Returns on Investment and Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria. COVID-19 pandemic on economic activities and financial performance in Nigeria has not been explored in the literature. The population for this study consisted of all members of staff in companies and institutions that are required by law to mandatory disclose their financial reports at least annually. The sample was drawn from members of staff of banks, government owned internal revenue offices in the selected states of the south – south zone of Nigeria. The research design employed in this study is a survey format because they are useful in describing the characteristics of a large population. A well-structured questionnaire was used to elicit responses from the sampled population. The finding of the study revealed that Returns on Investment (ROI) on the financial statement was observed to be statistically significant. The study recommends that, there should be good policy measures to promote returns on investment through proper financial statement update in Nigeria.

Key Words: Returns on Investment, Covid-19 Pandemic, Financial statement

Introduction

In 2019, the world was thrown into a chaotic state as a result of a virus which mutated and is to be known as the Corona Virus. Covid-19 Pandemic is an infectious disease caused by a new coronavirus discovered in 2019. Though several outbreaks have been experienced in the past, but this, was a novel in that it brought with it a lot of confusion, panic and its likes. The Covid-19 Pandemic has undoubtedly impacted the lives of citizens worldwide. This pandemic started precisely in December 2019, when the first cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) were reported in Wuhan, China. It has spread to over two hundred countries and territories, infecting over 6.2

million people and causing over 372,000 deaths worldwide as of June 1st, 2020 (CBC, 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledged and proclaimed COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (Yi, Lagniton, Ye, Li, & Xu, 2020). Studies show that COVID-19 has caused significantly more infections and deaths, compared with previous outbreaks of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) (Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir, & Siddique, 2020); Yi et al., 2020).

Since Nigeria is not an island of her own, there was need for her to be proactive and measure up in this fight. To combat the pandemic, the Nigerian Government initiated and applied a series of social distancing and mobility restriction measures: All classes' at all educational levels were cancelled and all direct flights from abroad and within Nigeria were stooped since it would have an inevitable consequence, economic and labor inclusive. The economic impact that the COVID-19 crisis will have on people's lives is yet to be quantified, this is more so as the Covid-19 pandemic is still on at the moment. Moreover, millions of jobs are threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic (Coibion, Gorodnichenko, & Weber, 2020). The economic impact of the loss of jobs and closure of businesses is already experienced by many countries globally.

Apart from the businesses operations, the mode of its reporting which is via the financial statement was also impacted. The financial reporting can be seen as a tool to verify and clarify the direction of investments and economic growth in the public and private sector. It is invaluable in assuring accountability and transparency in business transactions and management. Financial reporting can also enable governments and Financial regulating bodies ascertain if the reporting entity's level of compliance with legislation, regulations, common law and contractual arrangements are in place. It will also help in making decisions about providing resources to or doing business with the reporting entity (Ezeani ,Ogbonna&Ezemoyih, 2012).

Factors that will affect financial reporting processes or final outcome of any financial reporting exercise need to be considered seriously. This is due to the fact that the quality and timing of financial reporting are crucial to the institutions, government or investors who need to make decisions that would be far reaching and important in business and the economy as it may apply. Therefore, the impact of the covid-19 on the financial reports of organizations is of utmost concern. As the Covid-19 Pandemic is having severer impact on many sectors of the Nigeria public life such as the health sector, education, transportation and financial sector. The impact on processes as well as final outcome of financial reporting in Nigeria can be examined even as the nation responds to the pandemic and put in measures to curtail it.

It is no news that the financial sector reflects the state or health of the economy in any country. The financial sector facilitates the attainment of sustained economic growth through providing efficient monetary intermediation (Jha& Hui, 2012). This sector promotes investment by mobilizing savings and efficiently channeling resources to productive business opportunities.

From literature the findings of most researchers shows that COVID-19 pandemic affected organizations negatively (El-Mousawi and Kanso, (2020); and Syahputra&Saraswati, (2020); although, just as it became a threat to many organizations, it presented opportunities to some others across the globe (Armour, Onselen& Hunter, 2020). In the case of threats, the oil sector was adversely affected and Nigeria being an oil budget driven nation was hard hit as her oil-pegged budget could not stand the heat of the pandemic.

With all of these antecedent benefits, could the same be said for the investments in financial reporting? Does the Covid-19 pandemic have any positive impact on financial reporting? Particularly the Nigeria situation where revenues and profits had witnessed significant downturn with uncertainty over items in the financial reports; impairment and revaluations within sights, could there be brighter side for the financial reports? This study identifies in particular that, the COVID-19 Pandemic has the potential of enhancing the cash inflow in the financial statement of some organizations thereby giving a boost to returns on investment.

Based on the above research problem identified, the paper will be outlined as follows; review of literature, methodology, data presentation and analysis, discussion of findings, recommendations and conclusion.

Review of Literature

The concepts on covid-19 pandemic and returns on investment will be discussed in this section.

Covid-19 Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic continues to spread in many countries of the world. This crisis also has significant economic effects on companies, for example due to restrictions in production, trade and consumption or due to travel bans (International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS), 2020).

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut its projection for Nigeria's 2020 economic growth to 2% from 2.5% due to plunging oil prices stemming from the coronavirus outbreak. The West African nation is the continent's biggest producer and depends on crude for 90% of its exports. Nigeria will need at least three months to clear a production backlog even if crude prices recover, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Managing Director and the chief executive officer of

state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation as the country has 50 unsold cargoes and they are with the hoped that the oil price drop may have seen the bottom already. Nigeria's fiscal and monetary authorities will announce measures in coming days to deal with the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak (Femi, Adeyemi, Sulaimon, Benjamin & Bankole, 2020)

The oil price shock due to the coronavirus came as a great surprise to the Nigerian government and the impact has put significant strain on the budget and the currency and the government may have to adjust its 2020 budget, which was based on a crude price of \$57 a barrel according to the finance minister. Already, oil prices which are the mainstay of the country are trading below the Federal Government's benchmark for the 2020 budget, thus posing a threat to the budget which was signed by President Muhammadu Buhari in December, on the assumption of oil production of 2.18 million barrels per day with the price benchmark of \$57 per barrel (Femi et al., 2020).

Nigeria's latest Excess Crude Account balance, according to a statement from the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation, was put at \$71.81m, while movement in reserves showed that the country's reserves stood at \$36.37 billion at the weekend, down by \$2.16 billion from \$38.53 billion in which it opened the year. With an earlier projection by Citigroup that Brent Crude might slide to as low as \$47 a barrel in the wake of the coronavirus that is yet to be contained, there are concerns about the economy's buffer package and oil prices are expected to tank further having dropped to \$49.67 and the Federal Government has been exploring various means of generating revenue to buffer the effect of unstable oil prices through increment in VAT and review of extant legislation, among others (Femi et al., 2020).

Returns on Investment

Return on investment (ROI) is perhaps the most commonly used measure of profitability. It relates the profit output with the capital input and thus compute the rate of return on capital investment. This rate is the end profit of a series of quantitative variables (Amirthalingam & Balasundaram, 2013). The return on investment is equal to the profit margin on sales multiplied by the investment. It measures the rate of return on the total assets utilized in the company; and shows the return on all the assets under the control of management regardless of source of financing (Shaibu, 2014). Weston and Brigham cited in Amirthalingam & Balasundaram (2013) suggest that a return of 13% to 15% on net worth should be considered as standard for industrial enterprises.

A high ROI indicates that investment's gains favourably with respect to cost; while a low ROI indicates that the investment's gains are unfavourable. This can be used as a basis of evaluating the efficiency of an investment, and as a basis for comparing several investments (Investopedia, 2013). This is suggestive that with ROI, it is easy

to relate profits to capital invested. It should therefore be accepted as a valid measure of performance in terms of profitability of the firm, and as a means for comparing other investments. The investment with the largest ROI is then prioritized (McCombe, 2019). The use of ROI is receiving wide applicability. The concept has also been applied to scientific funding agencies (Pearce, 2015). ROI however has the limitation of not being able to capture short-term or long-term importance, value or risks associated with natural and social capital (McCombe, 2019; Robert, 2018).

Honkapohja and Koskela (1999) show that, in the 1990s, Finland experienced a deep depression as its GDP dropped to about 14% and the unemployment level rose from 3% to almost 20%. This was caused by both bad luck and bad policies. Bad luck took the form of external shocks such as the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union in 1991 while bad policies took the form of a poorly designed financial regulation and mistaken policy reactions at the onset of the crisis. There was also high private sector's indebtedness which increased structural unemployment, and this explained why there were few jobs creation during the economic recovery (Honkapohja and Koskela, 1999).

Di Quirico (2010) show that the 2007-8 global financial crisis affected Italy's economy due to lack of structural reforms prior to the crisis. Italy had barely recovered from twenty years of political instability and economic decline. The 2007-8 global financial crisis further worsened the economic situation in Italy. The widespread corruption (i.e., granting business contracts on the basis of political connections rather than by merit), the absence of investment in new projects for economic growth, and the inability of the ruling government to initiate real reforms contributed to the economic crisis in Italy (Di Quirico, 2010).

Thailand was also affected by the Asian economic crisis. Glassman (2001) showed that the economic crisis in Thailand was rooted in declining profitability of the manufacturing sector during a time of increased global export competition and over-capacity in Asia. This triggered the economic downturn throughout the Asian region, with Thailand falling first because of its significant liabilities, and other countries being pulled into forced devaluation through financial contagion effects (Glassman, 2001).

Nigeria witnessed two economic crises within a decade. The 2009 economic crisis recession was caused by a combination of the after-effect of the 2007-8 global financial crisis, poor loan underwriting process, bad risk management practices and poor corporate governance of Nigerian banks (Sanusi, 2010).

Banks were a major cause of the 2009 economic crisis. On the other hand, the 2016 economic crisis was caused by unexpected decline in oil price which led to a sharp drop in oil revenue which severely affected Nigeria's foreign reserve (Adeniran and Sidiq, 2018). This led to massive balance of payment deficits combined with an already high debt burden which plunged Nigeria into its second recession in a decade.

The literature also shows that economic crises have notable consequences. For instance, Carneiro et al (2014) show that the economic crisis in Portugal gave rise to job destruction due to the collapse of existing firms, increasing unemployment rate, increase in the incidence of minimum wage freeze, and also led to an increasing number of temporary workers. Cheong (2001) show that there was increasing income inequality during the Korean economic crisis, while Giannakis and Bruggeman (2017) in their analysis of the economic crisis in Greece observed that rural regions are more resistant to recessionary shocks than urban regions. Other consequences include: high mortality rates from homicide, pneumonia, alcohol dependence during economic crisis (Khang et al, 2005), and the collapse of many small and medium scale enterprises (Soininen et al, 2012). Ozili (2020) show that the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown restrictions had negative socioeconomic consequences for African countries. So far, the literature has not analyzed the effect or consequence of a health crisis on the economy. More specifically, the effect of coronavirus, or COVID-19, on economic activities and performance in Nigeria has not been explored in the literature.

In this section (empirical review) the relationship between returns on investment and covid-19 pandemic will be established.

Returns on Investment and Covid-19 pandemic

Honkapohja and Koskela (1999) opine that, Finland experienced a deep depression as its GDP dropped to about 14% and the unemployment level rose from 3% to almost 20%. This was caused by both bad luck and bad policies. Bad luck took the form of external shocks such as the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union in 1991. While bad policies took the form of a poorly designed financial regulation and mistaken policy reactions at the onset of the crisis. There was also high private sector's indebtedness which increased structural unemployment, and this explained why there were few job creation during the economic recovery (Honkapohja and Koskela, 1999).

Di Quirico (2010) asserted that, the 2007-8 global financial crisis affected Italy's economy due to lack of structural reforms prior to the crisis. Italy had barely recovered from twenty years of political instability and economic decline. The 2007-8 global financial crisis further worsened the economic situation in Italy. The widespread corruption (i.e., granting business contracts on the basis of political connections rather than by merit), the absence of investment in new projects for economic growth, and the inability of the ruling government to initiate real reforms contributed to the economic crisis in Italy (Di Quirico, 2010).

Thailand was also affected by the Asian economic crisis. Glassman (2001) opines that, the economic crisis in Thailand was rooted in declining profitability of the manufacturing sector during a time of increased global export competition and over-capacity in Asia. This triggered the economic downturn throughout the Asian region, with Thailand falling first because of its significant liabilities, and other countries being pulled into forced devaluation through financial contagion effects (Glassman, 2001).

Nigeria witnessed two economic crises within a decade. The 2009 economic crisis recession was caused by a combination of the after-effect of the 2007-8 global financial crisis, poor loan underwriting process, bad risk management practices and poor corporate governance of Nigerian banks (Sanusi, 2010).

Banks were a major cause of the 2009 economic crisis. On the other hand, the 2016 economic crisis was caused by unexpected decline in oil price which led to a sharp drop in oil revenue which severely affected Nigeria's foreign reserve (Adebayo&Adebiyi, 2016). This led to massive balance of payment deficits combined with an already high debt burden which plunged Nigeria into its second recession in a decade.

The literature also shows that economic crises have notable consequences. For instance, Carneiro et al (2014) asserts that, the economic crisis in Portugal gave rise to job destruction due to the collapse of existing firms, increasing unemployment rate, and increase in the incidence of minimum wage freeze. Cheong (2001) opines that, there was increasing income inequality during the Korean economic crisis, while Giannakis and Bruggeman (2017) in their analysis of the economic crisis in Greece observed that rural regions are more resistant to recessionary shocks than urban regions. Other consequences include: high mortality rates from homicide, pneumonia, alcohol dependence during economic crisis (Khang et al, 2005), and the collapse of many small and medium scale enterprises (Soininen et al, 2012). Ozili (2020) asserts that, the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown restrictions had negative socioeconomic consequences for African countries. So far, the literature has not analyzed the effect or consequence of a health crisis on the economy. More specifically, the effect of coronavirus, or COVID-19, on economic activities and performance in Nigeria has not been explored in the literature.

Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on accountability theory. A number of research studies concerning financial reporting have classified it into two broad categories based on the value of the information content and as a discharge of accountability (Bucheit& Parsons, 2007; Tinkelman, 2009).

According to Tetlock (1985), accountability theory is built on the following premises: the existence of an audience with expectations and an information source or resource user; the similarity or difference between the expectations of the audience and the information source or resource user; and the implicit costs or benefits of disclosing or withholding information (Tetlock, 1983). Accountability theory has been used in accounting and auditing theories and principles (Gibbins& Newton, 1994; Hoffman & Patton, 1997); in corporate governance and in corporate social responsibility and public discourse (Dhanani& Connolly, 2012).

Annual Financial reports should not be merely called financial statements or financial reports but accountability reports, and they should have four major

elements: strategic accountability within the operational report, financial accountability within the financial report, fiduciary accountability in the governance and compliance report and procedural accountability within the stakeholders' and internal control report. Accountability theory summarizes the concepts espoused by other financial reporting theories.

Methodology

The research design employed in this study is a survey format and a well-structured questionnaire was used to elicit responses from the sampled population of staff of the selected quoted financial companies or institutions in Nigeria based on the selected states used for this study in order to determine the influence of Covid-19 on financial reporting in Nigeria within the period of the study. The population for this study consisted of all members of staff in companies and institutions that are required by law to mandatorily disclose their financial reports at least annually. The sample was drawn from members of staff of banks, government owned internal revenue offices in the selected states of the south – south zone of Nigeria.

The study made use of stratified random technique. 10% of the total number of staff in companies and institutions that are required by law to mandatorily disclose financial reports at least annually was applied. Hence, a 10% of the stratified random sample of the total population is justified as representative of the active populations in ex-post-facto studies (Cohen & Klepper, 1996). Therefore, sample sizes of 75 staff of the institutions concerned were used in the study.

The regression method (linear regression) and Pearson correlation statistics were used to analyze the data that were collected from the respondents after conducting some preliminary test to ascertain the correct method of analysis to be applied based on the nature of the data. If they are normally distributed or not normally distributed. The hypotheses were tested using the regression results obtained.

Model Specification

The model specification is based on the theoretical frame work of this study. The model captures the relationship between the various independent variables and dependent variables. The functional regression equation is denoted as:

$$COD = F(ROI) \quad (1)$$

Equation 1 is now empirically expressed as econometric equation as shown below:

$$COD = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 ROI + U_t \quad (2)$$

Where:

COD = Impact of Covid-19

ROI = return on instrument

α_0 = Constant (interrupt)

$\alpha_1 - \alpha_1$ = Parameter estimates

U_t = Stochastic error term (white noise)

The a priori signs: $\alpha_1 - \alpha_1 > 0$

Properties of the Variables Being Estimated

Table 1: Properties of Transformed data

	ROI	COD
Mean	3.66	3.29
Median	3.5	3.2
Maximum	5	5
Minimum	2	1.2
Std. Dev.	0.63	0.91
Skewness	0.09	0.1
Kurtosis	2.53	2.2
Jarque-Bera	0.77	2.14
Probability	0.68	0.34
Sum	275	247
Sum Sq. Dev.	29.1	60.8
Observations	75	75

Source: researcher's data processing in E-views 10 (2022)

Table 1 revealed an overview of the properties of the various transformed variables being employed for estimation. It gives a descriptive statistics of the basic features of a specific data set and a summary of the sample measures of the data.

The return on investment (ROI) was observed to have a mean value of 3.66 and standard deviation of 0.63, minimum and maximum values of 2 and 5. The Jarque-Bera value measures whether it is normally or non- normally distributed but the ROI was observed to be non-normally distributed.

Normality Test

The data employed in the study were subjected to normality test in order to ascertain whether the data were normally distributed or non-normally distributed. This test of normality enabled the researcher to know what method of analysis to apply whether linear regression or ordinal regression, Pearson correlation or spearman correlation.

In this study, sample size of 75 was employed (75 questionnaires were retrieved out of the 100 administered) hence it is below 100. Therefore, the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was used.

Decision rule: Where the p-value is greater than 0.05, the variables are normally distributed but if the p-value was observed to be less than 0.05, the variables are non-normally distributed.

The values of the Skewness and Kurtosis when divided by the values of the standard error should be within the range of positive and negative value of 1.96 or -1.967. If the variables values fall within this range it is stated to be normally distributed or non-normally distributed.

The test results for the Skewness and Kurtosis revealed that the variables of ROI and COD fall within the values of 1.96. Hence, they passed the normality test and are approximately normally distributed.

The data for ROI passed the normality test of Shapiro-Wilk (0.058) was observed to be greater than the p-value of 0.05; the null hypothesis is therefore supported. While the other variable data for Shapiro-Wilk p-value (0.044 – 0.000) were observed to be less than 0.05, hence, these data did not pass the test. The null hypothesis is rejected since the p-value is below 0.05.

The visual inspection of the various histograms, normal Q-Q plots and box plots showed that the variables of ROI and COD, were approximately normally distributed. (Razali & Wah, 2011)

Multi-collinearity test

The data were also subjected to a further test of multi-collinearity based on the tolerance value and that of the variance inflation factor (VIF). The correlations between the variables were also determined and the results are shown below in table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Tolerance and Variable Inflation Factor (VIF) Analysis

Variable	COD	ROI	Tolerance	VIF
COD	1			
ROI	0.586*	1	0.670	1.492

Sources: Researcher's Output (2022)

Table 2 shows the Pearson correlations results for variable employed which indicated that they were observed to be statistically significant even at p-value of 0.01. All the

variables were positive and significantly related. The tolerance values shown in the table were observed to be greater than 0.10 and the VIF values were found to be less than 5. Therefore, the variables do not have any multi-collinearity problem associated with them. Hence, they can be subject to further empirical analysis.

Regression analysis

Table 3: Results for regression estimation

Explanatory variables	Coefficient estimates
Constant	-0.624 (-1.266)
ROI	0.159(3.595)*
R^2	0.44
\bar{R}^2	0.40
F (4, 70)	13.46(0.000)
Durbin Watson (DW)	1.55

Sources: *Researcher's Output (2022)*

Note: t-values are reported in parentheses besides the estimated coefficients,

* Significant at 5% level

** Significant at 10% level

An evaluation of the results shown in table 6 revealed that all the independent variables employed in the model was able to explain about 44 percent of the total variation of the dependent variable. The F-statistic value of 13.46 indicated that the overall model is statistically significant based on the probability value of (0.0000) at the p-value of 0.05.

As expected, the a priori sign were met by the variables. The values of the t-statistics were also observed as shown in parentheses in the above table which revealed that the variable of ROI was observed to be statistically significant at the p-value of 0.05 and 0.1 respectively.

The Durbin Watson statistics value of 1.55 approximately indicated the absence of auto-correlation problems in the model specified and applied for the empirical analysis.

A further analysis of the above table 6 result indicated that a 10 percent increase in ROI resulted in about 1.59 increases in terms of the impact of Covid-19 on Financial Reporting in Nigeria and that there was a positive relationship between them.

Test of Hypotheses

The hypothesis formulated for the study was stated in the null form.

Hypothesis one

H_{01} : Returns on Investment (ROI) on the financial statement is not significantly influenced by covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

The result of the regression in term of the t-values of 3.595 was observed to be statistically significant at the p-value of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is not supported which therefore states that returns on investment (ROI) in financial statement is significantly influenced by covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

Discussion of Results

The hypothesis formulated for the study was, Returns on Investment is not significantly influenced by Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria. The outcome showed that Returns on Investment (ROI) was statistically significant that is, influenced by covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

The result of the regression in term of the t-values of 3.595 was observed to be statistically significant at the p-value of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is not supported which therefore implies that returns on investment (ROI) in financial statement is significantly influenced by covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

This may not be at variance with findings of Khang et al, 2005; Soininen et al, 2012, whose study on Greece during one of the recessions revealed the collapse of many small and medium scale enterprises. This may be similar to the happenings of the Covid-19 pandemic as many businesses had their returns on investment (ROI) influenced by covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the result of the study findings is also in line with Ozili (2020) literature on covid-19 pandemic, which stated that, the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown restrictions had negative socioeconomic consequences for African countries.

Returns on Investment (ROI) on the financial statement was observed to be statistically significant, that is, influenced by covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study examined Returns on Investment and Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria: Issues and Insights. The empirical results indicates some level of relationship between the dependent and independent variable applied in the study. The empirical finding in the study to some extent affirms some previous result of other studies that are similar to our present study with regard to the Returns on Investment and Covid-19 Pandemic on some key financial and economic variable in some countries.

Recommendations

The results obtained from the empirical investigation revealed some level of influence between returnson investment and covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Based on the empirical finding, we recommend that, there should be good policy measures to promote returns on investment through proper financial statement update in Nigeria.

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FACEBOOK AS A TOOL FOR POLITICAL MARKETING DURING THE 2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of political advertising on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The study adopted survey research approach, using an online questionnaire to gather data from a large sample of Facebook users in Nigeria who were exposed to political advertising during the 2023 general elections. The study found that political ads on Facebook have a significant impact on the voting behaviour of respondents, with the majority of respondents reporting that the ads either reinforced their existing voting preference or changed their voting preference entirely. This indicates that political ads on Facebook can be a powerful tool for political campaigns to sway voters. The study also highlights the potential risks of using Facebook for political advertising, including the spread of misinformation and manipulation of voters. Therefore, the study recommends the need for regulation to ensure that political ads are not used to spread misinformation or manipulate voters. Overall, this study provides important insights into the use of Facebook for political marketing and highlights the need for further research and regulation in this area.

Keywords: Political advertising, Facebook, General elections, Voting behaviour, Misinformation

Introduction

Facebook has become a major tool for political marketing, especially in democratic contexts. The 2023 general elections in Nigeria provide an opportunity to examine the use of Facebook for political advertising. The research aims to map political advertising on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The importance of this research lies in the fact that Facebook has become a means for politicians and their adversaries to distribute fake news and other propaganda (Dave, 2019). Concerns about election interference in the era of mass social media have stepped up sharply since revelations about the volume of disinformation (Lomas, 2019). Facebook has introduced measures to increase transparency about political advertising after data firm Cambridge Analytica obtained the personal data of as many as 87 million users ahead of the 2016 US elections (Odutayo, & Adebayo,

2019). However, Facebook's automated ad approval system can be tricked fairly easily, making it possible to buy ads to spread misinformation and fake news (Ritzen, 2019). Facebook has extended some of its political advertising rules and tools for curbing election interference to India, Nigeria, Ukraine, and the European Union before significant votes in the next few months (Dave, 2019). Political ad buyers in these countries must confirm their identity and location, and their ads will be archived in an online library for seven years (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019).

However, Facebook has become a means for politicians and their adversaries to distribute fake news and other propaganda, which can interfere with the democratic process (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019 and Ritzen, 2019). Political campaigns play an important role in any democratic electoral process, creating an avenue for political figures and parties to communicate with voters (Amenyeawu, 2021). However, concerns about election interference in the era of mass social media have stepped up sharply since revelations about the volume of disinformation (Lomas, 2019). Facebook has introduced measures to increase transparency about political advertising after data firm Cambridge Analytica obtained the personal data of as many as 87 million users ahead of the 2016 US elections (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019). However, Facebook's automated ad approval system can be tricked fairly easily, making it possible to buy ads to spread misinformation and fake news (Ritzen, 2019). Facebook has extended some of its political advertising rules and tools for curbing election interference to India, Nigeria, Ukraine, and the European Union before significant votes in the next few months (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019 and Dave, 2019). The research problem is therefore timely and relevant, and the study will contribute to the understanding of the role of Facebook in political marketing and the challenges of regulating political advertising on social media.

Political campaigns play an important role in any democratic electoral process, creating an avenue for political figures and parties to communicate with voters (Amenyeawu, 2021). Facebook has become a means for politicians and their adversaries to distribute fake news and other propaganda, which can interfere with the democratic process (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019 and Locklear, 2019). Concerns about election interference in the era of mass social media have stepped up sharply since revelations about the volume of disinformation (Lomas, 2019). Facebook has introduced measures to increase transparency about political advertising after data firm Cambridge Analytica obtained the personal data of as many as 87 million users ahead of the 2016 US elections (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019). However, Facebook's automated ad approval system can be tricked fairly easily, making it possible to buy ads to spread misinformation and fake news (Ritzen, 2019). Facebook has extended some of its political advertising rules and tools for curbing election interference to India, Nigeria, Ukraine, and the European Union before significant votes in the next few months (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019 and Cohen, 2019). Facebook have become a

common tool for political advertising and the Nigerian 2019 general election was not an exception.

Previous studies have investigated the use of social media for political campaign communication in Ghana (Amenyeawu, 2021). Studies have also shown that Facebook has become a means for politicians and their adversaries to distribute fake news and other propaganda, which can interfere with the democratic process (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019 and Locklear, 2019). Facebook has introduced measures to increase transparency about political advertising after data firm Cambridge Analytica obtained the personal data of as many as 87 million users ahead of the 2016 US elections (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019). However, Facebook's automated ad approval system can be tricked fairly easily, making it possible to buy ads to spread misinformation and fake news (Ritzen, 2019). Facebook has extended some of its political advertising rules and tools for curbing election interference to India, Nigeria, Ukraine, and the European Union before significant votes in the next few months (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019 and Cohen, 2019).

The use of Facebook for political advertising during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria has raised concerns about foreign interference, fake news, and propaganda (Odutayo, & Adebayo, 2019 and Dave, 2019). Facebook has introduced measures to increase transparency about political advertising, but its automated ad approval system can be tricked easily, making it possible to buy ads to spread misinformation and fake news (Cohen, 2019). This study therefore was aimed to map political advertising on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria and to contribute to the understanding of the role of Facebook in political marketing and the challenges of regulating political advertising on social media.

The use of Facebook for political advertising during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria raises concerns about foreign interference, fake news, and propaganda, and the effectiveness of Facebook's measures to increase transparency about political advertising.

The study attempts to fill the gap in the lack of research on the use of Facebook for political advertising during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, based on the following objectives:

- a. To examine the nature and extent of foreign interference, fake news, and propaganda in political advertising on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.
- b. To evaluate the effectiveness of Facebook's measures to increase transparency about political advertising during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

- c. To contribute to the understanding of the role of Facebook in political marketing and the challenges of regulating political advertising on social media.

Research questions

1. How effective was Facebook as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?
2. What types of political advertising were used on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?
3. What was the impact of Facebook political advertising on the voting behaviour of Nigerians during the 2023 general elections?

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant relationship between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and voting behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of different types of political advertising on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Overview of political marketing and advertising

Political marketing and advertising have become increasingly important in modern-day politics. Political campaigns have evolved from traditional methods to include social media, digital advertising, and other forms of marketing. Several studies have been conducted on political marketing and advertising, including a systematic literature review of journal articles exploring political marketing on social media (Abid, Roy, Lees-Marshment, Dey, Muhammad, & Kumar, 2023). The study also reviewed the areas of research in political advertising and proposed a research agenda (Abid, Roy, Lees-Marshment, *et al.*, 2023). The study found that political advertising is an increasingly researched area, but the sundry natures of research findings to date demonstrate a body of work searching.

One study focused on the strategic stance of a political brand and the factors that affect its positioning (Steenburg, 2015). The study aimed to understand and manage stance and brand positioning in political marketing. Another study examined political advertising believability and information source value during elections (Bigi, 2016). The study focused on issues related to political advertising and electoral behaviour.

Political marketing and advertising are essential components of modern-day politics. The literature review highlights the importance of political marketing and advertising in political campaigns. Future research should focus on the effectiveness of political

marketing and advertising, including its impact on voter behaviour and the role of social media in political marketing. Political campaigns should also consider the ethical implications of political marketing and advertising, including the use of data and privacy concerns. Overall, political marketing and advertising are critical components of modern-day politics and require further research to understand their impact fully.

The role of social media in political campaigns

Social media has become an integral part of political campaigns around the world. The use of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have revolutionized the way political campaigns are conducted. Social media has provided politicians with a new way to reach out to voters, engage with them, and spread their message. Several studies have been conducted on the role of social media in political campaigns. A systematic literature review by Abid, Roy, Lees-Marshment, *et al.*, (2023) found that social media marketing's role in politics will continue to rise. The study highlighted the importance of social media in political campaigns and called for further research in the area. Another study by Somaiya, & Khan, (2022) examined the role of social media in political campaigning in India's general elections in 2014 and 2019. The study found that political campaigns help to enhance the political participation of potential voters. People vote based on predictions about the political parties' future policies and the candidates' personalities. Another study by Kisic, (2019) examined the use of social media in political campaigns in the case of Croatian local elections. The study found that social media is an important public relations tool that enables political parties and candidates to interact with citizens. The study highlighted the importance of social media in political campaigns and called for further research in the area.

A study by Yildirim, (2020) examined how social media is shaping political campaigns. The study found that social media has become an essential tool for political campaigns. The study highlighted the importance of social media in political campaigns and called for further research in the area. A systematic literature review by Reveilhac, Steinmetz, & Morselli, (2022) examined how and whether social media data can complement traditional survey data to study public opinion. The study found that social media is an important source of data for studying public opinion. The study highlighted the importance of social media in political campaigns and called for further research in the area. A study by Yunus, (2013) examined the role of social media in creating political awareness and mobilizing political protests in Turkey. The study found that social media has become a costless and extremely effective tool in reaching mass audiences with political purposes.

Social media has become an essential tool for political campaigns, enabling politicians to reach out to voters, engage with them, and spread their message. The literature review calls for further research in the area to explore the full potential of

social media in political campaigns. Political parties and candidates should invest in social media to reach out to voters and engage with them. Social media platforms should also take steps to address ethical concerns such as privacy and tracking. Overall, social media has revolutionized the way political campaigns are conducted, and its importance will only continue to rise in the future.

The Impact of Facebook on political marketing

Social media has become an integral part of political marketing, and Facebook is one of the most widely used platforms for political campaigns. Several studies have been conducted to understand the impact of Facebook on political marketing. Bacallao-Pino (2023) found that Facebook was used by students in Chile for both informative and organizational purposes during the elections. Borah (2017) analyzed the FB messages of three candidates during the 2008 and 2012 US presidential elections and found that Facebook was used for political advertising, emotional appeals, and social endorsement. The different uses of Facebook in political marketing relate to political engagement and vote decision (Borah, 2017 and Sandoval-Almazan & Valle-Cruz, 2020). A recent trend in political campaign studies is the use of sentiment analysis to understand users' decisions. The scandal of Facebook and Cambridge Analytica is an example of efforts to use social media platforms to impact citizens' will (Sandoval-Almazan & Valle-Cruz, 2020). A study conducted in Mexico found that the winning political party had more negative sentiment and fewer posts and users' discussions of the candidates in Facebook comments sections than the political party with the largest positive sentiment (Sandoval-Almazan & Valle-Cruz, 2020). Another study found that Facebook is one of the modern means that was adopted by politicians to disseminate their ideas and influence individuals' political orientations (Al-Momani, 2023). A study conducted in Italy and the UK found that Facebook can contribute to political participation, but its impact is mediated by media and political landscapes (Casteltrione & Pieczka, 2018). A study conducted in the US found that following political officials or institutions on social media is associated with higher levels of political interest and engagement (David, San Pascual & Torres, 2019). The study also found that those with more politically active friends on Facebook have higher levels of exposure to political content online, and there is a positive correlation between Facebook being a source of information about politics and discussing politics more often with others (David, San Pascual & Torres, 2019).

These studies suggest that Facebook has a significant impact on political marketing. It provides a new communication channel for supporters, a closer and friendlier tool for organization, supporting groups, and marketing to target audiences, and a means to send messages to opponents, disqualifying or attacking them. Political campaigns can use sentiment analysis to understand users' decisions and emotions towards political candidates.

To maximize the impact of Facebook on political marketing, political campaigns should consider the media and political landscapes and the impact of Facebook on political participation. They should also focus on creating engaging and informative content that resonates with their target audience. Finally, further research is needed to understand the long-term impact of Facebook on political marketing and the effectiveness of different strategies.

Empirical Review

Chappell (2021) investigated the reasons why Facebook is thought to mishandle political ads in a paper titled "Researchers explain why they feel Facebook mishandles political ads." The research was carried out in response to growing worries about the use of social media platforms in political advertising and their possible impact on the democratic process. The study's major goal is to investigate the reasons why Facebook is thought to mishandle political advertisements. The study also seeks to shed light on the potential consequences of such mismanagement on the democratic process.

The research is qualitative and employs a case study approach. The case study method is used to explore the specific case of Facebook's improper handling of political advertisements. Data from interviews with specialists in political advertising and social media platforms are used in the study. The population and sample methodologies are not stated directly in the report. The study, on the other hand, employs a purposive sampling technique to identify specialists in the fields of political advertising and social media platforms. The specialists were chosen for their expertise and experience in the field. The primary data collection instrument for the study is interviews. The interviews were conducted with political advertising and social media platform professionals. The interviews took place both in person and over the phone. The data acquired from the interviews is analysed using a thematic analysis approach in the study. The data was processed using a coding scheme devised in response to the research questions. To find themes and trends in the data, the coding method was utilised.

The analysis discovered that Facebook mishandles political advertisements in a variety of ways. To begin, Facebook's ad targeting algorithms can be used to target specific groups of people with political advertisements in order to influence their political opinions. Second, Facebook's ad transparency regulations do not work to prevent the proliferation of inaccurate or misleading political advertisements. Third, Facebook's ad review process is opaque, and there is no obvious way to challenge decisions made by the ad review team. Finally, Facebook's ad restrictions vary by country, which might contribute to the dissemination of inaccurate or misleading political advertisements in some nations. The study indicates that Facebook's mismanagement of political advertisements can have a substantial impact on the

democratic process and advocates for increased openness and accountability in Facebook's political ad policy.

Another study, "Political advertising on social media: Issues sponsored on Facebook ads during the 2019 General Elections in Spain," by Baviera, Sánchez-Junqueras, and Rosso, will be published in *Communication & Society* in 2022, analyses national party advertising strategies during the 2019 General Elections in Spain. The study seeks to give comparative descriptive statistics of different political parties' political communication by analysing a corpus of over 14,000 Facebook ads obtained from Meta Ad Library.

The study aims to assess national party advertising strategies during the 2019 General Elections in Spain and to give comparative descriptive statistics of different parties' political communication through the analysis of a corpus of over 14,000 Facebook ads obtained from Meta Ad Library. The study used a quantitative content analysis of Facebook advertising funded by political parties during the 2019 General Elections in Spain, and it examined a corpus of over 14,000 Facebook ads from the Meta Ad Library. The study's population comprises all Facebook advertising sponsored by political parties in Spain during the 2019 General Elections. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, was utilised to choose the corpus of over 14,000 Facebook ads for the study. The study collected data on the problems sponsored, the usage of images and videos, and the political party sponsoring the Facebook ads using a data collecting instrument in the form of a coding sheet.

The study analysed the data collected on the problems sponsored, the usage of images and videos, and the political party sponsoring the Facebook ads using descriptive statistics. The study used chi-square tests to examine the disparities in the topics promoted by different political parties, as well as their usage of images and videos. According to the study's findings, the most prevalent issues sponsored on Facebook advertising during Spain's 2019 General Elections were social welfare, economics, and employment. The study also discovered that different political parties supported different concerns, with the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) supporting the most social welfare issues and the People's Party (PP) financing the most economic ones. According to the study, the usage of images and videos in Facebook ads varies by political party, with the PSOE employing more images and videos than other parties. The study also discovered that using videos in Facebook ads was related to the sponsorship of social welfare concerns.

Gitomer, Oleinikov, Baum, and colleagues (2021) conducted a study to describe and analyse political ad funding behaviour on Facebook. The study concentrated on the geographic concentration of advertisements and sought to classify financing groups using data. The study's goal was to increase transparency in political fundraising and to demystify internet political advertising in general.

The study's objectives were to describe and categorise Facebook political ad funding behaviour. The study focused on the geographic concentration of adverts and sought to classify financing groups using data. A quantitative research design was adopted in the investigation. The authors examined Facebook political ad data supplemented with funding-related meta-data gathered by human coding and collaboration with the Centre for Responsive Politics. The authors described and classified political ad funding behaviour on Facebook using computational tools, including network analysis. The study had no defined population or sampling method. The authors examined Facebook political ad data that had been supplemented with funding-related meta-data gathered through human coding and a collaboration with the Centre for Responsive Politics.

The authors used data from Facebook political ads supplemented with funding-related meta-data gathered through human coding and collaboration with the Centre for Responsive Politics. The authors described and classified political ad funding behaviour on Facebook using computational tools, including network analysis. They concentrated on the geographic concentration of advertisements and discovered that the majority of advertisements reach an audience in a particular geographic location (i.e., U.S.). Geographic impressions, the authors discovered, play a key role in online political advertising and can be utilised to categorise financing groups. Geographic impressions, according to the study, play a key role in online political advertising and can be used to define financing entities. The authors discovered that most advertisements reach a specific geographic region (i.e., U.S.). The study is a step toward assuring political finance openness and, more broadly, demystifying online political advertising.

Pierri, (2023) examined digital advertising on Facebook and Instagram in the run-up to the 2022 Italian general election in a study titled "Political advertisement on Facebook and Instagram in the run-up to the 2022 Italian general election." The study sought to evaluate the use of Meta platforms, like as Facebook and Instagram, to promote political information in the run-up to the Italian general election in 2022. The Meta Ad Library was utilised to collect data on political ads on Facebook and Instagram for the study.

A quantitative research design was adopted in the investigation. The Meta Ad Library was used to collect data on political ads on Facebook and Instagram for the study. The study looked at over 23,000 individual commercials paid for nearly 2,700 different sponsors. The data was examined using descriptive statistics and regression analysis in the study. The study's population was all political adverts on Facebook and Instagram in the run-up to the Italian general election in 2022. The study collected data on political ads on Facebook and Instagram using a non-probability sample technique known as convenience sampling. The Meta Ad Library was utilised to collect data on political ads on Facebook and Instagram for the study. The

Meta Ad Library is a publicly accessible database of all Facebook and Instagram adverts.

The study employed descriptive statistics and regression analysis to examine the volume of political advertising, its characteristics, and the most common issues addressed in political advertising. Regression analysis was utilised in the study to identify the most active political advertisers on Facebook and Instagram. According to the study, the volume of political advertising on Facebook and Instagram in the run-up to the Italian general election in 2022 was high. According to the analysis, the most often addressed themes in political advertising were immigration, healthcare, and the economy. According to the report, political parties and candidates were the most active political advertisers on Facebook and Instagram. The study also discovered that negative advertising was common in political advertisements on Facebook and Instagram.

Methodology

The methodology for this study survey approach. It is a quantitative data collection method involving the use of online questionnaires to gather data from a large sample of Facebook users in Nigeria who were exposed to political advertising during the 2023 general elections. As of May 2023, there were nearly 41.6 million Facebook users in Nigeria, accounting for 18.5 percent of the population in the country (Statista.com, 2023). The questionnaire was designed to capture information on the frequency of exposure to political advertising, the type of political advertising seen, the level of engagement with the advertising, and the perceived impact of the advertising on voting behaviour. The qualitative data collection methods involve the use of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with a smaller sample of Facebook users in Nigeria who were also exposed to political advertising during the 2023 general elections. The focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were designed to capture information on the users' perceptions of the political advertising, the level of trust in the advertising, the perceived credibility of the advertising, and the perceived impact of the advertising on voting behaviour.

Overall, this research approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the role of Facebook as a tool for political marketing in a democratic context during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The study provides insights into the effectiveness of political advertising on Facebook, the level of trust in the advertising, and the impact of the advertising on voting behaviour.

Data Presentation

Table 1: *How often did you see political ads on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?*

Options	N	%
Never	1	0.3%

Rarely	2	0.5%
Sometimes	115	29.6%
Often	144	37.2%
Very often	126	32.4%
Total	388	100%

Source: *online survey 2023*

Table 1 shows the frequency with which respondents saw political ads on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The table indicates that out of the 388 respondents, 1 person (0.3%) never saw political ads on Facebook, 2 people (0.5%) saw them rarely, 115 people (29.6%) saw them sometimes, 144 people (37.2%) saw them often, and 126 people (32.4%) saw them very often.

Table 2: *How effective do you think Facebook was as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?*

Options	N	%
Not effective at all	2	0.5%
Slightly effective	14	3.6%
Moderately effective	86	22.2%
Very effective	136	35.1%
Extremely effective	150	38.6%
Total	388	100%

Source: *online survey 2023*

Table 2 shows the results of a survey on the effectiveness of Facebook as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The survey asked respondents to rate the effectiveness of Facebook on a scale from "not effective at all" to "extremely effective." Out of the 388 respondents, the majority (38.6%) rated Facebook as "extremely effective," followed by "very effective" (35.1%), "moderately effective" (22.2%), "slightly effective" (3.6%), and "not effective at all" (0.5%).

Table 3: *What types of political ads did you see on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?*

Options	N	%
Text-based ads	75	19.3%
Image-based ads	77	19.8%
Video-based ads	75	19.3%
Sponsored posts	78	20.2%

All of the above	83	21.4%
Total	388	100%

Source: online survey 2023

Table 3 presents the types of political ads seen on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The table shows that the majority of respondents saw sponsored posts (20.2%), followed by image-based ads and video-based ads (both at 19.8% and 19.3%, respectively), and text-based ads (19.3%). Additionally, 21.4% of respondents saw all of the above types of ads. The table shows that a total of 388 respondents participated in the survey.

Table 4: *How often did you see political ads on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?*

Options	N	%
Never	0	0%
Rarely	7	1.8%
Sometimes	69	17.8%
Often	140	36.1%
Very often	172	44.3%
Total	388	100%

Source: online survey 2023

Table 4 shows the frequency with which respondents saw political ads on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The table includes five options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Very often, along with the number and percentage of respondents who selected each option. A total of 388 respondents were included in the survey. According to the table, the majority of respondents (44.3%) reported seeing political ads on Facebook "Very often," while 36.1% reported seeing them "Often." A smaller percentage of respondents reported seeing political ads "Sometimes" (17.8%) or "Rarely" (1.8%), while none reported seeing them "Never."

Table 5: *Did you change your voting behaviour as a result of political ads you saw on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?*

Option	N	%
Yes	220	56.7%
No	146	37.6%
Cannot say	52	13.4%
Total	388	100%

Source: online survey 2023

Table 5 presents the results of a survey conducted during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, asking respondents whether they changed their voting behaviour as a result of political ads they saw on Facebook. The table shows that out of 388 respondents, 220 (56.7%) answered "Yes," indicating that they did change their voting behaviour based on the political ads they saw on Facebook. 146 (37.6%) respondents answered "No," indicating that they did not change their voting behaviour, while 52 (13.4%) respondents answered "Cannot say."

Table 6: *How did political ads on Facebook influence your voting behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?*

Options	N	%
Made me more likely to vote for a particular candidate	80	20.0%
Made me less likely to vote for a particular candidate	66	16.5%
Reinforced my existing voting preference	93	23.3%
Changed my voting preference entirely	81	20.3%
Did not influence my voting behaviour	68	20.0%
Total	388	100%

Source: *online survey 2023*

Table 6 shows the results of a survey on how political ads on Facebook influenced voting behavior during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The Table shows that out of the 388 respondents sampled, 80 (20.0%). Indicated that political ads on Facebook made them more likely to vote for a particular candidate, 66 (16.5%) said it made them less likely to vote for a particular candidate, 93 (23.3%) noted that the ads reinforced their existing voting preference, another 81 (20.3%) said the ads changed their voting preference entirely while the remaining 68 (20.0%) said political ads on Facebook did not influence their voting behaviour.

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and voting behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

Table 7: Correlation of the relationship between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and voting behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

		Exposure to political advertising on Facebook	Behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria
Exposure to political advertising on Facebook	Pearson Correlation	1	-.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.942

	N	388	388
Behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria	Pearson	-.004	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.942	
	N	388	388

Source: SPSS data 2023

The table shows the correlation between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The Table shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria is -0.004. The p-value associated with this correlation coefficient is 0.942, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. This means that there is no statistically significant correlation between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The null hypothesis states that there is no correlation between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, while the alternate hypothesis states that there is a significant correlation between the two variables. Based on the Pearson correlation coefficient and p-value in the table above, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant correlation between exposure to political advertising on Facebook and behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

H02: There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of different types of political advertising on Facebook and change in voting behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

Table 8: Correlation of the difference in the effectiveness of different types of political advertising on Facebook and change in voting behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

		Effectiveness of Facebook as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections	Behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria
Effectiveness of Facebook as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections	Pearson	1	-.013
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.800
	N	388	388

Behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria	Pearson	-.013	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.800	
	N	388	388

Source: SPSS data 2023

Table 8 shows the correlation between the effectiveness of Facebook as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections and behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The table reveals that the Pearson correlation coefficient between the two variables is -0.013, which is very close to 0. The p-value, which indicates the probability of obtaining a correlation coefficient as extreme as the one observed if the null hypothesis were true, is 0.800. This means that there is no significant correlation between the two variables, and the null hypothesis accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no evidence to suggest that the effectiveness of Facebook as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections is related to voters' behaviour during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

RQ1: How effective was Facebook as a tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?

According to Table 2 in, out of the 388 respondents surveyed, the majority (38.6%) rated Facebook as "extremely effective" for political marketing during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, followed by "very effective" (35.1%), "moderately effective" (22.2%), "slightly effective" (3.6%), and "not effective at all" (0.5%).

The table suggests that Facebook was a highly effective tool for political marketing during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, with a combined 73.7% of respondents rating it as "very" or "extremely" effective. This is consistent with the growing importance of social media in Nigerian politics, as noted in several of the search results (Nwokoma, 2023, Alayande, 2020 and Ibrahim, 2023). The high percentage of respondents who rated Facebook as "very" or "extremely" effective also suggests that political campaigns in Nigeria should continue to prioritize social media as a key platform for reaching voters. However, it is important to note that the survey only captures the opinions of a small sample of the population, and further research would be needed to confirm these findings.

RQ2: What types of political advertising were used on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria?

Table 3 in presents the types of political ads seen on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The table shows that the majority of respondents saw

sponsored posts (20.2%), followed by image-based ads and video-based ads (both at 19.8% and 19.3%, respectively), and text-based ads (19.3%).

The table provides valuable insights into the types of political ads that were prevalent on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The high percentage of sponsored posts indicates that political parties and candidates invested heavily in this type of advertising. The relatively equal distribution of image-based and video-based ads suggests that both types of ads were equally popular among political advertisers. The relatively low percentage of text-based ads could indicate that political advertisers are moving away from this type of advertising in favour of more visually appealing ads.

RQ3: What was the impact of Facebook political advertising on the voting behaviour of Nigerians during the 2023 general elections?

According to Table 5 in, out of the 388 respondents surveyed, 56.7% answered "Yes," indicating that they did change their voting behaviour based on the political ads they saw on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. This suggests that Facebook political advertising had a significant impact on the voting behaviour of Nigerians during the 2023 general elections.

The table provides insight into the potential impact of political ads on social media platforms like Facebook on voters' behaviour during elections. However, it is important to note that the survey was conducted during a time of heightened political tensions and an increase in fake news and misinformation on social media platforms in Nigeria (Salako,2023). Additionally, the table does not provide information on the specific types of political ads that respondents saw or the content of those ads, which could have influenced their voting behaviour. Overall, the table suggests that political ads on Facebook may have the potential to influence voters' behaviour during elections, but further research is needed to fully understand the impact of social media political advertising on voters.

Conclusion

The study examined the impact of political advertising on Facebook during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The results from the study suggest that Facebook is taking steps to combat misinformation and false news during the Nigerian elections. For example, Facebook has announced that it will not accept political advertisements from outside Nigeria ahead of the country's upcoming general elections (Odutayo& Adebayo, 2019). Additionally, Facebook is investing in people and technology to reduce the spread of misinformation and has launched a Nigeria-specific Elections Operations Centre to identify potential threats across its apps and technologies in real-time (Ikenze, 2023). Facebook is also working to make political ads more transparent and to launch an election operations centre to identify potential threats in real-time (Salako,2023 and Adepetun, 2022).

Despite these efforts, there has been an explosion of fake news across social media platforms, including Facebook, ahead of the Nigerian elections (Salako,2023). Experts and activists say political actors have expanded the scope of misinformation ahead of the general elections, and some candidates are accused of inciting hate speech and stoking inter-communal tensions, at risk of escalating violence in a country with a long history of electoral violence since its independence in 1960 (Election Watch, 2023).

The high frequency of political ads seen by respondents suggests that social media platforms like Facebook played a significant role in political campaigning during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. However, the results are consistent with the broader trend of increasing use of social media in political campaigning and the spread of misinformation and fake news on these platforms during elections in Nigeria (Salako,2023 and (Election Watch, 2023). The responses are indicative of the fact that political ads on Facebook had a significant impact on the voting behaviour of the respondents as the majority of the respondents reported that the ads either reinforced their existing voting preference or changed their voting preference entirely. This also indicates that political ads on Facebook can be a powerful tool for political campaigns to sway voters. Overall, the survey highlights the growing importance of social media in political campaigns and the need for regulation to ensure that political ads are not used to spread misinformation or manipulate voters.

Overall, the study provides important insights into the use of Facebook for political marketing and highlights the need for further research and regulation in this area.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1. **Increase Transparency Measures:** Facebook should continue to enhance its measures to increase transparency about political advertising during elections. This can include providing clear information about the source and funding of political ads, ensuring that users can easily access information about the ads they are exposed to, and implementing stricter verification processes for advertisers. These measures can help combat foreign interference, fake news, and propaganda in political advertising on the platform.
2. **Strengthen Regulation:** There is a need for stronger regulation to govern political advertising on social media platforms like Facebook. This can involve developing and enforcing guidelines that prevent the spread of misinformation and manipulation through political ads. Regulatory bodies should work closely with social media platforms to establish clear rules and standards for political advertising, ensuring that ads are accurate, fair, and do not unduly influence voters.

3. Conduct Further Research: The study highlights the importance of conducting more research in this area. Further studies can explore the effectiveness of different types of political advertising on Facebook, the impact of social media data on public opinion, and the challenges of regulating political advertising on social media. This ongoing research can provide valuable insights and inform the development of policies and strategies to address the evolving landscape of political marketing on social media platforms.

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PRISTINE UGHIEVWEN WORLDVIEW AND WESTERNIZATION - ADAPTATION AND CHANGE: A HISTORICAL INTERROGATION

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Abstract

In different climes of the world, people hold views about their society and the environment they find themselves. The Ughievwen group of Western Delta, Nigeria has its idea about the world in which it lives. Unfortunately, it appears that most aspect of the Ughievwen people's culture and their worldviews have suffered from the impact of westernization. This study examines how the Ughievwen culture has fared amidst influences from westernization. It shows the sources of Ughievwen worldview and their acclaimed modus operandi in Urhobo society. Hitherto, Ughievwen worldview was seen as similar to nations like Egypt, Greece, Babylon and Rome essentially due to the acclaimed historical links. The study relies on primary and secondary data that were sourced and evaluated using the historical method of investigation. The study finds that the resilience of the Ughievwen worldview made it easily adaptable to the changes occasioned by the intrusion of westernization.

Keywords: Pristine, Ughievwen worldview, Westernisation, Adaptation and change.

Introduction

The Ughievwen people of western Delta, Nigeria like other Africans have strong views and ideas about the world. These views and ideas came from experiences and observations made in their everyday life. For instance, based on their observations of different things like the sky above with stars, moon, sun and meteorites, with its cloud, rain, rainbow and movement of the winds, the earth under them with different life form, animals, insects and plants, rivers, lakes, limitation of man's power and knowledge,¹ the ephemeral nature of human life, etc., they made reflections about the world around them. These reflections have been accumulated to form their worldviews.² The implication of this is that every mortal will always form some views about life and the world around him or her. These reflections would always spread among people, some will be through intercourse, discussions, artistic expression or other means, but after such reflections, they are either abandoned,

modified or translated into practical realities.³ In the process, definite views and systems of thought started to emerge and hence it became a continuous process in which there could be no end.

Essentially, the emerging worldviews became so important in the life of the Ughievwen people to the point that, all facets of their life was based on it. It was thus, the basic governing principle in the polity, economy, religious and social aspects of the peoples' lives. Things began to change with the arrival of western culture. In spite of this change, it is important to state that a substantial aspect of Ughievwen culture have not responded to European Western culture, but through adaptation with remarkable resilience.⁴ A good example of this as would be seen later was the return of female corpses to their paternal homes.

This study focused on the changes in the Ughievwen worldview and adaptation of certain aspect of it to westernisation. This will be done by an examination of various forms in which it still exists. The points of convergence of the two cultures as well as areas of differences shall be explored. Above all, the study revealed a major feature of the Ughievwen culture that is common to different centres of world civilisation such as Egypt, Greece, Babylon and Rome. For example, just as the Romans had Juno as the goddess of marriage, Jupiter as the god sky, Mars as the god of war, Venus as the goddess of love among others,⁵ so were the Ughievwen gods (*edjo*) in charge of different aspects of life. For instance, to the Ughievwen people, *Ogba-Urhie* is the god that protected and guarded them to and on arrival in their present abode, *Igbun-Otor* and *Igun-eshovwi* assisted during times of war. Sacrifices that were offered to these gods were based on religion alone, because they "were meant to ensure that the favour of the gods were courted in their different areas of control."⁶ It is important to point out that worldview as used in this study is not peculiar to the Ughievwen people only. They are common place in the various Nigerian and West African societies, but limiting the work to the Ughievwen cosmogony is for convenience and above all indepth analysis.

The Ughievwen People and their Early History

The Ughievwen people are found in Ughelli South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. The sub-cultural area,⁷ has its administrative headquarters at Otujeremi.⁸ The territory is bounded on the South and South-East by the Okpare or Ekiagbodo Creek, on the West by Gbekebo Creek, on the North and North-West by Saba Creek in Udu Local Government Area of Delta State; on the North-East by Agharho clan and on the East by Ughelli clan.⁹ The area is contiguous land mass generally plain and low-lying land of about six meters above sea level with an intricate water network of meandering creeks, interconnected rivulets and a tidal river, with the River Forcados as the major body of water.¹⁰ The area lies wholly in the tropics and could be located roughly at 5,12N and 5,80E. The area occupies about 279 square kilometre.¹¹ The 2006 national population census (provisional

figure) puts the population of Ughelli South at 213,576 while the population of Delta State was put at 5,663,400.¹² This figure may have increased over the years.

Traditions of origin of Ughievwen clan indicate movement from four directions,¹³ - exodus from Egypt, Benin, the Niger/Benue Confluence Area and Bayelsa. A recent study applying the mean length reign approach on a fairly mean length of reign of thirty years has shown that the Ughievwen people, in the absence of any archaeological report on that part of the Niger-Delta, could have arrived their settlement from the beginning of the 18th century.¹⁴

Upon settlement on what is today Ughievwen land, the people evolved their own form of government. It was one “that evolved from kinship to kingship system of government (monarchy)”.¹⁵ The basic features of the kinship structure were: the family, lineage or kindred, the village and Age-grades. The largest unit was the *AwhareOvworho* (Peoples Assembly) which was a meeting of all adult males of the village such meetings were held at the residence of the eldest person (*OkpakoOrere*). The population of attendance at such meetings depended on the degree of public interest in the matters that were to be discussed.¹⁶ Inputs of the younger members of the village were also recognised. This group was known as *Uvwie*. Young women also played their role in kinship arrangement. There were two groups - daughters of the village known as *OtuEmete* and the married women of the village called *Ewheya*. These women association participated in law-making and settlement of disputes among their members.¹⁷

However, the abolition of the trade in slaves in the early part of the nineteenth century and trade in palm oil altered the political system from kinship to kingship (monarchy). Even though controversy exists as to who started the monarchical system in Ughievwen land, oral accounts and a recent study on the kingship institution affirmed that there was no king before Musumo.¹⁸ As argued by this writer,¹⁹ elsewhere the existence of an ‘Ovie’ (king) before the coming of the British was doubtful until Musumo made his journey to Benin and this appeared sustained by the intelligence report of 1932 that painted this picture “... until the arrival of government”.²⁰ What was certain in all is the fact that, there was a monarchical system that was a transition from the kinship structure which the people had initially when they arrived their present abode.

By the second half of twentieth century, the whole of Ughievwen land and indeed Urhoboland came under the control of the British. The latter’s conquest of the area titled the mode of transformation that hitherto, was on-going in favour of western influences which up till date has continued to shape the lives of the people. Before the eventual conquest of the Urhobo area by the British, protection treaties had been signed with Urhobo chiefs. Salubi states that “by 1894 not less than fourteen of such treaties had been entered into”.²¹

As argued by him, the signing of these treaties meant that the protectorate Government did not wait for the enactment of an order-in-council before penetrating into the hinterland of what was hitherto, a virtual sea-coast protectorate.²² By 1886, Ughievwen clan was part of the area controlled by the Itsekiri and was proclaimed part of Lagos protectorate. The clan was placed under control of political agents. In 1900, one Eyube became the Vice-Resident of the Native Court opened at Okpare.²³ The northern part of Ughievwen clan, namely: Orhowe, Owawha and Ukpédi sub-clan were under the control of Okpare but in 1905, Uvburie sub-clan came under the control of the native court that was extended to Erhuwaren and Otokutu.²⁴ While the court at Okpare served the village groups of Orhowe, Owawha and Ukpédi, the villages of the Uvburie group, with the exception of Ejorofe which attended Okpare, others were under the control of Erhuwaren and Otokutu native courts.²⁵ It is important to add that though the Ughievwen people resisted British incursion,²⁶ it was rather passive. The Ughievwen people like other Africans, were opposed to British incursion and were determined to retain their sovereignty and independence but could not withstand the superior weapons of the British. Whatever unity of action that could have been mustered was worsened by the fact that internal strifes had made the “ovie” stool vacant and therefore, rendered a unified resistance almost impossible.

The Ughievwen people Worldviews

Basically, many ideas about the world have emerged among the Ughievwen people. Although examining all in detail may not be possible in this study, it should be borne in mind that the media of expression of these views include: myths, legends, proverbs, symbols, rituals and wise-sayings.²⁷ Yet, there is no formal view of the universe but as the different ideas are harnessed, a clearer view emerges. Just as was the case with the Yorubas of South-Western Nigeria where it is believed that “the universe is pervaded with mysteries which people try to find explanation for and in the process they end up forming ideas about the world”,²⁸ the Ughievwen people are no exception. The Ughievwen in their views agree with other Africans that the universe was created by *Osonobruwhe* which connote “one who contains all the complexities of the world”. This Supreme Being was believed to be everywhere, and he had his seat in the Heavenly places. For this reason, they also call the Supreme Being *Orovwakpor*—“the owner of the sky”.²⁹ Surprisingly, this view of the Supreme Being is perverted by Western scholars to be “high gods” to differentiate God as conceived by Africans from their God of the Holy Bible. R.E. Bradbury for instance, said that “the Urhobo worship a high god, Oghene, who is the creator of the world and of life and death”.³⁰ The claim about ‘high god’ is essentially borne out of ignorance because “... all races and people are capable of experiencing God’s self-revelation but the difference is that the response to this self-disclosure varies from locality to locality in accordance with the intellectual and spiritual abilities of the people”.³¹

The Ughievwen people conceived the universe as “having two divisions, the physical (*Akpor*) and the metaphysical (*erinmwin*)”. Sacrifice was a “major means through which the spiritual entity (*erinmwin*) visited the world (the physical, *Akpor*) and through which natural beings connected with the spiritual world”.³² This was necessary because man needed to offer sacrifices in order to continue to enjoy support and blessings of the Spiritual world (*erinmwin*). When persons died, they were believed to join the spiritual world. Thus, the dead who formed the spiritual world together with the divinities (*edjo*) were believed to be important as the living in the society. The actions and reactions of the dead and the living therefore, constituted the general determinant of the state of being of generations to come. As a result of this belief, the Ughievwen people “usually sought the consent of the spiritual beings (divinities and ancestors) on important issues through divination (*epha*)”.³³ However, in Ughievwen cosmology, whatever happened to an individual or society, whether boom or doom was attributed to either the blessings or punishment of the divinities and ancestors (*erinmwin*).³⁴

As the Ughievwen people expressed views about the world, they also held views about many other things in the world. For example, they believed that apart from the human physical head, there was an inner head (*erhi*) that determined and sanctioned man’s life.³⁵ *Erhi* (the invisible head or one’s star or destiny) was thus, the essence of luck and most important force responsible for human success or failure. This *erhi* was also believed to be individual’s personal divinity that governed his/her life and communicates on people’s behalf with divinities; but whatever that was not sanctioned by a person’s *erhi* could not be approved by the divinities.³⁶

Closely linked to the aforesaid was the Ughievwen people’s belief that there was a thin line that separated the dead from the living.³⁷ This was because at death, the deceased lived in the spiritual abode. Death was categorised and the type of burial system given to the dead depended on the nature of death.³⁸ Generally, males and females were accorded burial rites. However, for the Ughievwen people, unlike the Mbama people of present day Imo state of Nigeria,³⁹ the corpse of Ughievwen females must be returned to the paternal home.⁴⁰ Additionally, at death the property of persons who were banished from the community was not allowed into the community. The corpse of such persons was buried in the area where they lived during the period of banishment.

However, where a person died as a youth, the deceased was buried in the community under sorrowful atmosphere without pomp.⁴¹ In such case, the corpse was wrapped with mat (*evwerhe*) and buried around the family compound but not inside the house.⁴²

Persons who lived up to eighty years and above were considered to have had good departure from this world. They were expected to have had children that could

sustain themselves and grandchildren (*ivromon*). All of these was a mark of pride to the family. It was particularly the case if the deceased built a house (*Uwevwwin*) before death. This point is abundantly emphasised by WeresoOrogun when he said:

... among the Urhobo such a country home (a house) serves a dual purpose. The first and more obvious purpose is that of providing decent housing accommodation. The other but less often expressed purpose is that it provides a distinguished burial space for the owner. In this sense our villages have huge burial grounds for people by cheerful undertakers whose duty is to receive the migrant at the end of his days.⁴³

Thus, Ughievwen cosmology not only emphasised belief in a Supreme Being, there was relationship between the dead and the living and at death, the journey of life continued. Marriage was only a temporal union between couples. At death, each person must go back to his or her paternity, hence female corpse up till date must be returned to their paternal source. Like the Yorubas of South-Western Nigeria, the world was seen as a place “where people come to trade and leave for heaven which is the home of everybody”.⁴⁴

The Dynamics of Westernisation

Every mortal always had some ideas about life and the world in which he or she lives. Such ideas also existed among the Europeans. For instance, the Romans, the biblical Jews and the pre-biblical Greeks, like the Ughievwen people of western Delta, Nigeria, believed that the universe was of two divisions;- the natural and the supernatural realms. They also held the view “that plant and animals populate the natural world, so the gods populated the supernatural realm of the universe”.⁴⁵ These gods were also believed to be in charge of one aspect of peoples’ life or the other.⁴⁶

For instance, Greek’s Zeus (Jupiter) and the Roman’s Jupiter were believed to be father of all the gods, and the gods of the sky, the Greek’s Hera and the Roman’s Juno were the goddesses of marriage and wife of Zeus, the Greek’s Athena and the Roman’s Minerva were the goddesses of wisdom, Greek’s Poseidon and the Roman’s Neptune were the gods of the Sea, Greek’s Pluto (Hades) and the Roman’s Pluto (Dis) were the gods of the lower world, Apollo was the Greek’s and Roman’s god of the Sun, Greek’s Artemia and the Roman’s Diana were the goddesses of hunting, Greek’s Ares and Romans Mars were the gods of War, Greek’s Hermes and Roman’s Mercury were the messengers of the gods, Greek’s Aphrodite and Roman’s Venus were the goddesses of Love, Greek’s Dionysus and Roman’s Bacchus were both gods of wine.⁴⁷ For the Jews, it was believed that Yahweh is the only god who is always in charge of all aspects of their lives.⁴⁸ Even the prophets (Rabbis) served as intermediaries between man and Yahweh.

The advent of natural science and its inventions came to challenge the gods hitherto, believed to be in charge of people's affairs. This was the Renaissance or rebirth of learning in which the old beliefs were now questioned.⁴⁹ Despite the fact that the scholars that championed this movement had tough times with the medieval authority, their persistence and determination laid the bastion for what is today, known as Western civilisation or westernisation. Worthy of note were scholars like Franciscan Friar, Roger Bacon, Galileo, Nicholas Copernicus, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo among others.⁵⁰

Thus, by the time the civilisation that had its foundations in the Renaissance arrived Africa and Ughievwenland in particular, it had reached an advanced level. The civilisation questioned the old beliefs of the Ughievwen people as it did to the Europeans medieval views. Unfortunately, scientific ideas, inventions and principles proved most of the old beliefs wrong. For instance, knowledge of the natural sciences and environment made it clear that low productivity of crops could be as a result of poor soils, the nature of weather and the type of seedlings used etc., rather than ascribe it to the evil activities of a god or goddess. Scientific innovations like the application of fertilizers, use of technological instruments like tractors over the years, as part of western civilisation has assisted in improving production and standard of living of the people. Also, with the introduction of European system of healthcare, there was disillusionment about the belief that the gods or ancestors were responsible for ailments like deformities and certain diseases⁵¹ since these could be cured with the European healthcare, sacrifices to gods or ancestors was no longer necessary.

It is important to note that both indigenous Ughievwen culture and westernisation agree on some points. In areas of differences, changes occurred. For example, while the western culture agreed with Ughievwen cosmology that the world was created, the biblical story of creation as recorded in the Old Testament does not *hook, line and sinker* agree with the Ughievwen tradition of creation.⁵² The Ughievwen peoples' belief that different gods or deities were in charge of different aspects of their lives has been proved wrong. Rather, angels were claimed to be messengers of the almighty God, consequently, sacrifices to the deities in the nature of food, libation and other materials were condemned and instead, sacrifice according to Christian teaching should be in the form of prayers, thanksgiving and oneself as a living sacrifice.

Another major point between westernisation and Ughievwen peoples' cosmology was the fact that the former did not subscribe to the spirited sources of ailments. To westernisation, illness or any ailment was not the machination of any god or deities/anti-god. The only anti-god in the universe according to Christian doctrine was Satan. This Satan was not to be appeased as in the case of the Ughievwenbelief,

but prayers must be made against him. According to the Christian religion (symbolising westernisation) the antidote against Satan include; belief in God, confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and calling the name of Jesus while praying against Satan.

The Resilience of Ughievwen Worldviews in Contemporary Times

British penetration and conquest of Ughievwen clan laid the foundation for Christian missionary activities in the clan.⁵³ Although the nineteenth century Nigeria, notes Ayandele, was a “fertile ground for Christian missions with the grandiose dream of sweeping through the country in matter of years, even before many of the pioneer missionaries set foot on the Nigerian soil, they had wished out of existence African traditional religion, which they expected to collapse Jericho-wise at the mere shouting of the gospel”.⁵⁴ S.U. Erivwo notes that at the turn of the 19th century, liberated slaves who returned from parts of Yorubaland, particularly the Owo area, first introduced Christianity to Ukwokori (Kokori) Ovu land, Eku and Avwra (Abraka).⁵⁵ Within or about the same period, the returnees “commenced worshipping in communities, one at Warri and the other at Sapele”.⁵⁶ These people came from different denominational backgrounds - Anglicans, Methodists, Prebyterians and Baptists.⁵⁷ However, it was James Johnson of the Anglican Church that was consecrated an Assistant Bishop in his old age in 1900⁵⁸. Within this period too, the Roman Catholic Mission had began to make in-roads into Urhoboland. Among its early converts were Uvietabore and Eyube whose mother was from Ekiugbo in Ughelli and whose father was from Gbogidi.⁵⁹ Through his effort, Catholicism was later introduced to Gbogidi and many Ughievwen towns, Ughelli and Ovwo in Olomu. Others were Daniel Sadjere, Enaohwo of Ovu, Peter Iwoh of Okurekpo and Obudu of Okwagbe.⁶⁰

With the advent of Christianity in Ughievwen land and the subsequent conversion of the people to Christian faith, most of the views of the Ughievwen people about the world suffered a serious decline. Many of the Ughievwen gods became unpopular as their adherents abandoned them and took the new faith with great enthusiasm. Thus, the new converts began to see the Almighty God as introduced by the western culture as the dispenser of all good things. Sacrifices and libations to the gods and ancestors became associated with heathen practice.

Yet, there existed areas of agreement between the cosmology of the Ughievwen people and that of western civilisation. This gave room for adaptation of the former to the latter. For example, although gods and ancestors ceased to be intermediaries between man and the Supreme God (*Osonobruwhe*) to the converts, the idea of supreme God was still in vogue, since it conformed to the western idea of Almighty God. This could be authenticated by the acceptance of the word Oghene as the translation of the European word “God”. The intermediary role of the Ughievwen

gods and ancestors is now being played by the reconciler, Jesus Christ through the shedding of his blood on the mount of cavalry and by virtue of his death and resurrection.⁶¹

Even after the attainment of political independence from the colonial master, Britain, the Ughievwen people, who are part of Nigeria have continued to believe and had consultations with church prophets which showed that their belief is chaotic and needs intervention is still strong. In politics too, the players also emphasise the intervention of the Almighty God as held in westernisation-all of which demonstrate the point that worldview is a practice that shows peoples' way of life and as such it is inseparable from the people.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion has shown that in some respects Ughievwen cosmology is similar to the western view from the onset. However, developments in the western world elicited difference. In spite of the differences, aspects of the Ughievwen peoples' worldview are still popular amidst challenges posed by westernisation. This essentially is attributable to the flexibility and adaptability of the Ughievwen peoples' worldview. The Ughievwen people are reputed to be sociable, hospitable and open to new ideas, beliefs and systems that are progressive and amendable to change. Life cannot be static. Change must come. The renowned historian, Phillippe Aries, on the need for change in human life once observed that if "there a permanent relationship between one's idea of death and one's idea of oneself, must we take for granted on one hand, contemporary man's recoil from the desire to exist, the universe of what occurred during the second Middle Ages, the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries? ... must we take for granted that it is impossible for our technological cultures ever to regain the naïve confidence in Destiny...."⁶² Any society that remains static will certainly risk extinction. There is always room for intermingling of culture and belief systems which ultimately leads to changes and adaptation, but caution be exercised in the process of imbibing alien cultures and beliefs of the Ughievwen identity is not to be completely lost.

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STRESS MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL IN THE WORKPLACE: PERCEPTION ON PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE IN AUCHI POLYTHENIC AUCHI

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between stress management and control in the workplace and personnel performance. The objective of the study was to explore the influence of efficiency, effectiveness, stress, management and control, workload, role ambiguity, role conflict and commitment on personnel performance in the workplace. The study analyzed the literature review, theoretical framework as, well as empirical studies by other authors from which conceptual framework was developed. The study was set to be informed by the role theory effect: Findings has it that stress management and control has a very robust influence on the overall performance of personnel in the workplace. We therefore recommend that managers take necessary steps to help manage and control stress in the workplace. Stress is with us, it abide and live with us, and we cannot eliminate it totally if we must be productive, but then we must do everything to manage it so as not to get negatively affected by it.

Keywords: Stress Management and Control; Personnel Performance, Perception

Introduction

Today like never before, stress levels are increasing among workers in the workplace in geometric progression. Visits to the hospitals are also increasing, stress related ailments are shooting out like rockets. Though, to large extent, experiencing some amount of stress in our lives is proactive and adaptive, in this case our responses to stress helps our minds and bodies to prepare for different challenges and to react appropriately in a time crises. In fact, certain amount of stress is necessary for performance, stress add flavor, challenges and opportunities to life. Actually without stress, life could become very dull and unexciting. Also, stress could get to a level that it might become adverse to life, environment, productivity and the system.

As a manager, the first responsibility is to become effective. The second is to maintain that effectiveness, in the maintenance of managerial effectiveness, stress is an increasingly significant threat. This is not new to the manager, but there are at

least three reasons for a new and enlightened concern. First, over the years, the nature of disease and disorder has changed, chronic diseases are now the principal contributors to morbidity and mortality and each day new evidence reveals the relationship of stress to chronic disease. Second reason is the issue of change and adoption. An organization must respond continuously to a changing environment. They adjust, adopt, attempt to find new structures and new policies to meet changing constraints and opportunities, the need to adopt induces stress, and when organizations are under stress, managers are stressed. The third factor is what management jobs have become more complex - more difficult because, because of global changes. Such changes include the following; (1) The coming of the horizontal society; (2) The building of what is public and private; (3) The need for systems thinking, system action.

These and other changes forebode more uncertainty and ambiguity in the future. They also require adjustment and adaptation, with resultant stress. For managers and organization, the issue of stress has many dimensions. The most obvious is simply health and longevity. The personal tragedy in premature death is obvious. Corporate loss is also significant. Many managers, having just risen to the point of assuming key positions, die of coronary heart disease. Thus, the bench strength dies on the brink of making its most significant contributions, an organization must learn to nurture and be vigilant of such valuable resources. They must respond to stress-related issues, should managers have annual medical check-ups? Do you know what they should know about alcoholism, nutrition, exercise and stress? Do they know how to survive in this time of our economic recession facing Nigeria?

The effect of stress on the performance of the employee's job is one of the biggest problems facing us now, and this occurs in our everyday society. To the organization, employees are the most workforce that is working longer hours, as the rising levels of responsibilities requiring them to exert themselves, even more strenuously to meet rising expectations about job performance. In view of this fact, the style and level of the competition that we face had led to the level of stress faced by employees. Most employees who work in the city and live outside the city face a lot of stress from their home to place of work have compound stress because of traffic, Mostly in Port Harcourt where a lot of flyovers are being constructed. Among other factors are the financial crisis and economic recession facing Nigerians.

Most organization that is going through the issue of restructuring because of its efficiency and effectiveness in order to ultimately utilize the resources had created employee low performance, as such, result to stress, among other issues are layoffs, dismissing and mergers to maintain the organization position in the market place. According to O'Meara (2008) stress is described as the adverse psychological and physical reactions that occur in an individual as a result of their demands being made on them. More so, Swinepoles (1998) said that work related stress has been a topic

that has recurred increasing attention, in the area of occupational health, over last years.

One of the things that cause stress is the demand for employee growth, other factors could be traced to the interpersonal relationship and use of free time. Therefore, stress can be adverse psychological and physical reactions that occur in an individual as a result of his or her inability to cope with the demands required.

1.1 Stress Defined

Stress can be defined as our mental, physical, emotional, behavioural reaction to any perceived demand or threats be it at the workplace or at home. Stress is a reaction of the body in order to adapt to a difficult or dangerous situation. The two major types of stress are Distress and Eustress. Distress can be defined as the continuous experience or feelings of overwhelmed, oppressed and behind in your responsibility. It is the all encompassing sense of being imposed upon by the tunnel.

Examples of Distress: Financial difficulties; Conflicts in relationships; Excessive obligations; Managing chronic illness; Experiencing a trauma. Eustress can be defined as another form of stress that is positive or beneficial for productivity. Eustress helps to provide energy and motivation to meet up with responsibilities and achieve goals.

2. Conceptual Framework

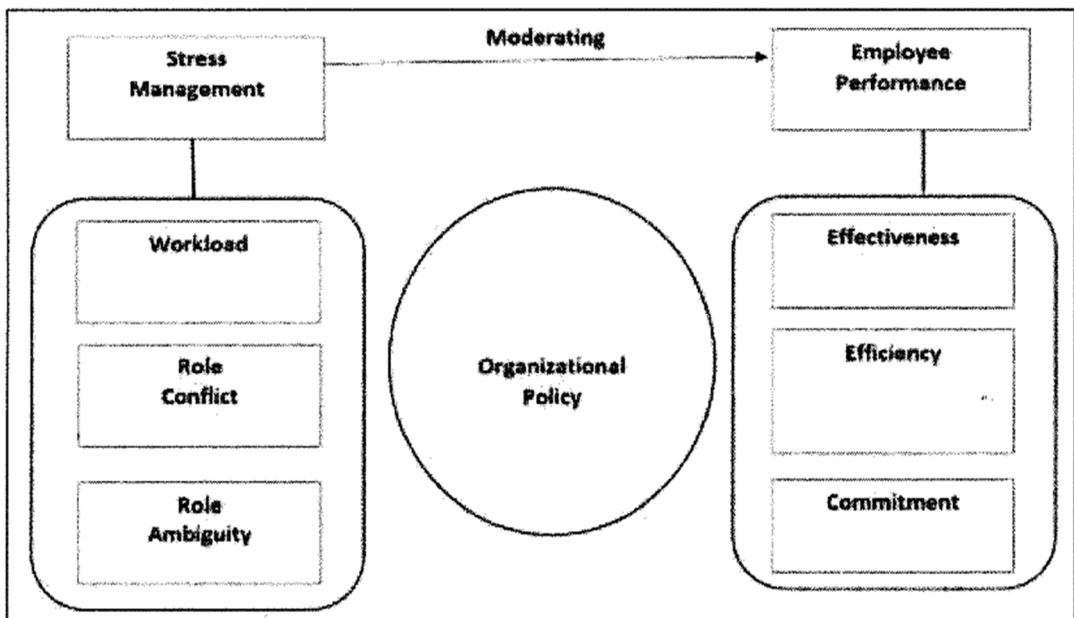


Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework on stress management and employee performance (Source: Developed by the researcher, 2019)

The conceptual framework has the dependent and independent variables, from this study, we have three of various dimensions of stress management and employee performance. In the literature that was adopted, these are workload, role conflict, role ambiguity. On the other hand, we have employee performance which include effectiveness, efficiency and commitment.

2.2 Aim and Objectives

The objective of this study is to look at the impact of stress management on personnel performance. In this time of the post-COVID-19 economic crises, most organizations fail to be social responsible and identify how important human resources are and ignore personnel. This causes a negative effect on performance.

- a) to determine the relationship between stress management and poyee performance;
- b) to determine the relationship between workload and effectiveness;
- c) to determine the relationship between role conflict and efficiency;
- d) to determine the relationship between role ambiguity and commitment.

2.3 Statement of Problem

One of the major challenges confronting managers in Nigeria is how to improve personnel performance. The performance of some personnel is very low and this has become so worrisome to managers in these organization. The poor performance of these organization could be traceable to the workforce. Hence this paper will examine the concept of personnel performance and its measure (effectiveness, efficiency and commitment and tries to examine the relationship between stress management and personnel performance.

2.4 Scope of the Study

Content-wise, the study focuses on stress management and personnel performance. It covers the key construct such as the dimensions of stress, management (workload, role conflict and role ambiguity) and measures of personnel performance (effectiveness, efficiency and commitment). The relationship between stress management and personnel performance as the main focus of the study.

3. Methodology

This study adopted the qualitative research approach where secondary data were used as the main source of data collection. The secondary data were collected from published materials such as textbooks, journals, articles, seminar papers and periodicals. The data collected from secondary sources were used to confirm and support the argument put forward in this paper, deductions were made from the theoretical and empirical review.

3.1 Conceptual Review

3.1.1 Concept of Stress Management

Stress management is a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of and for the motive of improving everyday functioning. Stress produces numerous physical and mental symptoms which vary according to each individual's situational factors. These can include a decline in physical health, such as headaches, chest pain, fatigue, and sleep problems, as well as depression. The process of stress management is named as one of the keys to a happy and successful life in modern society. Life often delivers numerous demands that can be difficult to handle, but stress management provides a number of ways to manage anxiety and maintain overall wellbeing.

In a Strategic International Leadership Development Manual, by 'The Management House Africa, (2014), in Dubai (UAE), was defined as our mental, physical, emotional behavioural reaction to any perceived demand or threats be it at the workplace or at home. It is seen as a reaction of the body in order to adapt to a difficult or dangerous situation.

Despite stress often being thought of as a subjective experience, levels of stress are readily measurable; using various physiological tests, similar to those used in polygraphs.

There are several models of stress management, each with distinctive explanations of mechanisms for controlling stress. Much more research is necessary to provide a better understanding of which mechanisms actually operate and are effective in practice.

3.1.2 Major Dimensions of Stress Management

Stress is not a decision how it is dealt within an organization is a choice. Workplace stress is the mental or emotional strain on an individual due to specific work circumstances, In the United States over 70% of workers consider their jobs to be stressful (Aamodt, 2016, p. 542). The causes of workplace stress vary from person to person. Different stresses include the amount of work given, the lack of time and resources to complete a task.

3.1.3 Workload

Workload is the amount of work an individual has to do. There is a distinction between the actual amount of work and the individual's perception of the workload. Workload can also be classified as quantitative (the amount of work to be done) or qualitative (the difficulty of the work).

The assessment of operator workload has a vital impact on the design of new human-machine systems. By evaluating operator workload during the design of a new system, or iteration of an existing system, problems such as workload bottlenecks and overload can be identified. As the human operator is a central part of a human-machine system, the correction of these problems is necessary for the operation of safe and efficient systems.

An operating budget may include estimates of the expected workload for a specific activity.

3.1.4 Role Lower Load

This is when a task of duties of the role are less than the level of individual capabilities which generates bored feelings or stress, tensions and fear, not lead their expected duties, and in the second they feel small work or lack of its importance, by so doing their job performance will be affected.

3.1.5 Role Conflict

According to Thao, & Rashid (2010) stated that role arises when more demands have been taken place upon the individual by the peers, supervisors and subordinates. This type of stress is seen in the jobs which have a lack of descriptions or unclear descriptions and it requires conceptual thinking and decision making.

Perrewé, Rosen, & Maslach (2012) states that role conflict refers to incompatible requirements and expectations that the employee receives from their supervisor or coworker. Amadi, whom an individual must interact hold conflicting expectations about that individual's behaviour.

3.1.6 Role Ambiguity

Malik, N. (2011) stated that the employees became ambivalent to predict their supervisor's reactions to their tasks as "*success*" or as "*failure*" (Karasek, Karimi, & Alipour, 2000). Beehr & Bhagat (1992) stated that role ambiguity is another factor that leads to job stress. This occurs in a situation where expectations, responsibilities and objectives, have not been clearly designed by the employer to the employee.

3.2 Concept of Personnel Performance

Employee performance is the ability to achieve the set objectives within the required timelines and parameters (Yusuf, Muhammed, & Kazeem, 2014). Having regards to employee performance. Sundi (2013) proposed five primary criteria that could be used to measure performance, example: work quality, individual relationship, timeliness and work independence.

A lot of researchers focused on the relationship linking job performance and satisfaction in the area of organizational psychology and found out that the employee's performance depended on employee's satisfaction. This indicated that great employee performance can be achieved by a high level of job satisfaction. Yahaya, Yahaya, Tamyas, Ismail, & Jaalam (2010) concluded that for the employees to remain motivated as well as to boost their jobs satisfaction, the employers should provide a good environment.

3.3 Dimensions of Personnel Performance

Employee performance can be measured using various criteria. For instance (Ashley, 2019) measuring employee performance using effectiveness. Ogboso & Amah (2002) using efficiency, Bronwyn (2018) and commitment Buchanan (1974).

3.3.1 Personnel Performance

Personnel performance refers to how their workers behave in the workplace and how well they perform the job duties you have obligated to them. Companies typically set, performance targets for individual employees and the company as a whole in hopes that your business offers good value to customers to minimize waste and operate efficiently (Ashley, 2002).

3.3.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the capability of producing a desired result or the ability to produce desired output. When something is deemed effective, it means it has an intended or expected outcome, or produces a deep, vivid impression.

Ogboso and Amah (2014), described organizational effectiveness as an elusive one that there is no single way of defining it. It may be as a result of the numerous benchmarks used by different scholars.

Efficacy, efficiency, and effectivity are terms that can, in some cases, be interchangeable with the term effectiveness. The word effective is sometimes used in a quantitative way, "being very effective or not very effective". However, neither effectiveness, nor effectively, inform about the direction (positive or negative) and the comparison to a standard of the given effect. Efficacy, on the other hand, is the extent to which a desired effect is achieved the ability to produce a desired amount of the desired effect, or the success in achieving a given goal. Contrary to the term efficiency, the focus of efficacy is the achievement as such, not the resources spent in achieving the desired effect. Therefore, at is effective is not necessarily efficacious, and what is efficacious is not necessarily efficient.

Other synonyms for effectiveness include: clout, capability, success, weight, performance.

Simply stated, effective means achieving an effect, and efficient means getting a task or job done it with little waste. To illustrate: suppose, you build 10 houses, very fast and cheap (efficient), but no one buy them, In contrary to building 5 houses same budget and time as 10 houses but you get all 5 sold and the buyers are happy (effective). You get the desired result selling your houses and happy customers (effect).

3.3.3 Efficiency

Efficiency is the often measurable ability to avoid wasting materials, energy, efforts, money, and time doing something or in producing a desired result. In a more general sense, it is the ability to do things well, successfully, and without waste. As defined by Deborah Stone, efficiency is “thus not a goal in itself. It is not something we want for its own sake, but rather because it helps us attain more of the things we value”.

In more mathematical or scientific terms, it signifies the level of performance that uses that hast amount of inputs to achieve the highest amount of output. It often specifically comprises the capability of a specific application of efforts to produce a specific outcome with a minimum amount of quantity of waste, expense, or unnecessary effort. Efficiency refers to very different inputs and outputs in different fields and industries. In 2019, the European Commission said; “Resource efficiency means using Earth is limited resources in a sustainable manner while minimizing impacts on environment”. It allows us to create more with less and to deliver greater value with less input.

According to Khattak (2011) stated that stress puts drastic effects on the employee. Employees in stress cannot meet the expectation of their organization. Because of facing physical, psychological and organizational burnouts (Ishmael, & Hong, 2011). Describe that employees in a service organization are subjected to a high degree of work-related stress, which is the major reasons for employee’s poor performance at the job. Job stress affects negatively on the female employee’s well-being which creates dissatisfaction and negative emotions towards work and ultimately their performance decreases.

3.3.4 Commitment

Meyer, Stanley, &Parfyonova (2012), described commitment in the part of a personnel in a workplace using a multi-dimensional approach and consider it to have effective, continuance commitment denotes the perceived cost of leaving an organization; and normative commitment refers to the felt responsibility to support and remain a manner of an organization.

Thus it can be discerned from the description above, that personnel commitment is a bond between the personnel and the organisation such that he/she (the employee) wants to continue serving the organization and help it achieve its objectives.

4. Operational Framework

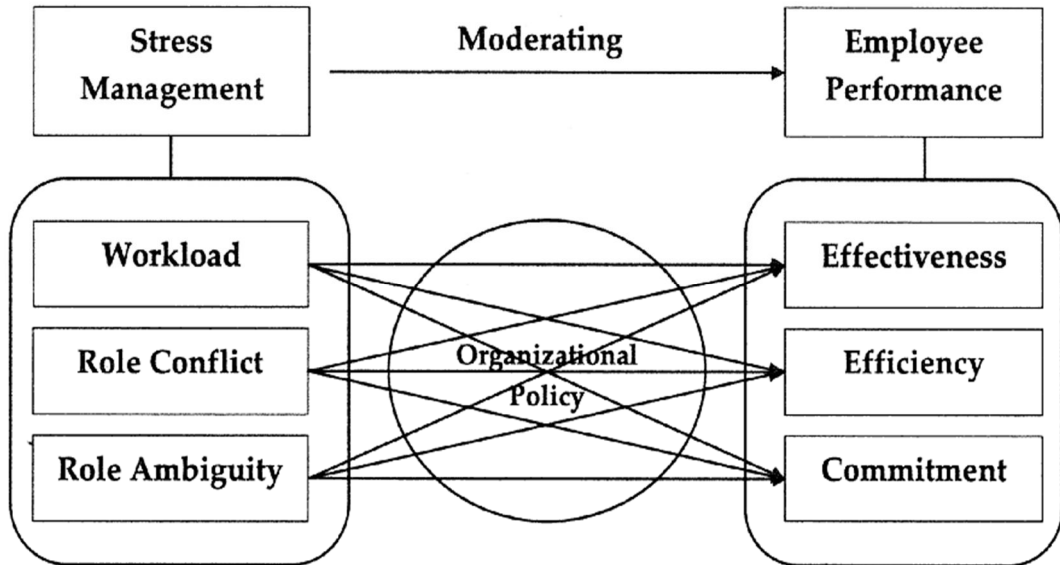


Figure 2: Operational Framework of the relationship between stress management and employee performance (Source: Desk Research, 2019)

4.1 Workload and Effectiveness

Managing workload is a major path to increased performance/productivity. The smart organization thus always look for things to effectively manage workload and improve performance. An effective workload management strategy helps in determining priorities, calculate the degree of urgency, the usage of guidelines and procedures, attend to the risk of inaction, reduce stress and augment of a healthy work-life balance.

4.2 Workload and Efficiency

Organization face a trade-off between high utilization and responsiveness. High utilization can improve financial performance but causes congestion, which increases throughout time. Employees may manage this trade-off by reducing processing times during periods of high workload, resulting in an inverted U-shaped. The organization should follow a strong planning process and calculate accurate estimation by keeping all strength and weaknesses in mind. A successful plan based on current fact and future estimation gives the management of beforehand edge in deciding the work distribution. Moreover, it prepares them for any unwanted circumstance. Therefore,

the workload distribution on the ground of a solid plan helps both the managers and employee to assign and execute tasks efficiently.

4.3 Workload and Commitment

There has been an established fact that there is a link between workload and workers commitment. In fact, Dewe (1992) reported that workload is frequently one of the most stressful aspects of the workplace. One of the antecedents to emotional exhaustion and tedium identified by researchers is workload (Moore & Fuhrer, 1995).

4.3 Role Ambiguity and Effectiveness

Classical role theory (Kahn et al., 1964) defined role ambiguity as to the lack of information available to perform one's responsibilities effectively. More recently, researchers (Yun, Takeuchi, Marginson, 2006) have found role ambiguity to be associated with a lack of information on goals, a condition in which the job is to be performed, responsibilities and duties to perform one's job effectively. Bray, & Whaley, (2001) found that an individual's belief in his or her capabilities to perform effectively in a role influence employee performance effectiveness.

4.4 Role Ambiguity and Efficiency

As a major element in the social learning theory of Bandura (1977) efficiency refers to the belief in somebody competent to perform a specific task. Researches have contended that reducing efficiency may induce job relation strain (Brief and Aday, 1981; Stumpt, Kahn, & Long, 1987), argued that a larger number of individuals that believes their performances are uncontrollable, that is high role ambiguity imply a lower efficiency among them. Bray (1998) also suggested that role ambiguity may be negatively related to efficiency for the following reasons (Li and Bagger, 2008) first, role ambiguity diminishes the quality of the information available to evaluate correctly an individual's ability to perform a task. Secondly, according to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), achieving a high level of efficiency requires that an individual can visualize one's performance, ultimately reading one's confidence in their ability to perform effectively. Clearly, role ambiguity may negatively affect an employee's self-efficiency.

4.5 Role Ambiguity and Commitment

In an organization newcomers who receive fewer programs experience a higher level of role ambiguity are statistically predictor of commitment. And those who have this are likely to be less committed to the organization. Most recent empirical research found that role ambiguity is related to employee attitudes such as job satisfaction and commitment (Bettencourt and Brown, 2003; Harris, Artis, Walters, & Licata, 2006).

When encountering role ambiguity, employees need to find out ways to deal with these stressors and ensure their in-role performance. Their attitude will change to consider their own interest rather than serving the best interest of their organization. To be more specific employee encountering role ambiguity will experience dissonance, and such uncomfortable feelings, inspire negative reciprocity. Thus, employee decreases their commitment to the organization.

4.6 Role Conflict and Effectiveness

Kahn, & Wolfe (1978) reported that the effect of role conflict include low job satisfaction, high level of tensions and ineffectiveness, House, & Rizzo (1972) added reduced organizational effectiveness and increased tendency to quit to list of negative sideeffects of role conflict Schwab, & Iwanicki (1982) found that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization linked role conflict and burnout, The level of stress arising from role conflict has a significant influence on the effectiveness with which some employee manages their job activities, Multiple roles performed by some employee result to the conflict which may be stressful for them and this may be stressful for them and this may affect the way they control things in an organization.

4.7 Role Conflict and Efficiency

Concerning role conflict specifically, the greater the role conflict among the employee in an organization, the less efficient is the organization and the less satisfied are those working in it. Role conflict that is both an integral part of the work environment and a real phenomenon related to people who work in the same work environment on a daily basis. The importance of role conflict allows their detection and deepening of knowledge of their origins, as sources of job satisfaction and consequently as important factors leading to poor productivity and low performance of an organization. It would be constructive for the managers to introduce organizational interventions covering all the employees, adopting a team-oriented approach, designed to reduce ways of managing things.

4.8 Role Conflict and Commitment

When an employee faces role conflict, their level of commitment towards the organization will be reduced. (Judah, & Hwang, (2011). observed that indeed role conflict have a significant negative relationship towards affective and continuance commitment. It can be said that employers do not show respect, nor understanding the ideas, opinion, views of employees forced them to be in the role conflict. However, role conflict, always leads to absenteeism, turnover and lower productivity, producing a poor quality of products, job dissatisfaction and negative employee performance.

Apart from the above explanations, what most prominent situation of role conflict is two or more expectation contradicted at a time as a result of inadequate defensive and supportive communication climate.

5. Theoretical Review

5.1 The Role Theory Effect

In order to fulfill expected service, most western economics have undergone major organizational restructuring and redefinition of professional rules (Briggs, 1997). One of the basic premises of the role theory is that various job roles that individuals engage in may be stressed regardless of their actual occupation, suggesting that stress found in various work roles may be stressful for all workers.

Osipow, and Spokane (1987) described six work roles that they felt were stressful regardless of an individual's actual vocation, these six roles are:

- a) Role ambiguity;
- b) Role insufficiency;
- c) Role overload;
- d) Role boundary;
- e) Role responsibility, and
- f) Physical environment. (Osipow, & Spokane, 1987).

Imtiaz, &Abmad (2009) carried research on the impact of stress on employee performance and identified the factors affecting stress as personal issue, lack of administrator support, lack of acceptance for work done, low span over the work environment, unpredictability in work environment and inadequate monetary reward.

Bewell, Yakubu, Owotunse, &Ojih, (2014) examined work4nduced stress and its relationship to organizational effectiveness and performance are relatively inseparable and challenged the various organization in Nigeria to employ the service of organizational and clinical psychologists to help in providing stress coping skill, coaching and counseling to employees as it will help to boost various organization in Nigeria.

Manzoor (2012) carried out a research investigating the impact of work stress on job performance through a case study on textile sector of Faisalabad and their results showed that the stress levels among employees in textile sector of Faisalabad is high in certain areas like work overload and long work hours, effect on family life, pressure at work, job insecurity and physical agents. However, this kind of stress is not affecting the performance of the employee. They conclude that there is no relationship between job stress and employee performance.

5.2 Gap in Knowledge

Since the research was done within a particular independent variable, there is a need to further study other independent variables that affect personnel performance.

6. Summary

The findings of this study corroborate what previous research was concluded on how flexible work schedule in an organization influenced employee commitment and generally found positive relations. There is continuous interest from other researchers to study flexible work as it has been advocated as a means of increasing personnel performance. Flexible work creates favourable impacts on employee's wellbeing and reducing work-family conflict.

7. Conclusion

Stress is at the centre of several challenges bedeviling personnel in the workplace, it cannot be eliminated hence the need to manage it to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce, organization should ensure that their work environment is in order, jobs are designed to accommodate employee and policies that make for flexibility in workplace should be put in place. It is therefore up to managers/organizations, to take necessary steps to help manage and control stress in the workplace.

There is absolutely no gainsaying the glaring fact that stress is with us, it abide and live with us, we cannot eliminate stress totally if we must be productive, but then, we must do everything to manage it so as not to get negatively affected by it.

7.1 Recommendations

- 1) Management should design tasks and jobs in ways that would make for effectiveness and efficiency and bring about improvement in the performance of their workforce.
- 2) It is recommended that flexible job schedules should be incorporated into human resource management strategies, policies and plan to enhance easy personnel performance and commitment that will increase organization survival.
- 3) Management/employers should as a matter of urgency, organize periodic seminars and conferences for their personnel, while taking the following suggestions for reducing/managing stress very seriously:
 - a) Handling thoughts and attitudes correctly
 - b) Finding a support system (opposite sex)
 - c) Being realistic
 - d) Getting organized and taking charge
 - e) Taking breaks (rest)
 - f) Learning to say no when and where necessary
 - g) Daily exercise

- h) Use of food supplements
- i) Having sex responsibly
- j) Adequate diet
- k) Laughter and use of humour etc

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