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Political advisors were confident in their point-lead[1].

Foot/Endnote

1. Newton Minow and Craig LaMay, *Inside the Presidential Debates: Their Improbable Past and Promising Future,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 24-25.

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Example:

Book:
-Migration is a phenomenon that is constantly and radically evolving. It continues each day to assume unprecedented meanings and expressions.[1]

Website:
-The worry is the subordinate role assigned to religion in matters of migration. Thus, Beckford contends: õit would be an exaggeration to claim that religion was invariably an important aspect of migration.ö[6]

Journal:
-Leadership failure or leadership success[2]
-í í . however, went spiral and literarily explosive in the years that followed until recently when it would seem that having the opportunity or means to emigrate was not just celebrated as an achievement but viewed as a long-desired object of liberation[22]

-Similarly, Kari, Malasowe and Collins[3]
* Forman et al.[5] declared that the war in Ukraine is becoming overwhelming

Footnote/Endnote:
Book
It is a global phenomenon that affects in either way the demographic, social, political, economic, socio-cultural, religious, moral, and spiritual landscapes of the world and human activities.[2]

Website:
[6]James A. Beckford,. "*Religions and Migrations* ó Old and New." Quaderni di Sociologia 80: (2019):15-32, accessed October 26, 2021, doi:https://doi.org/10.4000/qds.2599

Journal:
[2]Samson Adesote, õ*Internal Conflicts and Forced Migration in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective.*ö Journal of Identity and Migration Studies 11, no. 1 (2017): 1-26.

[4]Umar Kari, Godwin Malasowe and Ogbu Collins, õ*A study of Illegal Migration in Nigeria and the pull and push factors*, 2011-2017 World Journal of Innovative Research 6, no. 5 (2018): 53-60

[5]Olubunmi Akintola and Olagoke Akintola, õWest Africans in the Informal Economy of South Africa: The Case of Low Skilled Nigerian Migrants.ö The Review of Black Political Economy, vol. 42, no. 4 (2015): 379-398

Bibliography Book:
-Phan, Peter C. "Christianity as an Institutional Migrant: Historical, Theological, and Ethical Perspectives." In Christianities in Migration. The Global Perspective, edited byElaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan, 9-36. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillian 2016.

Journal:
Adesote, Samson. õInternal Conflicts and Forced Migration in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective.ö Journal of Identity and Migration Studies 11, no. 1, 2017.

Akintola, Olubunmi and Akintola, Olagoke. õWest Africans in the Informal Economy of South Africa: The Case of Low Skilled Migrantsö. The Review of Black Political Economy Vol. 42no1, 2015.

Kari, Umar, Malasowe, Godwin and Collins, Ogbu. õA Study of Illegal Migration Trends and the Pull and Push Factors in Nigeria 2011- 2017.ö World Journal of Innovative Research 6, no. 5, 2018.

* When citing a work by more than three authors, only the surname of the first listed author is used, followed by et al. for example: Forman et al. 2021 62-63

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Editorial Brief

This is Volume 4 Issue 2 (November edition) of International Journal of Migration and Global Studies (IJMGS). The Journal is developed and published by the Centre   of Excellence in Migration and Global Studies (CEMGS), National Open University of Nigeria. All the articles went through blind peer review by scholars in the various disciplines. The coverage is multidisciplinary in contents, and trans- global in analyses. In this era, it is vital that we continue to assemble interdisciplinary solutions to migration and global studies issues.

Hence, this volume features: Forced Internal Migration, Proliferation of Urban Slums and Disquiet in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria; Forced Migration and Displacement: Understanding the Clashes in Benue State Herders-Farmers Conflict; Talent Retention Challenges and Business Performance among African Entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom; Evaluating the Factors Influencing the Perception of Young Healthcare Professionals Towards Labour Emigration in Nigeria; Jacob, Japa, Japada: A Theological and Socio-economic Reflections on Genesis 30:25, 30 in the Light of Nigerian Youth Emigration; Nascent Entrepreneurs in North-Central Nigeria's Agri-Business: Opportunity and Necessity; Open and Distance Learning and Women's Advancement in Information Technology: The NOUN's Experience; Employee Career Development Plan on Business Operation: A Study of Oriental Foods Industry Limited Kano; The Consequences of Banditry and Possession of SALW in Shinkafi and Zurmi LGA, Zamfara State; Human Security: A Panacea to the Rising Japa Syndrome in Nigeria; The Administration of Open, Distance and E-Learning (ODeL) in the Context of Environmental Sustainability and Human Mobility.

The articles in this volume are rich in content, informative in analyses; and refreshing in evidence. They are useful in all parameters and will add value to finding solutions to some of the issues raised on all topics. The efforts of various people smoothened the editorial transition and made this publication possible.

I really appreciate all the Contributors, Reviewers, and members of the Editorial team for making the publication of this volume possible and we rely on your continuous cooperation towards the next edition.

Gloria Anetor
Prof. Gloria Anetor Managing Editor

Forced Internal Migration, Proliferation of Urban Slums and Disquiet in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria

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Abstract

Forced migration is at an all-time high in northern Nigeria due to rising conflicts and crimes. This study, therefore, investigated forced internal migration, slums proliferation and disquiet in Kano Metropolis. This was carried out using descriptive survey design, along with questionnaire and interviews as instruments of data collection from randomly selected 1000 respondents in six purposively selected slums in Kano City. Findings indicate that 92% of the sampled migrants into Kano were forced out of their homes due to rampaging conflict and insecurity, mainly from Borno, Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto, and Taraba States. Also, 87% of the respondents migrated due to armed conflicts such as terrorism, banditry, cattle rustling, farmer-herder conflict, and communal clashes over land ownership. The overall mean scores of 2.76 showed that respondents agreed that forced migration led to proliferation of slums in Kano. Discrimination, lack of jobs, hosts-migrants' contestation over job, human rights abuse and intimidation of migrants by the law enforcement agents caused disquiet. In sum, forced migration into Kano has the tendency to aggravate conflict and insecurity. It is recommended that government at all levels should intensify efforts on countering terrorism, insurgency, banditry and other forms of insecurity to reduce forced migration into Kano Metropolis.

Keywords: banditry, conflict, migration**,** slums**,** terrorism**,**

La migration interne forcée, la prolifération des bidonvilles urbaines et l'inquiétude dans la métropole de Kano, Nigéria

Résumé

La migration forcée atteint un niveau record dans le nord du Nigéria en raison de la montée des conflits et de la criminalité. Cette étude a donc examiné la migration interne forcée, la prolifération des bidonvilles et l'inquiétude dans la métropole de Kano. Cette étude a été réalisée à l'aide d'une conception d'enquête descriptive, ainsi que d'un questionnaire et d'entretiens comme instruments de recueillement de données auprès de 1 000 répondants sélectionnés au hasard dans six bidonvilles sélectionnés à dessein dans la ville de Kano. Les résultats indiquent que 92 % des migrants échantillonnés à Kano ont été contraints de quitter leur domicile en raison du conflit et de l'insécurité, principalement dans les États de Borno, Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto et Taraba. En outre, 87 % des répondants ont migré en raison de conflits armés tels que le terrorisme, le banditisme, le vol de bétail, les conflits entre agriculteurs et éleveurs et les affrontements communautaires concernant la propriété foncière. Les scores moyens de 2,76 ont montré que les répondants convenaient que la migration forcée a conduit à la prolifération des bidonvilles à Kano. La discrimination, le manque d'emplois, la contestation des migrants hôtes pour l'emploi, les violations des droits de l'homme et l'intimidation des migrants par les forces de l'ordre ont provoqué des inquiétudes. En résumé, la migration forcée vers Kano a la tendance d'aggraver les conflits et l'insécurité. Il est recommandé que le gouvernement à tous les niveaux intensifie ses efforts pour lutter contre le terrorisme, l'insurrection, le banditisme et d'autres formes d'insécurité afin de réduire la migration forcée vers la métropole de Kano.

Mots-clés : le banditisme, le conflit, la migration, les bidonvilles, le terrorisme,

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Introduction

In recent times, involuntary migration has led to upsurge of urban population globally. There were 71.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) across the world at the end of 2022, 62.5 million as a result of conflict and violence, and 8.7 million as a result of disasters.[1] Nigeria contributes largely to these figures. For instance, International Organisation on Migration (IOM) in 2023 tracked 1,222,977 displaced persons out of which 1,110,369 were internally displaced persons (IDPs) (91% of the displaced population) as well as 1,190,293 IDPs in 191,688 households across the eight states in north-central and north-west Nigeria.[2] Urban centres in the northern part of Nigeria have become hosts to great numbers of IDPs in the last one decade due to unprecedented conflict and insecurity.[3] Forced movements are rampant in troubled areas. For instance, Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna, Sokoto and Niger States have become homes to bandits causing serious security debacle.[4] Terrorism thinly disguised as grievance has turned north-west into a safe sanctuary for active terrorist groups.[5] Women, children and the aged are the most vulnerable to the onslaught of rampaging marauders in the region. In a nutshell, pervasive banditry and veiled terrorism in the north-west constitute threat to security causing disruption of socio-economic activities in general, atmosphere of uncertainty and policing challenges to the citizenry and the government.[6] In addition, climate change and unemployment have been identified as major push factors of rural-urban drifts in Africa.[7]

As one of the big cities, the security and economic situations in northern region of Nigeria have particularly accentuated the rate of forced migration into Kano City. Kano State is said to host 27,058 persons out of 1,075,893 IDPs tracked in eight states

[1] Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "*All-Time High of 71 Million People Internally Displaced Worldwide*" (2023), accessed January 4, 2023, doi:https://www.internal-displacement.org/media-centres/all-time-high-of-71-million-people-internally-displaced-worldwide

[2] International Organisation for Migration*, "Nigeria-North-Central and Northwest Zones Displacement Report/Round 11 Needs Monitoring*" (2023), accessed, November 7, 2023, doi:https://www.google.com/search?q=International+Organisation+for+Migration+(2023).Nigeria-North-Central+and+Northwest+Zones+Displacement+Report+March+2023%

[3] Jimam Lar, *"Violence and Insecurity in Northwest Nigeria: Exploring the Role and Resilience of Local Actors"* African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review, vol. 9no. 2 (2019): 123-154.

[4] Olaniyan Azeez and Yahaya Aliyu, "*Cows, Bandits, and Violent Conflicts: Understanding Cattle Rustling in Northern Nigeria.*" Africa Spectrum, 51(3), (2016): 93-105.

[5] Ojewale, Oluwole. "*Rising Insecurity In Northwest Nigeria: Terrorism Thinly Disguised as Banditry.*" Brookings: Africa in Focus,(2021), accessed March 10, 2024, doi:https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2021/02/18/rising-insecurity-in-northwest-nigeria-terrorism-thinly-disguised-as-banditry/

[6] Rosenje Musharafa O. and Adeniyi Oluwatobi P. "*The impact of banditry on Nigeria's security in the Fourth Republic: An evaluation of Nigeria's Northwest."* Zamfara Journal of Politics and Development vol. 2 no. 1(2021), 1-26, accessed February 8, 2024, doi:https://zjpd.com.ng/index.php/zjpd/article/view/30

[7] Paul O. Adekola, *"Migration, urbanization and environmental problems in Nigeria."* In Migration and Urbanisation in Contemporary Nigeria: Policy Issues and Challenges, Oyefara, J. L. (ed.), Lagos: University of Lagos Press (2016), 19- 32.

in north-central and north-west Nigeria as at March, 2023.[8] Obviously, Kano has attracted migrants of different shades because it is the largest metropolitan city and hub of North-west Nigeria as well as home to international commerce and large markets. Kano's openness and hospitality to migrants of all kind also account for its ever-growing population. Apart from Nigerians, voluntary and involuntary migrants from Niger, Chad and Cameroon see Kano as a safe haven.

Migrations arising from armed conflicts, insurgency, banditry and general insecurity have led to unhealthy outcomes in many climes. However, there is paucity of literature on the effect of influx of forced internal migrants on the proliferation of slums in Kano and consequences on peace and security. Thus, this research examined the socio-economic contradictions which have occurred in Kano slums since the influx of forced migrants in the last one decade. The main aim of this study was to unearth probable indicators of threats to peace and human security. The specific objectives of the study are:

1.   To examine the significant cases of forced internal migration into Kano City and their causes
2.   To investigate the patterns of settlement among the migrants into Kano city
3.   To find out how people perceive forced internal migration into Kano as a cause of proliferation of slums
4.   To examine negative indices associated with forced migration and slum proliferation and how they affect peace and security in Kano slums

In order to carry out this task, the under-listed research questions were raised:
1.   How significant are cases of forced internal migration into Kano City and what are their causes?
2.   What are the patterns of settlement among the migrants into Kano city?
3.   How do people perceive forced internal migration into Kano as a cause of proliferation of slums?
4.   Which negative indices associated with forced migration and slum proliferation affect peace and security in Kano slums?

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[8]   International Organisation for Migration, *"Nigeria-North-Central and Northwest Zones Displacement Report/Round 11 Needs Monitoring"* (2023), accessed, November 7, 2023, doi:https://www.google.com/search?q=International+Organisation+for+Migration+(2023).Nigeria-North-Central+and+Northwest+Zones+Displacement+Report+March+2023%.

Conceptual Clarification

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defined Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as:

> persons or group of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human–made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.[9]

Thus, internal displacement connotes involuntary movement of people from their homes to areas within their national borders. They are different from refugees who have crossed to another country.[10] Such displacement falls within the ambits of domestic jurisdiction and therefore does not relate to cross-international borders' activities.[11] In this study, IDPs are described as people who have fled their homes as a result of fear of harm or death and have run to safe places whether in IDP camps or elsewhere within their country.

Forced Migration: Forced migration denotes a migratory movement which, although the drivers can be diverse, involves force, compulsion, or coercion that threatens life or livelihood.[12] In her own perspective, the UN-HRC (2023) posited that insecurity of all forms, ethnic genocide, civil war, hunger, extreme poverty, drought, and/or flooding have been responsible in different climes for involuntary flight of droves of people.[13] In the light of the foregoing definition, the term forced migration is the same as internal displacement as the migratory movement is due to some elements of coercion, which may be uncertainties often arising from natural or man-made causes.

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[9]   UN-HRC. *Conflict and Violence are the Primary Causes of Hunger and Famine*, *Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Tells the Human Rights Council*, (2023), accessed February 2, 2024, doi:https://reliefweb.int/report/world/conflict-and-violence-are-primary-causes-hunger-and-famine-special-rapporteur-right-food-tells-human-rights-council

[10] Shaibu, Moses. E., Ogwuche, Matthew. E., Ibebunjo, Basil. O., Orie, Gloria. E. and Ebobo, Christiana E. *"Social Exclusion and National Integration: A Study of Internal Displaced Persons in North-Central, Ab*uja." Khazar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, vol. 5no. 3, (2022): 1-8.

[11] Ramsbotham Oliver & Woodhouse Tom, *Humanitarian Intervention in Contemporary Conflict*: *A Reconceptualization*. Cambridge: Polity Press (1996).

[12] Migration Data Portal "*Forced migration or displaceme*nt." (2023), accessed April 2, 2024, doi:https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/forced-migration-or-displacement

[13] UN-HRC. *Conflict and Violence are the Primary Causes of Hunger and Famine*, *Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Tells the Human Rights Council*, (2023), accessed December 15, 2023, doi:https://reliefweb.int/report/world/conflict-and-violence-are-primary-causes-hunger-and-famine-special-rapporteur-right-food-tells-human-rights-councilncil

The term forced is preferred because it emphasises the causal factors of such migration, its sudden nature and its consequential disruption of livelihood pattern.

Slum: Slum is usually seen as informal settlement that grows organically in and around cities.[14] Slum is conceptualised as blighted urban area which is inhabited majorly by urban people of low income and low educational attainments.[15] There is a similar definition of slum as "a wide range of low-income settlement and/or poor human living conditions".[16] Slums may develop as a result of increased migration to urban centre by people who are relatively poor or displaced and are in dire need of housing. Slums are described as human settlements that lack certain basic necessities of life, including access to quality education, drinkable water, and access to quality medical facilities.[17] Slums are, therefore, areas known as unplanned settlements of low quality living conditions.

Security: Security, viewed from the perspective of the state, is prevention of threats to the existence of the state with the use of force to suppress violence. It is for this reason that states assemble and maintain armed forces and other organs of internal security (at the domestic level) for the protection of its territorial integrity.[18] This idea of security is on a neo-realist theoretical framework, as the primacy of the state is placed over and above any other factor. From the early 1990s, focus of security changed and developed to cover the safety of individuals within the state. This concept is termed Human Security. Beyond absence of violence, human security encompasses elements such as human rights, good governance, and access to opportunities, education and health-care as well as environment. Thus, human security is seen as freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of the future generations to inherit a healthy natural clean environment.[19] This implies that while we secure today, we must avoid acts that will jeopardise existence of future generations.

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[14] UN-HABITAT. "*Dialogue on the Urban Poor: Improving the Lives of Slum-Dwellers*." Barcelona: World Urban Forum (2007*): 63-74.

[15] Fourchard, Laurent. *Urban Slums Report: The case of Ibadan, Nigeria*. In Ibadan, Nigeria edited by Fourchard, Laurent. Ibadan: IFRA-University of Ibadan (2003).

[16] UN-HABITAT. "*Report of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme: Note by the Secretary-General.*" (2003), accessed February 7, 2024, doi: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/512140?ln=en

[17] George, Kehinde C. "*Basic Principles and Methods of Urban and Regional Planning*" Lagos: Libro-Gem Books, (2002).

[18] Rourke, John. T. "*International politics on the world stage (10th ed.).*" New York: MacGraw Hill (2005).

[19] Commission on Human Security. "*Human Security Now: Final Report.*" New York: CHS (2003).

Literature review

A study on North-east Nigeria security situation found that Boko Haram insurgency caused forced migration in the last one decade, and that forced migrants have littered the city of Maiduguri, causing increasing housing demand.[20] Forced migration in northern region of Nigeria has been attributed to insurgency and banditry leading worsening economy.[21] The deepening social exclusion between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and hosts in north-central region of Nigeria, particularly in Nasarawa and Benue States has also been established.[22] According to them, government policies and efforts to ensure integration of IDPs into the host communities have generally been superficial and ineffective.

Migratory patterns in Lagos State show economic, social, safety, environmental to political factors propel movement of people and resources from one place to another.[23] Most other studies have focused on internal migrants who stay in IDP camps. For instance, a look at camp management reveals a lot of neglect and makes internal migrants flee IDP camps and eventually constitute nuisance to city dwellers.[24]

Inflow of migrants has metamorphosed Kano to a highly urbanised modern mega-city of the beautiful and the ugly. It has increased commerce, physical infrastructure and government revenue. Conversely, phenomenal increase in Kano's population density in the last few years has brought challenges in infrastructural management and governance in general.[25] Like elsewhere, existential needs, values, and identity warrant contestation for inelastic socio-economic space among migrants and indigenes.[26] The scenario is further compounded by the fact that while some migrants

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[20] Nkwocha, Kelechi, F. Shettima, Mohamed. K, Iheukwumere, Samuel O, Nwabudike, Chukwuma. P., and Agulue, Emmanuel. *Forced Migration in Northeast Nigeria: Drivers and Effects on Urban Living*, International Journal of Scientific Research in Multidisciplinary Studies vol. 6no. 9, (2020): 86-92.

[21] Omenma, Tochukwu; Abada, Ifeanyichukwu. M. & Omenma, Oyinyechi Z. *"Boko Haram Insurgency: A Decade of Dynamic Evolution and Struggle for a Caliphate."* Security Journal vol. 33 *(2020):* 376–400, accessed February 7, 2024, doi:https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-020-00233-7

[22] Shaibu, Moses. E., Ogwuche, Matthew. E., Ibebunjo, Basil. O., Orie, Gloria. E. and Ebobo, Christiana E. *"Social Exclusion and National Integration: A Study of Internal Displaced Persons in North-Central, Ab*uja." Khazar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, vol. 5no. 3, (2022): 1-8.

[23] Omoniyi, Tiilehin. O. Ajitoni, Sunday. O. and Amosun, Peter A. "*Migratory Pattern and City Slums in Lagos State, Nigeria"*, Ibadan Journal of Educational Research (IJER) vol. 2, no. 18(2021): 1-12.

[24] Ekezie, Winifred, "*Resilience Actions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Living in Camp--Like Settings: A Northern Nigeria Case Study*." Journal of Migration and Health*, vol. 6* (2022): 1-9.

[25] Jimam Lar, *"Violence and Insecurity in Northwest Nigeria: Exploring the Role and Resilience of Local Actors"* African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review, vol. 9, no. 2 (2019): 123-154.

[26] Ojewale, Oluwole. *Rising Insecurity In Northwest Nigeria: Terrorism Thinly Disguised as Banditry*, Brookings: Africa in Focus*, (2021), accessed March 15, 2024, doi:https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2021/02/18/rising-insecurity-in northwest-nigeria-terrorism-thinly-disguised-as-banditry/

are useful as skilled and unskilled labourers, others who are jobless become nuisance to security. An earlier study showed inability of government to manage the unfolding socio-economic challenges resulting from displacement of persons.[27] No doubt, inability of government to manage consequences of migration to urban centre will lead to present and future escalation of conflict and insecurity. For instance, it is documented that ripple effects of unhindered migration to urban centres have accentuated management crisis in Lagos and Abuja.[28]

However, few empirical researches have been carried out on forced migration into Kano Metropolis and its propensity to cause disquiet in Kano slums. Thus, this study focuses on problems that arise from addition of forced migrants to slums in Kano with the objective of exposing early warning signs in order to provide proactive early responses to insecurity and latent conflicts.

Theoretical Framework

Push-Pull Factor Theory of migration is used to explain causes of forced migration. Relative Deprivation Theory, Theory of Anomie and theory of Social Disorganisation are intricately apposite in explaining migrants' experiences and strategies for coping with the challenges associated with unplanned relocation and their expectations in contrast with the realities they face in slums.

Push-Pull Theory of international migration gained rapid traction in the 1960s but its origin is traceable to Adam Smith's (1776) book, "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" and the "Laws of Migration".[29] The Push-Pull Factors Theory of Migration is now generally attributed to Lee (1966) and according to him, "push" factors operate in the economically backward regions or countries of the world, where insufficient demand of labour and low wages force people to go out and search for more viable alternative locations for better livelihoods. The "pull" factors on the other hand, operate in the economically advanced regions or countries of the world, where higher demand for labour and higher wages, encourage people to come in and stay there.[30]

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[27] Ekezie, Winifred, "*Resilience Actions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Living in Camp--Like Settings: A Northern Nigeria Case Study.*" Journal of Migration and Health*, vol. 6* (2022): 1-9.

[28] Musibau O. Oyebode, *Paradox of Migration in the Context of a Plural Society: Focus on Peace in Nigeria*. International Journal of Migration and Global Studies vol. 1, no.1 (2021): 81- 105.

[29] E. G. Ravenstein, E. G. "*The Laws of Migration*. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* vol. 52, no. 2 (1889): 241–305, accessed March 15, 2024, doi.org/10.2307/2979333

[30] Lee, Everett. S. "*A Theory of Migration*." Demography, vol. 3, no. 1(1966): 47–57.

In elaborating Lee's perspective, this study includes lack of natural disasters, political fear of persecution, famine or drought, loss of wealth, bullying, threats to life, and war/armed conflict which are sudden push factors. Push-Pull Factor Theory is apposite in explaining internal displacement that is unplanned or forced in Nigeria and indeed why the destination is Kano City.

Relative Deprivation (RD) Theory, relates to outcome of migration and relationship that ensues among hosts, migrants and government. RD theory was earlier propounded in the works of Marx (1933) and Tocqueville (1935).

Walker & Pettigrew (1984) extended discussions on RD and situated it within the theoretical framework of Tajfel's (1979) Categorization-identity-comparison (CIC) to explain intergroup relations.[31]

They posit that social conflict arises due to people's perceptions of inequality. This happens when there is disparity between expectation and what people get in comparison with what others get. People naturally desire to enjoy or deserve to enjoy certain benefits as a member of any socio-political arrangement and if what they are currently enjoying is less than expectation, they become discontented with their situation. Thus, it is espoused that when the gap among groups within a particular population is too wide, the possibility of rebellion becomes more likely.

Persons' feelings of deprivation are relative to their own past, another person, persons, group, their ideals or other social category. For instance, as Nigerians, every citizen believes he is entitled to certain benefits wherever he may be within the country and compares what he gets with others who may be hosts. Thus, any discrimination or deprivation anchored on parochial factor of in-group and out-group dichotomy, neglect or structural violence is a potential cause of conflict described as state of anomie.[32] According to Durkheim 1893), anomie is a state in which expectations are unclear and the social system that keeps people functioning has broken down.[33] Thus, when a society has a relatively high rate of economic inequality, the more likely it is that people will rebel and when expectations of poor individuals become transformed

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[31] Iain Walker, W. and Thomas Frazer Pettigrew, "*Relative Deprivation Theory: An Overview and Conceptual Critique*", British Journal of Social Psychology, vol. 23, no. 4 (2011):301 – 310, accessed March 15, 2024, doi:https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229622127_Relative_Deprivation_Theory_An_Overview_and_Conceptual_Critique.x

[32] Joshua Olusegun Bolarinwa, Musibau. Olabamiji Oyebode and Omotola Charlse Olusanya, *Introduction to Peace Studies*, 24-25. Abuja: National Open University of Nigeria.

[33] Durkheim, Émile. 1893. *The Division of Labour in Society, Translated by George Simpson*. Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, Illinois

as a group identity, they become a political force that will not hesitate to use violence in order to combat perceived discrimination.

Also relevant to this study is the Social Disorganization Theory postulated by Chicago School (1990s) that posits communities with loose social ties and endemic poverty are prone to high levels of crime and decadent behaviours. Unemployment, deteriorating infrastructures and single-parent homes are factors that lead to high rates of crimes (Gaines and Miller, 2000).[34] All of these factors easily arise as a result of forced migration.

The theories above are relevant in detecting early warning signs and signals of latent conflict especially in situations where new migrants are not properly integrated or taken care of and suffer neglect. However, relative deprivation theory is emphasized in this study at helps to explain forced migrants' experiences and possible reactions to sufferings and neglect.

Materials and Methods

The research design for this study was descriptive survey as it aimed to investigate demographic and behavioural traits arising from forced migration. Primary data was garnered using a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Articles, Journals, books, internet materials were also used for secondary data.

The current metro area population of Kano in 2024 is 4,491,000, a 3.29% increase from 2023[35]. The study population comprised migrants outside IDP camps, government officials and community heads. However, approximated value was used because the total number of migrants was difficult to determine. A total of 1000 copies of a structured questionnaire were administered on migrants, residents, community leaders and government officials. However, 863 were validly filled and returned. A total of 30 in-depth interviews were conducted across the five selected slums.

Purposive sampling technique was used to allow representation of the six slums and categories of different respondents needed for the study. The slums used for this study are situated in Kwakwaci, Fagge Local Government, Darmanawa, Kumbotso Local Government, Farawa, Kumbotso Local Government Area, Dan Bare, Kumbotso Local

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[34] Larry K. Gaines, Michael Kaune and Roger Leroy Miller. Criminal Justice in action, 11th edition (2000), accessed March 16, 2024, doi:https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/criminal-justice-action

[35] Macrotrends. Kano, Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024 (2024), accessed, June 10, 2024, doi:https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/cities/22005/kano/population

Government, Gama, Nasarawa Local Government and Tarauni Kasuwa, Tarauni Local Government. However, samples (questionnaire respondents and interviewees) from each of the slums were randomly selected

Quantitative and qualitative analyses were adopted for data analysis using SPSS. Tables were used to display data in figures, percentages and mean scores. Qualitative data obtained through interviews were categorized and embedded in the discussion of findings using illustrative quotes to aggregate responses. The number of interviewees who made similar and aggregated statements were included.

Findings

RQ1: How significant are cases of forced internal migration into Kano City and what are their causes?

Table 1. Nature of Migration to Kano City

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	796	92
No	67	8
Total	863	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 1 shows that majority (92%) of the migrants were forced out of their homes into Kano City. A mere 8% of the respondents were not forced to migrate from their homes to Kano City.

Table 2. Causes of forced migration to Kano

S/No	Causes	Frequency		Valid Percent	
1	General economic conditions	63		12	
2	Natural Disaster especially drought and famine	40		87	
3	Conflict situations	748		1	
4	Others	12		100	
5	Total	863			

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 shows that migrants were forced out of their homes by a number of reasons ranging from general economic hardship (7%), natural disaster (5%), conflict situations (87%) and others (1%).

RQ2: What are the patterns of settlement among the migrants into Kano city?
Table 3: Patterns of settlement among the migrants in the slums of Kano city

S/No	Patterns of Settlement by Migrants	Frequency		Valid percent	
1	Clustered settlement in new areas	381		44.0	
2	Isolated or dispersed settlement in new areas	212		25.0	
3	Harboured by relatives	97		11.0	
4	Rented accommodation	119		14.0	
5	Open community accommodation	54		6.0	
	Total	863		100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 3 shows that clustered pattern of settlement amongst forced migrants in Kano Metropolis accounts for the largest form of settlement which is (44%), isolated or dispersed settlement which accounts for 25% and 14% of forced migrants in rented accommodation. Just 11% of the respondents are harboured and 6% live in open community accommodations.

RQ3: How do people perceive forced internal migration into Kano as a cause of proliferation of slums?
Table 4: Respondents' Views on Forced Migration and Proliferation of Slums in Kano

	Views	SA	A	UD	SD	D	Mean	Decision
1	Unchecked settlement in new areas leads to new slums	353	307	52	71	80	2.80	Agree
2	Make-shift homes disrupt urban planning	416	319	22	61	45	2.85	Agree
3	Inadequate social amenities in the settlements results in slums	312	321	43	89	98	2.60	Agree

4	Forced migration overcrowds residences in slums	318	294	32	123	96	2.76	Agree
5	Shanties and uncompleted houses produce slums	311	262	43	142	105	2.55	Agree
6	Open community integration leads to clumsiness	312	265	52	138	96	2.56	Agree
7	Pressure on government interventions projects in urban slums	315	306	77	69	96	2.76	Agree
	Cluster Standard Deviation and Mean					0.741	2.76	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

With the overall mean scores of 2.76 in table 4 above, it is indicative that the level of agreements of the forced migrants on the link between forced migration and proliferation of slums in Kano is positive**.**

RQ4: Which negative indices associated with forced migration and slum proliferation affect peace and security in Kano slums?
Table 5: Negative Indices Associated with Forced Migration and Slum Proliferation in Kano state that affect peace and security

S/No	Indices	SA	A	UD	SD	`	Mean	Decision
1	Rivalry among migrants over limited physical space	342	229	54	173	65	2.95	Agree
2	High disease and morbidity from sanitary system increase	327	266	17	169	84	2.93	Agree
3	Children are exposed to danger and poor upbringing.	312	329	19	109	194	2.90	Agree
4	Contestation for few jobs leads to violence	297	259	15	173	119	2.85	Agree
5	Migrants and hosts in slum areas are prone to frequent conflicts over limited infrastructure	344	245	19	167	88	2.93	Agree

6	Human rights abuse and intimidation by the law enforcement agents abound.	323	298	62	212	58	2.75	Agree
7	Migrants in slum areas worsens high-rate of drug abuse	314	269	89	152	139	2.70	Agree
8	Migrants in slum areas worsens high-rate of crimes	376	238	44	98	107	2.73	Agree
9	Rampant sexual harassments and gender-based violence in slums.	285	348	86	77	67	2.80	Agree
10	Migrants in slum areas worsens theft	239	356	38	146	184	2.68	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 5 shows that respondents' mean scores show agreement with the indices associated with problems of slums proliferation.

Discussion

The study reveals significant cases of forced migration (92%) of the respondents into Kano City. Majority of the interviewees (23) also said "our movement to Kano was involuntary, unplanned and spontaneous in reaction to debilitating security upheavals." Generally, conflict situations earn 87% of the reasons why the respondents fled their homes. This finding corroborates earlier finding by scholars for the Northeast.[36]

Conflicts such as terrorism, banditry, cattle rustling, farmers-herders' conflict and communal clashes caused displacement into Kano. "Interviewed migrants in Gama Ward in Nasarawa Local Government of Kano State claimed that "we are from Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States and were displaced due to the Boko Haram insurgency." Similar result in earlier study found that the Boko Haram insurgency was the major cause of forced migration in Maiduguri, North-east Nigeria.[37] Fifteen of the

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[36] Omenma, Tochukwu; Abada, Ifeanyichukwu. M. & Omenma, Oyinyechi Z. *"Boko Haram Insurgency: A Decade of Dynamic Evolution and Struggle for a Caliphate."* Security Journal vol. 33 *(2020):* 376–400, accessed March 20, 2024, doi:https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-020-00233-7

[37] Emmanuel Baba Mamman. *"Public Policy Response to violence: A case Study of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria."* Walden University, Scholar Work (2020). Accessed March 20, 2024, doi:https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=10671&context=dissertations

interviewees said "we were forced out of Zamfara, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto because bandits ravaged our ancestral homes."

Majority of the migrants settle in clusters (44%). This type of settlement arises from sense of belongingness and identity that assure them of safety. According to 19 interviewees "clustered pattern of settlement in new area is possible because the slums are open to new entrants and government policies allow such settlement for displaced person." Isolated settlements accommodate people who are mostly from north-central states who are afraid to blend with Hausa/Fulani migrants. This category of migrants said "experiences from herders-farmers' conflict that pushed us out of our communities made us suspicious of these people.".

Findings revealed a number of factors that lead to creation of new slums or worsening of the living conditions of the existing ones. These include converting uncompleted buildings in existing slums to temporary residences using rafter palms as roofing and building on drainages and roads thus complicating environmental disorder in these slums. Other acts are erecting shanties in open, playing-ground and recreational spaces thus disrupting urban plan roadmap and creating new slums and over-crowding in these slums. Thus, attraction of forced migrants to urban periphery of Kano creates new slums and worsens the condition of existing slums.

A number of indices point to disquiet in Kano slums due to forced internal migration and resulting slum proliferation. They are: rivalry among migrants over physical space, high disease and morbidity from sanitary system and children exposure to danger and poor upbringing. Migrants and hosts in slum areas are prone to frequent conflicts like quarrel, clash and fight over inadequate infrastructures and resources. These findings have also been documented in earlier studies on rural-urban migration outcomes in Nigeria.[38]

Twenty-one interviewees noted that "although government rarely comes to our aid, individuals, community leadership, civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations are assisting us to settle and integrate into our new environment." This

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[38] Paul O. Adekola, *Migration, urbanization and environmental problems in Nigeria*, In *Migration and Urbanisation in Contemporary Nigeria: Policy Issues and Challenges* edited by Oyefara, John, 40-53. Lagos: University of Lagos Press. See also Musibau O. Oyebode. *Paradox of Migration in the Context of a Plural Society: Focus on Peace in Nigeria*. International Journal of Migration and Global Studies vol.1no. 1(2021): 81- 105.

finding aligns with previous findings on how IDPs in Northern Nigeria generally get integrated into the host communities.[39]

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be seen that there is indeed forced migration into Kano State from northern states, most notably from Borno, Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto, and Taraba States. These states have been hotspots of conflict and insecurity in the last few years.

Forced displacements to Kano are due to general economic hardship, natural disaster, and armed conflict situations such as terrorism, banditry, cattle rustling, farmers-herders' conflict, communal clashes and so on.

Forced migration leads to slums proliferation as new arrivals distort city plan by erecting make-shift homes and shanties, occupy uncompleted buildings and open public facilities. Pressure on existing infrastructure leads to poor living conditions of migrants and hosts.

Respondents believed that a number of indicators in the slums point to disquiet in Kano State. Potential causes of conflict include joblessness, growing theft, harassment, poor healthcare, improper education of migrants' children and exposure to hard drugs.

This study calls attention to early warning signs and signals of conflict emanating from forced migration and consequential phenomenal proliferation of slums in Kano City and the need for early response to avert conflicts which are at the latent stage. This disquiet is widespread in most urban centres in the northern part of Nigeria as a result of involuntary migration. If the disquiet is not nib in the bud on time, it could worsen the conflict situations and insecurity in that region of Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are put forward for consideration:

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[39] Ekezie, Winifred. "*Resilience Actions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Living in Camp--Like Settings: A Northern Nigeria Case Study*." Journal of Migration and Health *vol. 6* (2022): 1-9.

1. Since the causes of forced migration in the study area are basically insurgency, banditry, and conflicts, government at all levels should ensure that the war, insecurity and armed conflict is won in Nigeria.
2. While the infrastructures in slums are improved, policies on IDPs and indigene-settler dichotomy should be reviewed in Nigeria to better accommodate Nigerians no matter their nationalities and causes of flight to a new area. Integration of forced migrants is a key to peace in Kano City.
3. Government should assist IDPs to acquire new skills that will make them employable in their new location.
4. Efforts should be made to return forced migrants back to their ancestral homes when the war against armed conflict is won.

Conflict of Interest: None of the authors are IDPs or has any special interest that is capable of creating bias in this study

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Forced Migration and Displacement: Understanding the Clashes in Benue State Herders-Farmers Conflict

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Abstract

The protracted violence between farmers and herders in Benue State, Nigeria, has resulted in widespread forced migration and displacement. The complex dynamics of this conflict are explored in this paper, with a particular emphasis on how conflicts exacerbate displacement. Clashes between sedentary farmers and Fulani herders, which have their roots in old grudges, have become more intense due to rivalry for resources and land, and as a result, many people have been displaced. Access to basic essentials and safety from violence are just two of the many difficulties faced by displaced people and their communities. Non-state actors frequently contribute to the escalation of hostilities, and government responses have been insufficient. Multidisciplinary measures, such as livelihood diversification plans, sustainable resource management, and conflict resolution techniques, must be implemented in order to resolve the issue. By seeing how crucial confrontations are to the conflict between farmers and herders, policymakers can formulate targeted interventions to mitigate forced migration, foster reconciliation, and uphold the rights of affected populations in Benue State.

Keywords: Benue State, Conflict, Displacement, Forced-Migration, Herders-Farmers

La migration forcée et le déplacement : comprendre les affrontements dans le conflit entre éleveurs et agriculteurs de l'État de Benue

Résumé

La violence prolongée entre agriculteurs et éleveurs dans l'État de Benue, au Nigéria, a entraîné des migrations et des déplacements forcés à grande échelle. La dynamique complexe de ce conflit est explorée dans cet article, en mettant l'accent sur la manière dont les conflits exacerbent les déplacements. Les affrontements entre les agriculteurs sédentaires et les éleveurs peuls, qui trouvent leurs racines dans de vieilles rancunes, sont devenus plus intenses en raison de la rivalité des ressources et de terre, ce qui a entraîné le déplacement de nombreuses personnes. Avoir accès aux produits de première nécessité et de sécurité face à la violence ne sont que deux des nombreuses difficultés auxquelles sont confrontées les personnes déplacées et leurs communautés. Les acteurs non étatiques contribuent fréquemment à l'escalade des hostilités, et les réponses gouvernementales ont été insuffisantes. Des mesures multidisciplinaires, telles que des plans de diversification des moyens de subsistance, une gestion durable des ressources et des techniques de résolution des conflits, doivent être mises en œuvre pour résoudre le problème. En constatant à quel point les confrontations sont cruciales dans le conflit entre agriculteurs et éleveurs, les décideurs politiques peuvent formuler des interventions ciblées pour atténuer la migration forcée, favoriser la réconciliation et défendre les droits des populations affectées dans l'État de Benue.

Mots-clés : L'État de Benue, le conflit, le déplacement, la migration forcée, les éleveurs-agricult

Introduction

Forced migration and displacement are significant global issues that alter social structures and elicit strong humanitarian reactions. "Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity,"[1] said Pope Francis in an elegant speech. These individuals, who include men, women, and children, are compelled to leave their homes for a variety of reasons and have a justifiable desire to know, possess, and most importantly, to survive. This statement highlights the need to understand and deal with the complicated issue of forced migration and displacement in national contexts as well as on a global one.

In Nigeria, the phenomenon of forced migration and displacement is characterised by complex dynamics that are heavily impacted by environmental and socioeconomic causes. This is never more apparent than in Benue State, where conflicts between farmers and herders have engendered significant population displacement. These clashes, fueled by competition over diminishing resources and exacerbated by climate change impacts, pose substantial challenges to the socio-economic and environmental fabric of the state.

Socioeconomically, the conflict in Benue State highlights the fight over rights to land, water, and grazing areas. As Odinkalu (2018) puts it, "The conflicts are as much about access to land and water as they are about the boundaries between settled agriculturalists and migratory cattle herders."[2]Competition has resulted in recurrent acts of violence and displacement, and communities are finding it extremely difficult to obtain possibilities for livelihood and basic necessities.

The conflict has an environmental component as well. Resource shortage is made worse by deserts and altered rainfall patterns brought on by climate change. According to Iliya (2019), "The conflict has also been exacerbated by climate change-induced environmental stressors such as desertification, which have diminished grazing lands and water sources."[3] Displacement in Benue State is made worse by these natural stresses, which exacerbate already-existing conflicts.

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[1] Pope Francis. Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the International Forum on "Migration and Peace." Vatican City.2018

[2] Odinkalu, C. "The Unholy Herders of Nigeria: Conflict, Culture, and the Destruction of Lives." *Journal of International Affairs*, 71(1),2018; 27–47.

[3] Iliya, J. A. "Climate Change, Resource Conflict and Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria: A Case Study of Benue State." *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(6),2019; 189–199.

Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend forced migration and displacement in the context of Benue State's socioeconomic and environmental dynamics in order to develop policies that would effectively tackle these issues. In order to reduce conflict, foster resilience, and protect the rights and general welfare of impacted communities, policy makers and other stakeholders can develop focused interventions by looking into the underlying causes, dynamics, and effects of displacement in Benue State.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the historical elements that fueled the conflict between farmers and herders.
2. To comprehend the trends and effects of forced relocation and migration.
3. To investigate how different parties involved in the problem can contribute.
4. To make suggestions for long-term attempts at rehabilitation and conflict settlement.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

This study uses a historical-qualitative methodology to examine the forced migration and displacement brought about by the herders-farmers conflict in Benue State. It does this by combining archival research, oral history interviews, and analysis of contemporary records. Thematic analysis is another tool used in the study to pinpoint important trends and themes associated with the crisis.

Study Area

The study focuses on Benue State, Nigeria, an area heavily impacted by the conflict between farmers and herders. Comprehensive information on the area's geography, population, and socioeconomic status is taken into account to provide the study's background.

Data Collection

Archival Research: Examination of historical records, government documents, and previous studies to trace the roots of the herder-farmer conflict.

Oral History: Interviews with elders, community leaders, and displaced persons to capture personal accounts and local perspectives.

Contemporary Reports: Review of reports from non-governmental organizations, media, and government agencies to understand the current situation.

Ethical Considerations

The appropriate ethical committees granted their approval. All participants gave their informed consent, guaranteeing that they understood the goal of the study and that they might withdraw at any moment. Given the delicate nature of the subject, precautions were made to preserve participant anonymity and protect their identities.

Limitations

The report notes potential biases and difficulties, including the likelihood of underreporting due to the sensitive nature of the conflict and security concerns that may have limited access to particular places. By using stringent data validation procedures and triangulating data from several sources, these constraints were resolved.

Results

The historical patterns of land usage and the economic exchanges between farming communities and pastoralist groups can be linked to the herder-farmer conflict in Benue State. Disagreements were largely managed through the use of conventional conflict resolution techniques including intergroup talks and local councils. Tensions have, however, increased as a result of the failure of these systems as well as external factors and population shifts.

Discussion

The Herders-Farmers Conflict in Historical Perspective

Conflicts between farmers and herders have always been a result of the socioeconomic and environmental dynamics of pastoral and agricultural communities. These disputes between pastoralists and farmers over resources are not specific to Nigeria; they have been a recurrent problem in many regions of the world.

Conflicts between herders and farmers have their origins in pre-colonial Nigeria, when various ethnic groups developed unique subsistence strategies according to the topography and climate of their respective areas. For example, the Fulani herders used to move their livestock around seasonally in search of pastures and water, a practice known as transhumance. The native farming groups, on the other hand, cultivated the land for crops and were mostly sedentary. According to Odoh and Chilaka (2012), "The Fulani herders have historically migrated across West Africa, including Nigeria, in search of grazing land, which inevitably brought them into contact—and often conflict—with farming communities".[4]

British measures during the colonial era frequently made these problems worse. The colonial government disturbed customary patterns of land use and migration by attempting to draw boundaries and encourage cash crop cultivation. As a result, there was more rivalry for grazing and arable land. "Colonial land policies, which favoured sedentary agriculture over pastoralism...laid the groundwork for future conflicts,"[5] as Shettima and Tar (2008) argue.

The delicate balance between farmers and herders has been impacted by the agricultural policy of the Nigerian government ever since independence. Programmes to increase agricultural output have frequently been charged with invading customary grazing areas and routes. Competition for resources has increased due to this encroachment, rapid population development, and environmental changes including deserts and irregular rainfall patterns. As per Adisa and Adekunle's (2010) findings, "Population pressure and environmental degradation have compounded the struggle for resources, leading to increased incidences of clashes between herders and farmers".[6]

Furthermore, modern conflicts are longer-lasting and more violent due to the spread of small guns and the deterioration of conventional conflict settlement techniques. According to Blench (2004), "The breakdown of traditional mechanisms for managing

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4   Odoh, S. I., and Chilaka F. C. "Climate Change and Conflict in Nigeria: A Theoretical and Empirical Examination of the Worsening Incidence of Conflict between Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers in Northern Nigeria." *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review* 2 (1), 2012: 92.
5   Shettima A.U. and Tar A.G. "Farmer-Pastoralist Conflict in West Africa: Exploring the Causes and Consequences." *Information, Society and Justice Journal1* (2), 2018: 163.
6   Adisa, R. S., and Adekunle O.A.. "Farmer-Herder Conflicts: A Factor Analysis of Socio-economic Conflict Variables among Arable Crop Farmers in North Central Nigeria." *Journal of Human Ecology* 30 (1), 2010: 136.

conflicts between herders and farmers has led to more frequent and deadly encounters".[7]

Traditional Migratory and Land Use Patterns

Particularly in agrarian and pastoral civilizations, the biological and sociocultural dynamics of various regions have determined traditional patterns of migration and land use. In order to maximize resource usage and guarantee sustainability, these patterns show a symbiotic interaction between communities and their surroundings. Many pastoralist societies have historically relied heavily on semi-nomadic and nomadic herding methods for their subsistence. The Fulani herders are a well-known group in West Africa, which includes Nigeria. In order to deal with the climatic unpredictability and guarantee that their cattle have access to pastures, they have historically engaged in seasonal migration patterns known as transhumance. Transhumance, as explained by Blench (1994), "allows pastoralists to exploit different ecological zones and minimize the risk of overgrazing, which is crucial in arid and semi-arid regions".[8]

Sedentary agricultural communities, on the other hand, have created land use strategies centred on established farming. The requirement to manage water supplies and preserve soil fertility frequently affects these activities. Crop rotation, agroforestry, and shifting cultivation are a few methods used to maintain agricultural productivity. According to Mortimore (1989), "Traditional farmers have developed a deep understanding of their environment, employing practices that enhance soil fertility and reduce the risk of crop failure".[9]

Farmers and pastoralists have historically had a beneficial connection. Pastoralists used their animals to provide manure for field fertilization, and they would exchange livestock goods for grains and other agricultural output. As said by Tyover Iorjah,

While growing up, we use to see herders living side by side with us. These herders were usually in company of their wives, children and even their aged parents. They would invite us during their naming or other ceremonies. Our coexistence with them

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7   Blench R. "Natural Resource Conflicts in North-Central Nigeria: *A Handbook and Case Studies."* Mallam Dendo Ltd, Cambridge.2004;.45

8   Blench R. "The Expansion and Adaption of Fulbe Pastoralism to Subhumid and Humid Conditions in Nigeria." *Cahiers d'Études Africaines, 1994*; 231.

9   Mortimore M. *Adapting to Drought: Farmers, Famines, and Desertification in West Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.1989;157

was not free from disagreement. Such misunderstandings were usually settled by elders from the two parties amicably..."[10]

However, a number of things have harmed their friendship. The rivalry for land and water resources has intensified due to factors such as population expansion, growing agricultural practices, and environmental changes. According to Turner (2004), "The expansion of cultivated areas into traditional grazing lands has reduced the availability of pastures and water points, leading to conflicts between herders and farmers".[11]

Traditional patterns of land use have also been profoundly altered by colonial and post-colonial land policies. Traditional migratory pathways were disrupted by colonial administrations, which frequently enforced fixed territorial boundaries and favoured sedentary farming over nomadic herding. According to Bassett and Crummey (1993), "Colonial land tenure systems privileged agricultural expansion at the expense of pastoralism, leading to the marginalisation of pastoral communities,"[12] these policies had long-lasting impacts.

These problems have been made worse by environmental changes like desertification and climate variability. Pastoralists frequently encroach on agricultural regions because they must travel farther to locate sufficient grazing places. Conflicts have become increasingly prevalent as a result of the increased tensions. Hussein, Sumberg, and Seddon (1999) note that "climate change and environmental degradation have increased the incidence of conflicts between farmers and herders by intensifying the competition for scarce resources."[13]

There is, however, a different school of thought that holds that the violent attacks and counterattacks between herders and farmers in the Middle Belt region were primarily caused by the herders' natural desire to seize the rich, fertile land from the indigenous owners. We obtained responses from a random sample of the impacted individuals in this situation, which supports this reality. Each of them contended that the herders' attacks on their settlements were premeditated and designed to seize control of their ancestral grounds. They assert that the pattern of targeted locations serves as evidence of this. These localities, or villages, are located in Agatu, Ortukpo, Logo, Kwande,

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[10] My interview with Tyover Iorjah C50 years one of the displaced persons in Jato-Aka town. 23/5/2023
[11] Turner M. D. "Political Ecology and the Moral Dimensions of 'Resource Conflicts': The Case of Farmer-Herder Conflicts in the Sahel." *Political Geography* 23 (7),2004: 854.
[12] Bassett T. J., and Donald C, eds. *Land in African Agrarian Systems*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993;112
[13] Hussein K., James S, and David S. "Increasing Violent Conflict between Herders and Farmers in Africa: Claims and Evidence." *Development Policy Review* 17 (4), 1999: 400.

Ukum, Guma, Gwer West and part of Makurdi Local Government Area which are the main hub of food production that earned the state the slogan of "food basket of the nation." These places have been attacked by the herdsmen with the farmers fleeing for dear life. This has thrown the state into food security challenges.[14]

Analysing the narrative that places the blame for the crisis from 2014 to 2023 on the federal government, security leaders, and Fulani social and cultural organizations

Significant controversy and criticism have been directed at former President Muhammadu Buhari, security chiefs, and Fulani socio-cultural groups as a result of the herders-farmers dispute in Benue State. The people of Benue State and other interested parties have made several accusations against these organizations, citing bias, carelessness, and collusion. Given his Fulani ancestry, one of the primary arguments made against the former president Buhari is the purported ethnic bias. Critics claim that in order to save the predominantly agrarian villages of Benue State from attacks by Fulani herders, his administration failed to act swiftly or forcefully. According to Agbo, "the people of Benue have a general belief that Buhari's administration, because of his ethnic affiliations, has not handled the situation honestly."[15] People who are impacted by this perception feel abandoned by the federal government, which has increased their mistrust and hostility.

Failure to Provide Adequate Security: Despite repeated requests for federal intervention, Buhari came under fire for not sending enough security forces to Benue State. One theory for why violence persists is that there hasn't been a strong enough response. As reported by Amnesty International, "the federal government's delayed and inadequate security measures have been a major factor in the continued violence and loss of life in Benue State."[16]

The Buhari administration's failure to adequately attend to the victims of the crises' humanitarian needs is another point of contention. Many believed that the federal government had disregarded the many pleas for greater aid and support for the impacted areas and displaced people. Orjinta notes that "the federal government's

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[14] My interview with James Luper C.45 years one of the victims in Anyiin in Logo LGA. 23/1/2023

[15] Agbo E. "Ethnic Bias and Presidential Inaction: The Case of Buhari and the Benue Crisis." Journal of Nigerian Political Studies 12, no. 3 ,2019: 45-67.

[16] Amnesty International. "Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes Between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria." *Amnesty International Report,* December 2018

failure to respond adequately to the humanitarian crisis in Benue has exacerbated the suffering of the victims".[17]

Security chiefs have also been accused of failing to stop the violence before it started and of responding to attacks with inefficiency. Many times, this inefficiency has been taken to mean that the impacted communities are not being sufficiently protected. "Security agencies have failed to act on intelligence reports and have not provided adequate protection to vulnerable communities,"[18] the House of Assembly of Benue State stated. Allegations have been made that certain members of the security staff may have participated in the violence by either remaining silent during the attacks or, in certain situations, possibly working with the assailants. "There have been several instances where security forces were accused of standing by during attacks, leading to suspicions of collusion,"[19] according to a Human Rights Watch investigation.

In a related development, the socio-cultural groups belonging to the Fulani people, specifically the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, have been accused with endorsing or justifying the violent herders' acts. Significant mistrust and hostility toward these groups have resulted from the impacted communities' perception of their support. According to Ikhide, "the rhetoric from Fulani leaders has often been seen as justifying the actions of violent herders, which has further fueled the conflict". [20]

Additionally, these groups came under fire for their adamant resistance to the Ranches Establishment and the Open Grazing Prohibition Law passed by the state of Benue. Opponents contend that by opposing these regulations, the Fulani socio-cultural groups are unable to embrace contemporary, peaceful methods for managing livestock, hence sustaining the war. As stated by The Guardian, "the resistance to anti-grazing laws by Fulani groups has been a significant barrier to achieving lasting peace and stability in the region".[21]

Similar to the allegations made against the federal government and security chiefs, who are mainly Fulani at the time of this study, herders from the Fulani ethnic group

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[17] Orjinta C. "The Humanitarian Crisis in Benue: A Call for Federal Intervention." *Journal of African Humanitarian Studies* 9, no. 1 (2020): 22-39.

[18] Benue State House of Assembly. "Resolution on the Role of Security Agencies in Addressing the Herders-Farmers Conflict." Benue State Legislative Records, 2019.

[19] Amnesty International. "Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes Between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria." *Amnesty International Report, December* 2018

[20] Ikhide P. "Miyetti Allah and the Herders-Farmers Crisis: A Critical Analysis." *Journal of Contemporary Nigerian Studies* 15, no. 2 .2020: 78-95.

[21] The Guardian. "Fulani Herdsmen and the Anti-Grazing Law in Benue State." *The Guardian, April* 12, 2019

have also made several accusations against the people of Benue State and other regions of Nigeria. Complaints of violence, discrimination, and restricted access to grazing pastures are common themes in these complaints.

One well-known charge is that the inhabitants of Benue State have been deliberately embroiled in violent conflicts with herders, which have resulted in a significant number of fatalities and destruction of property. Some herders claim that resistance to herding practices and the application of anti-grazing regulations is what has led to these conflicts. As mentioned by Okello, "Herders have accused communities in Benue State of targeting them through violent attacks, claiming that these actions are motivated by ethnic and religious differences".[22]

Furthermore, herders contend that discriminatory anti-open grazing regulations enforced in places such as Benue State have heightened tensions. Their traditional way of life, which depends on having the ability to transport livestock across vast tracts of the country, is unfairly limited, they claim, by these restrictions. Such laws, in their opinion, are "intended to criminalise and marginalise the herding community." [23]

The herders further assert that the Nigerian government often ignores them and offers them no protection. They contend that because the state hasn't given their properties and animals enough security, they're at risk of violence and theft from nearby rural communities. As Abdullahi puts it, "The herders feel abandoned by the government, which they believe is biased towards the agricultural communities".[24]

These grievances are a reflection of Nigeria's larger problems with ethnic conflict, resource competition, and the difficulties in striking a balance between customs and contemporary governmental policies. The charges made by the herders draw attention to the intricate dynamics of interethnic relations and the necessity of inclusive, all-encompassing measures to resolve these disputes.

Displacement Case Studies

The serious effects of conflicts between farmers and herders in Benue State are demonstrated by specific cases of displacement.

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[22] Okello M. "Ethnic Tensions and Conflict between Herders and Farmers in Nigeria." *African Peace Journal* 34, no. 1.2020: 76-89.

[23] Adamu, Musa, and Ben Osei. "Anti-Grazing Laws and Their Impact on Herders in Nigeria." *Journal of African Studies* 45, no. 2 .2021: 110-123.

[24] Abdullahi, I. *Herders and Farmers in Nigeria: Conflicts and Prospects.* Lagos: Lanre Publishers, 2019.

Attacks in the Guma and Logo local government districts in early 2018 that were blamed on Fulani herders left thousands of people homeless and over 70 dead. Many camps for internally displaced people (IDPs) were established as a result of the violence, where displaced people had to live in substandard conditions with no access to basic necessities. "The displacement caused by the 2018 attacks in Guma and Logo has left thousands of people in dire need of humanitarian assistance, with many living in overcrowded and under-resourced IDP camps,"[25] according to a report from the International Crisis Group (International Crisis Group 2020). Long-term repercussions of the relocation include disruptions to the impacted communities'.

Agatu Massacre and Displacement

The Agatu massacre in 2016, where hundreds of people were killed and numerous villages destroyed, led to a significant displacement. Survivors fled to nearby towns and IDP camps, where they struggled to rebuild their lives amidst the ongoing conflict.

According to Idowu, "The Agatu massacre not only resulted in a large loss of life but also forced thousands of people to flee their homes, creating a severe displacement crisis in the region"[26] (Idowu 2016, 98). The displacement has had lasting impacts on the Agatu community, with many displaced persons still unable to return to their homes years after the attack.

Impacts of these conflicts on migration

The conflict between farmers and herders in Benue State has had a significant impact on regional migratory trends. Large-scale migrations have resulted from the war, which centres on the struggle for land and water resources, which has uprooted a sizable number of farmers and herders. A significant rural migration has occurred as a result of the persistent violence, which has compelled many farmers to flee their homes in search of safety. In pursuit of security and a means of subsistence, farmers are forced to migrate to other states or urban areas due to the ongoing conflicts between herders and farmers, according to Nwafor (Nwafor 2020, 65).[27]

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[25] International Crisis Group. Managing Trafficking in Northern Nigeria: Nigeria's Humanitarian Crisis [Report No. 123]. 2020.Retrieved from https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/managing-trafficking-northern-nigeria-nigerias-humanitarian-crisis.

[26] Idowu A.O.; Urban Violence Dimension in Nigeria: Farmers and Herders Onslaught. P.188 AND NOT 98 http://www.agathos-international-review-.com/issues/2016/14/Idowu.pd

[27] Nwafor, P. A. *Agricultural Development and Food Security in Nigeria*. Lagos: Greenleaf Publishing, 2020; 65.

The impact has also been felt by herders, who frequently find that growing animosity and legal constraints prevent them from accessing customary grazing routes and areas. As a result, a large number of herders have moved in quest of safer grazing grounds. The herders in Benue have been forced to travel to other regions or even neighbouring nations where grazing opportunities are thought to be safer and more available due to rising resistance and restrictive rules, as noted by Mbachu (Mbachu 2019, 122).[28]

This displacement born out of crisis has amplified population shifts and prompted migration, putting a strain on local resources and causing overcrowding in some urban areas. "The influx of displaced persons from conflict zones in Benue into urban areas has exacerbated challenges related to housing, employment, and social services"[29]

In addition, the crisis has upset the customary migratory habits of herders, who traditionally engaged in transhumance—moving periodically in pursuit of pastures. These patterns have been drastically disrupted by the conflict, with herders now aiming for permanent migration instead of seasonal travel. The traditional herders' migration routes have been seriously interrupted, as Adetunji notes, which has caused them to migrate in more permanent ways in an effort to find stability and security for their livelihoods (Adetunji 2022, 76).[30]

Conclusion

The herders-farmers conflict in Benue State, characterized by clashes between pastoralist herders and local farming communities, has led to widespread forced migration and displacement. The conflict stems from deep-rooted historical, economic, and environmental factors, including competition over scarce resources, land-use patterns, and environmental degradation. The increasing desertification in northern Nigeria has pushed nomadic herders southward in search of grazing land, while population growth and agricultural expansion in Benue have limited the availability of land, leading to frequent clashes over territory and livelihoods. This struggle for survival has intensified tensions, leading to violence, displacement, and the destruction of property.

Forced migration resulting from these clashes has had profound social, economic, and political consequences. Thousands of people have been displaced from their homes,

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[28] Mbachu, O. *Nigeria's Security Challenges and Policy Responses.* Lagos: University Press, 2019; 122.
[29] Mbachu, O. Nigeria's Security Challenges and Policy Responses. Lagos: University Press,2019; 122.
[30] Adetunji, A. O. *Economic Development and Policy in Nigeria.* Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 2022; 76.

with entire communities uprooted and forced to seek refuge in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps or neighbouring states. This mass displacement has strained local resources, disrupted social and family structures, and increased poverty levels, as many of the displaced have lost access to their farmland, homes, and means of livelihood. The conflict has also deepened ethnic and religious divisions, as herders, primarily from the Fulani ethnic group, often come into conflict with predominantly Christian farming communities in Benue.

Efforts by the government to resolve the conflict, such as the establishment of grazing reserves and anti-open grazing laws, have had limited success, as they often fail to address the root causes of the conflict and are met with resistance from affected parties. Long-term solutions must involve not only resolving disputes over land but also addressing the underlying issues of resource scarcity, climate change, and economic inequalities. Without a comprehensive and sustained effort to address these challenges, forced migration and displacement will continue to plague Benue State, exacerbating the already fragile social and economic situation in the region.

Recommendations

With its origins in rivalry for territory and natural resources, as well as in the cultural and socioeconomic divide between the two groups, the herders-farmers conflict in Benue State, Nigeria, has persisted for a long time. Food security and social cohesion in the area have suffered greatly as a result of the fighting, which has claimed lives, destroyed property, uprooted families, and disrupted agricultural operations.

Promoting Dialogue and Reconciliation

The creation of community leaders, farmers, and herders in local peace committees is essential to promoting social cohesion, communication, and reconciliation. These committees can act as forums for settling land disputes, fostering intergroup trust, and creating cooperative plans for resource management.

Engaging Community Leaders

Traditional leaders and religious leaders are examples of community leaders who are essential in energising their followers and promoting communication. The reconciliation process can be more successful and long-lasting if these figures are included in the peace committees.

Organizing Conflict Resolution Workshops

Conflict resolution workshops can provide herders and farmers with the skills and tools necessary for managing disputes and finding mutually beneficial solutions. These workshops should focus on communication, negotiation, and mediation techniques, as well as the importance of compromise and mutual understanding.

Establishing Grazing Reserves

Grazing reserves can provide herders with designated areas for grazing their livestock, reducing the need to encroach on farmlands. These reserves should be developed in consultation with herders and farmers, ensuring that they meet the needs of both groups and are managed sustainably.

Developing Livestock Value Chains

By making investments in livestock value chains, herders might become less dependent on customary grazing methods and discover new avenues for economic growth. This can involve projects like expanding the availability of veterinary care, raising the productivity of cattle, and facilitating the connection between herders and markets.

Increase in the visibility of security in places prone to conflict by the presence of a larger security force can aid in preventing violence and enabling prompt response to new threats. To foster confidence and trust, security personnel must interact with communities in a courteous and professional manner.

In order to address the underlying causes of the conflict, such as resource management and land tenure difficulties, legislative and policy frameworks must be reviewed and strengthened. It is imperative that laws like the Ranches Establishment Law and the Open Grazing Prohibition in Benue State be implemented and enforced effectively. Tenure disputes can be lessened by making land tenure rights clear and ensuring their equitable distribution. In order to create more inclusive and transparent processes, this may entail evaluating the current land tenure policies and interacting with stakeholders.

Upholding current laws ensuring compliance and discouraging infractions need the effective execution of current regulations, such as the Open Grazing Prohibition and

Ranches Establishment Law in Benue State which is necessary for the ability of law enforcement organizations and making sure they have the tools and assistance they need to do their jobs well.

Supporting Displaced Communities

The provision of a comprehensive assistance to internally displaced persons, including humanitarian relief, livelihood support, and reintegration efforts, is crucial for addressing the consequences of the conflict. Engaging affected communities in the planning and implementation of these interventions is essential for ensuring that they are responsive to their needs and priorities.

Delivering Humanitarian Relief

Delivering humanitarian relief, such as food, shelter, and medical assistance, to displaced communities is a critical first step in addressing their immediate needs. This relief should be provided in a timely and equitable manner, ensuring that it reaches all those in need.

Facilitating Reintegration

Facilitating the reintegration of displaced communities into their home areas or new settlements is essential for enabling them to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. This may involve providing support for rebuilding homes and infrastructure, as well as assistance for restoring agricultural activities and other economic opportunities.

Engaging Community-Based Organizations

Community-based organizations (CBOs) play a crucial role in mobilizing local communities and advocating for their needs and priorities. Engaging CBOs in the development and implementation of interventions can help ensure that they are responsive to local contexts and priorities.

Conclusively, the Nigerian government and relevant stakeholders can work towards a sustainable resolution of the crisis by putting into practice the recommendations made in this paper.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal ties that could improperly influence or slant the papers content. Without financial support from any group directly associated with the conflict between farmers and herders in Benue State, this study was carried out on its own. The writers don't belong to any political, ethnic, or cause-related advocacy groups.

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Abstract

This study investigated talent retention challenges and business performance among African entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom (UK). The collection of data involved the use of a questionnaire, which was distributed to 50 respondents purposively chosen from different locations in the UK, while five respondents were interviewed in addition to the questionnaire. The questionnaire data was analysed through the use of frequency distribution and correlation matrix, while interpretive thematic analysis was used to analyse the responses from the interviewees. The sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK identified the main challenges of talent retention in their businesses in their home countries as follows: inability to provide competitive salaries to employees (72%), limited opportunities for growth in businesses (68%), and inadequate training and development programmes for employees (58%). They identified the main strategies that could be useful for talent retention in their businesses in their home countries as follows: career development programmes (88%), adequate training and development programmes (86%), flexible work arrangements (86%), effective communication (84%), mentorship (82%), and provision of competitive salaries (76%). The findings show the need for African entrepreneurs in the UK to use appropriate strategies to meet the expectations of the talented employees to drive the performance of their businesses in their home countries.

Keywords : Cross-Border Business Management; Diaspora Entrepreneurs; Talent Retention.

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Défis de rétention des talents et performance commerciale chez les entrepreneurs africains au Royaume-Uni

Résumé

Cette étude a examiné les défis de rétention des talents et la performance commerciale chez les entrepreneurs africains au Royaume-Uni. La collecte de données a impliqué l'utilisation d'un questionnaire, qui a été distribué à 50 répondants choisis à dessein dans différents endroits du Royaume-Uni, tandis que cinq répondants ont été interviewés en plus du questionnaire. Les données du questionnaire ont été analysées à l'aide de la distribution de fréquence et de la matrice de corrélation, tandis qu'une analyse thématique interprétative a été utilisée pour analyser les réponses des personnes interviewés. Les défis principaux de la rétention des talents au pays d'origine identifiés par les entrepreneurs africains échantillonnés au Royaume Uni incluent : l'incapacité à offrir des salaires compétitifs aux employés (72 %), les opportunités limitées de croissance dans les entreprises (68 %), et les programmes de formation et de développement inadéquats pour les employés (58 %). Ils ont identifié les principales stratégies qui pourraient être utiles pour retenir les talents dans leurs entreprises dans leurs pays d'origine comme suit : le programmes de développement de carrière (88 %), programmes de formation et de développement adéquats (86 %), modalités de travail flexibles (86 %), la communication efficace (84 %), mentorat (82 %) et l'offre de salaires compétitifs (76 %). Les résultats montrent la nécessité pour des entrepreneurs africains au Royaume-Uni d'utiliser des stratégies appropriées pour répondre aux attentes des employés talentueux afin de stimuler les performances de leurs entreprises dans leurs pays d'origine.

Mots-clés : la gestion des entreprises transfrontalières ; Les entrepreneurs de la diaspora ; la rétention des talents ;

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Introduction

Making a decision that will lead to a sustainable commitment from talented employees is an important requirement for the survival and sustainability of business organisations, especially in a cross-border context, where the employers and employees largely interact remotely. This is because talented employees are the backbone of enterprises, given their contributions to improved business performance in a competitive business environment.[1] Consistent with this background, Jain and Verma[2] noted that:

> Talent retention strategies are critical factors for the survival and growth of any organisation. Managers can build a strong foundation for talent retention to boost business performance. Managers can enhance talent retention of the organisation by focusing on resilience, proactive behaviour and employee empowerment, which holds the power to accelerate the business performance.

Similarly, Mazlan and Jambulingam[3] observed that talent retention strategies comprised different practices by which employers prevent the exit of talented employees from their organisations.

Talent retention has been defined as the process by which employers use appropriate strategies to keep their employees engaged and committed to their jobs in the organisation.[4] A low rate of employee turnover is an indicator of talent retention. Thus, entrepreneurs need to discover the factors affecting the commitment of their employees. It is also necessary for entrepreneurs to find out why their talented employees may decide to quit their jobs.

Many organisations believe in the use of competitive salaries and benefits to achieve talent retention.[5] However, the use of competitive salaries and benefits may not be a sustainable strategy for talent retention in small businesses. As shown in a study by Akinwale[6], a small business refers to any business in which the number of employees

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[1]   Surawski, B. (2019), Zeidan S. and Itani, N. 2020).

[2]   N. Jain, and P. Verma, (2022.

[3]   Mazlan, M. R. M. and Jambulingam, M. (2023)

[4]   Narayanan, A. Rajithakumar, S. and Menon, M. (2019).

[5]   Zhang, M. Fried, D. D. and Griffeth, R. W. (2012). ".

[6]   Akinwale A. A. (2019).

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ranges from 11 to 35 workers and the total cost ranges from at least ₦1 million and above, including working capital but excluding cost of land.

It has been shown that 40% of workers in small businesses in Kenya resigned for several reasons other than salary, including lack of succession planning, hostile work environment, lack of recognition, and lack of flexible work arrangements.[7]

Kossek et al[8] noted that entrepreneurs in African enterprises could meet the expectations of their employees if they provide flexible work arrangements and healthy work environment. This is consistent with the main argument in the job embeddedness theory, showing factors influencing talent retention.[9] The identified factors influencing employee retention comprise some indicators of job satisfaction and organisational commitment, including positive work environment, opportunities for career advancement, and affiliations with colleagues, mentors, and acquaintances, among others.

The issue of talent retention can also be examined from the exchange theory of organisational behaviour, showing the outcomes of rewards and costs incurred in the interactions between employers and employees.[10] In this context, addressing the challenges of talent retention requires entrepreneurs' ability to understand and meet the expectations of their employees, given that competent employees are usually responsible for carrying out the activities and operations of a business organisation.

The persistence of high rates of employee turnover in many businesses in Africa suggests that talent retention is a major challenge among African entrepreneurs.[11] A report showed that 64% of entrepreneurs in small businesses in Africa found it difficult to retain talented employees in their businesses.[12] Another report showed that the failure of entrepreneurs to retain talented employees in their businesses could create adverse impact on business performance, especially if the talented employees depart from the businesses after receiving training.[13] Figure 1 demonstrates the link between talent retention and business performance.

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[7]   Workforce Africa, *Employee Retention Strategies.*.
[8]   Kossek, E. E. Ruderman, M. N. Braddy, P. W. and Hannum, K. M. (2017.
[9]   Martdianty, F. Coetzer, A. and Susomrith, P. (2020), Mitchell, T. R. Holtom, B. C. Lee, T. W. Sablynski, C. J. and Erez, M. (2001)"
[10] Armstrong, M. and Taylor, S. (2023)..
[11] Amah, O. E. and Oyetunde, K. (2020).
[12] Brand, A. (2023)..
[13] Armstrong, M.and Taylor, S. (2023)..
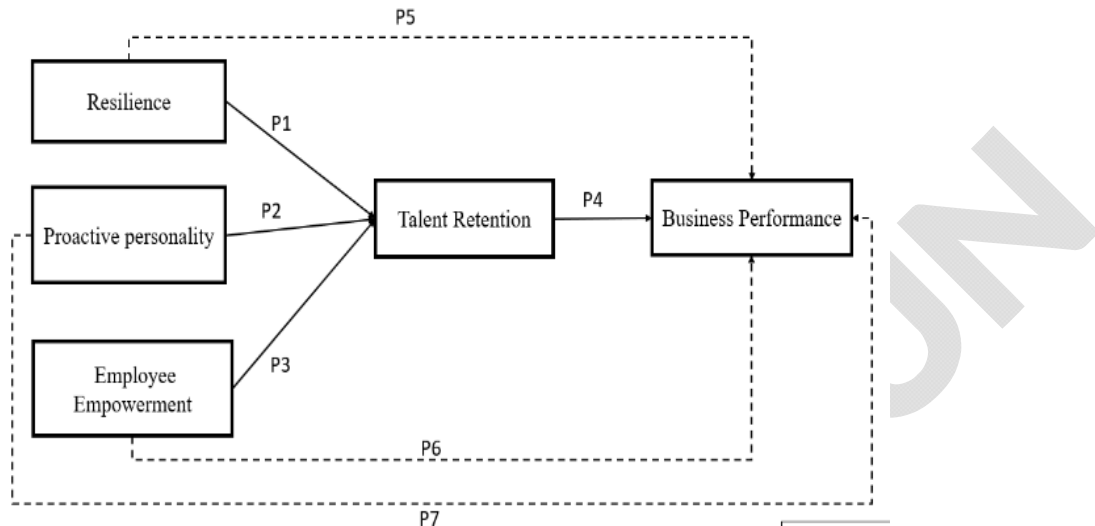
Fig. 1: The Link between Talent Retention and Business Performance
Source: Jain and Verma[14]

The connection between talent retention and business performance can manifest when entrepreneurs motivate their employees to meet certain targets in order to enhance the profitability of their businesses[15].

A major factor contributing to high rates of employees' turnover could be the absence of adequate talent retention strategies. In this regard, entrepreneurs are expected to recognize the need to use an appropriate strategy for retention of talented employees in their businesses by taking actions that will make the talented employees remain committed.[16]

Some researchers corroborated the above-mentioned observation by showing that entrepreneurs can retain their talented employees through engagement practices and employees participation in the management of businesses.[17] Similarly, some studies have shown that entrepreneurs can retain their talented employees by using some strategies such as career growth opportunities, training and development programmes, innovation, and change management.[18]

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[14]   Jain, N. and Verma, P. (2022)..
[15]   Hoerl, R. W. and Snee, R. D. (2020).
[16]   Tarar, A. R. (2021).
[17]   Cui, W. Khan, Z. and Tarba, S. Y. (2018). ".
[18]   J. Bass, S. Beecham, M. Razzak, and J. Noll, (2018).

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The above-mentioned strategies of talent retention may be useful to African entrepreneurs in cross-border management of their businesses, given that lack of physical presence of the entrepreneurs, who are running their businesses remotely, may impede efforts to ensure talent retention for the survival and sustainability of their businesses.

Existing studies on talent retention challenges in Africa largely focus on the experience of African entrepreneurs in Africa. This study focuses on the experience of African entrepreneurs in the UK to reveal the challenges of talent retention and business performance in the context of cross-border management of small businesses.

Studies have shown how entrepreneurs in the diaspora contributed to economic development in their countries of origin through remittances and establishment of small businesses, among others.[19] Therefore, this study will make valuable contributions to knowledge in the areas of challenges of talent retention and business performance among entrepreneurs in cross-border management of small businesses.

Objectives

This study examined challenges of talent retention and business performance among African entrepreneurs in the UK, with a focus on the following specific objectives:
1. Identifying the challenges of talent retention from the experience of African entrepreneurs in the UK
2. Highlighting the strategies for addressing talent retention challenges from the experience of African entrepreneurs in the UK
3. Assessing the correlation between talent retention challenges, talent retention strategies, and business performance from the experience of African entrepreneurs in the UK

Materials and Methods

This study was carried out through a survey research method, including a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. A survey research method was adopted in this

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[19] Chand, M. (2016), Stoyanov, S. Woodward, R. and Stoyanova, V. (2018)

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study because it is suitable for acquiring numerical data and personal insights on the subject matter of the study from a cross section of the study population.[20] Survey research method is realistic and economical as it makes a timely collection of data from the study population possible.[21]

Considering lack of accurate data on the actual number of African entrepreneurs in the UK, a purposive method of sampling was adopted to select 55 respondents among the available African entrepreneurs in the UK, who had practised cross-border management of small businesses.

As shown in some studies on sample size determination such as Rahman[22] and Althubaiti[23], a sample size that is relatively small is sufficient for a study in which the research model is not too complex and the effect of an independent variable is easily identifiable. Thus, a small sample size was used for this study because the research model in this study is not too complex and the effect of talent retention challenges on business performance can easily be identified from the experiences of African entrepreneurs in the UK, who had practised cross-border management of small businesses.

Collection of data was done through a questionnaire, which was distributed to 50 respondents purposively chosen from different locations in the UK, while five participants were interviewed in addition to the questionnaire data. The structured questionnaire comprised questions on background information, including age, nationality, duration of residence in the UK, and line of cross-border business operations. The questionnaire also comprised several Likert scale questions concerning talent retention challenges, talent retention strategies, and business performance.

Regarding compliance with research ethics, the research objectives and the right to voluntarily participate in the survey were clearly communicated to the respondents. The respondents were also informed of their rights concerning other ethical principles such as safety, anonymity, confidentiality, integrity and respect.[24] Eventually, the respondents gave their consent before they participated in the study, which was carried

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[20] Bryman, A. (2016).
[21] Flick, U. (2018).
[22] Rahman, M. M. (2023).
[23] Althubaiti, A. (2023).
[24] Babbie, E. (2021).

out in compliance with the ethical approval and guidelines from the Birmingham City University.

The questionnaire data was analysed through frequency distribution and correlation matrix, while interpretive thematic technique was used to analyse the responses from the interviewees. An interpretive thematic technique is suitable for an evaluation of individual experiences and the implications of the experiences.[25]

Results

The respondents' background comprised age, duration of residence in the UK, nationality and line of cross-border business operations. Table 1 shows the respondents' background, including age, duration of residence in the UK, nationality and line of cross-border business operations. The highest proportions of the respondents (78%) were in the 25-34 years age bracket, followed by 12% in the 35-44 years age bracket, thereby showing that the highest proportions of the surveyed African entrepreneurs in the UK are involved in youth-led cross-border management of small businesses.

Table 1: The Respondents' Background

The Respondents' Background	Frequency (Total = 50)	Percent (100%)
Age (Years):		
18-24	4	8
25-34	39	78
35-44	6	12
45 and Above	1	2
Duration of Residence in the UK (Years):	17	34
< 1	30	60
1-3	1	2
4-6	2	4
7 and Above		

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[25]   Saunders, M. Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019).

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Nationality:		
East Africa	1	2
Southern Africa	1	2
West Africa	48	96
Line of Business in Home Countries:		
Fashion	9	18
Food	5	10
Retails	8	16
Services	16	32
Others	12	24

Source: Survey 2024

Regarding the duration of their residence in the UK, most respondents (94%) had resided in the UK for a relatively short period ranging from less than one year to 1-3 years. This finding is a reflection of their immigration status and the type of visa they received from their home countries.

The nationality of the respondents was diverse. Most of the surveyed African entrepreneurs in the UK (96%) identified with West African nationalities, while a negligible minority originated from East Africa and Southern Africa. This finding suggests that the majority of the surveyed African entrepreneur in the UK were immigrants from West Africa.

The respondents' line of cross-border business operations comprised fashion, food, retail, and services, among others. The highest proportions of the respondents (32% and 24%) were operating services and a wide range of business activities in cross-border management of business operations. This was followed by those operating fashion (18%), retail (16%), and food (10%) businesses, respectively. The finding on the respondents' line of cross-border business operations suggests that the challenges of talent retention among African entrepreneurs in the UK cut across different sectors of cross-border business operations.

Table 2 shows the respondents' views on talent retention challenges among African entrepreneurs in the UK. The sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK identified the main challenges of talent retention in their cross-border business operations as follows: inability to provide competitive salaries to employees (72%), limited opportunities for growth in businesses (68%), and inadequate training and development programmes for employees (58%). This finding shows that many

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African entrepreneurs in the UK have not been able to meet the expectations of the employees in their cross-border business operations.

Table 2: The Respondents' Views on Talent Retention Challenges

Talent Retention Challenges	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree/SD	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Lack of competitive salaries	10	20	26	52	8	16	6	12
Limited opportunities for growth in the business	11	22	23	46	9	18	7	14
Inadequate training and development for employees	9	18	20	40	13	26	8	16

Source: Survey 2024

Moreover, four out of the five participants in the in-depth interviews identified some other challenges of talent retention as lack of regular and effective communication with the talented employees in cross-border business operations. All the participants in this category expressed their inability to foster a personal connection with their employees, thereby making it difficult to build trust, understand the attitudes of the talented employees, and address any other concerns of the talented employees in their cross-border business operations. Also, all the participants in the in-depth interviews noted that cross-border management of business operations made it very difficult to gauge the level of commitment of the talented employees and compliance with the values of the enterprises.

Table 3 shows the respondents' views on talent retention strategies among the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK. The sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK identified the main strategies that could be useful for talent retention in their cross-border businesses as follows: career development programmes (88%), adequate training and development programmes (86%), flexible work arrangements (86%), effective communication (84%), mentorship (82%), and provision of competitive salaries (76%).

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Table 3: The Respondents' Views on Talent Retention Strategies

Talent Retention Strategies	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree/SD	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Provision of competitive salaries	10	20	28	56	7	14	5	10
Adequate training and development for employees	21	42	22	44	6	12	1	2
Flexible work arrangements	22	44	21	42	6	12	1	2
Mentorship	14	28	27	54	7	14	2	4
Career development programmes	17	34	27	54	4	8	2	4
Virtual meetings for effective communication	23	46	19	38	7	14	1	2

Source: Survey 2024

All the participants in the in-depth interviews provided some insights into the talent retention strategies among the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK. They shared their experiences concerning the strategies they used in addressing the challenges of talent retention in their cross-border business operations, where they used different strategies such as encouragement of team work, the use of virtual meetings for effective communication, and prompt responses to issues arising from cross-border management of business operations. In explaining their personal experience of talent retention strategies, some participants noted thus:

> I have started using virtual team meetings to keep everyone in the loop and to foster a sense of unity. I have introduced performance bonuses to incentivize my team when they work overtime. (IDI 1 African Entrepreneur in the UK, 2024)

> I introduced the use of project management to simplify operations and keep track of tasks for smooth business operation. Offering competitive compensation packages and opportunities for professional growth are also part of my strategies. (IDI 2 African Entrepreneur in the UK, 2024)

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Firstly, I employ a thorough recruitment process to screen out the unserious candidates. Secondly, I encourage the culture of open communication and feedback to ensure everyone is comfortable with their roles. Together, these strategies reflect a comprehensive approach to cultivating a committed and cohesive remote team. (IDI 3 African Entrepreneur in the UK, 2024)

Table 4 shows the linkages between challenges of talent retention, talent retention strategies, and business performance from the experiences of the surveyed African entrepreneurs in the UK. The challenges of talent retention positively correlated with the talent retention strategies used by the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK (r = .295, p = .038), showing that the talent retention strategies used by the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK reflected their perception of talent retention challenges.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Talent Retention Challenges, Talent Retention Strategies and Business Performance

Correlation Matrix	Talent Retention Challenges	Talent Retention Strategies	Business Performance
Talent Retention Challenges	1	.295*	.400**
Talent Retention Strategies	.295*	1	.437**
Business Performance	.400**	.437**	1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Moreover, the challenges of talent retention among the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK positively correlated with their perception of business performance in their cross-border business operations (r = .400, p = .004), showing that the challenges of talent retention adversely affected business performance. Furthermore, the talent retention strategies used by the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK positively correlated with their perception of business performance in their cross-border business operations (r = .437, p = .002), showing that as the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK utilized more talent retention strategies, their business performance improved.

The findings on the linkages between the challenges of talent retention, talent retention strategies and business performance clearly show the implications of the challenges of

talent retention from the experiences of the surveyed African entrepreneurs in the UK, who had practiced cross-border management of business operations. This implies that talent retention challenges received a considerable attention from the entrepreneurs.

Discussions

The top challenges of talent retention identified by African entrepreneurs in the UK comprised the following: lack of competitive salaries for employees (72%), inadequate opportunities for growth in small businesses (68%), and inadequate training and development programmes for employees (58%). The other main challenges of talent retention among the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK comprised lack of regular and effective communication with talented employees and difficulties in gauging the level of commitment of talented employees and compliance with the values of the businesses.

The above-mentioned findings are consistent with the results of some studies in the literature. For instance, Brand[26] revealed that many enterprises were unable to retain their talented employees as a result of lack of competitive salaries and benefits, while Kohlmeyer et al.[27] found that access to opportunities for career development could make some talented employees decide to remain in their employers' business organisations.

The talent retention strategies, which the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK considered as necessary and important in the cross-border management of their businesses comprised the following: career development programmes (88%), adequate training and development programmes (86%), flexible work arrangements (86%), effective communication (84%), mentorship (82%), and provision of competitive salaries (76%), while some other strategies focused on team cohesion and adapting to the unique demands of cross-border management of business operations.

The above-mentioned findings on talent retention strategies reinforce the main conclusion in a study by Kossek et al.[28], showing that entrepreneurs in African enterprises could meet the expectations of their employees if they provide flexible work arrangements and healthy work environment, which could enhance job satisfaction, improved employee performance, and organisational commitment.

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[26] Brand, A. (2023).
[27] Kohlmeyer, J. M. Parker, R. J. and Sincich, T. (2017).
[28] Kossek, E. E. Ruderman, M. N. Braddy, P. W. and Hannum, K. M. (2017).

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Similarly, in their recent study on talent retention challenges, Mazlan and Jambulingam[29] observed that talent retention strategies comprised different practices by which employers prevent the exit of talented employees from their organisations, including provision of career growth opportunities and training and development programmes.

The finding on the strategies for dealing with the challenges of talent retention confirms the importance of job embeddedness theory and the exchange theory of organisational behaviour, given that the surveyed African entrepreneurs in the UK recognised the need for making their talented employee experience a positive work environment and career development opportunities.

Consistent with the findings on talent retention strategies in this study, Mazlan and Jambulingam[30] noted that using appropriate talent retention strategies will make it possible for employers to achieve talent retention, which will in turn boost the performance of their organisations. This confirms the respondents' views on the specific talent retention strategies, which they considered suitable for addressing the challenges of talent retention and business performance in the context of cross-border management of small businesses.

Conclusion

This study examined the challenges of talent retention and business performance among African entrepreneurs in the UK, including the effectiveness of the strategies they employed in addressing the challenges. By identifying and addressing talent retention challenges in their businesses, African entrepreneurs in the UK can enhance their workforce management strategies for improved business performance. The talent retention challenges identified comprised inability to provide competitive salaries, limited opportunities for growth in businesses, inadequate training programmes, difficulties in maintaining regular and effective communication, and difficulties in measuring the level of employees' commitment.

From the experiences of the sampled African entrepreneurs in the UK, this study has demonstrated the challenges of talent retention in cross-border management of small businesses. thereby showing the resilience and adaptability of African entrepreneurs in cross-border management of small businesses. This was evident in their expressions

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[29] Mazlan, M. R. M. and Jambulingam, M. (2023)
[30] Ibid.

of talent retention strategies in terms of career development programmes, adequate training and development programmes, flexible work arrangements, effective communication, mentorship programmes, provision of competitive salaries, team cohesion, and adapting to the unique demands of cross-border management of business operations.

Managing the challenges of talent retention can enhance business performance. Business owners who can effectively retain competent employees are more likely to experience a sustainable improvement in the performance of their businesses, given that the exit of key employees can lead to a significant reduction in the level of business performance.

The study demonstrated the interactions between talent retention challenges, talent retention strategies and business performance from the experiences of cross-border business management by African entrepreneurs in the UK. Therefore, a combination of sustainable strategies and practices geared towards enhancing talent retention can be a strategic approach for African entrepreneurs to manage their businesses effectively in a cross-border context. A single strategy may be inadequate to deal with talent retention challenges.

Considering the shades of opinions on talent retention challenges and the strategies employed in addressing the challenges across business operations in the context of cross-border business management, there is no guarantee that African entrepreneurs in the UK can achieve talent retention through only one strategy. For instance, provision of training and development opportunities for employees could make the employees more marketable and change jobs instead of remaining with their employers, except if there are other considerations, which can enhance employees' commitment to their employers.

Finally, it is important to note that the success of a business organisation requires collaboration between the business owners and their talented employees, as both parties need to agree on the modalities for meeting business targets. If the talented employees feel neglected in decision-making they may decide to quit or work at their own pace, thereby deliberately failing to meet the expectations of the business owners.

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Recommendations

The main findings presented in this study show the need to promote sustainable strategies of talent retention for the survival and sustainability of businesses in Africa. Therefore, the African entrepreneurs in the UK, who are involved in cross-border management of businesses, should give adequate attention and consideration to the following recommendations as they practise cross-border management of their businesses:

1.   The entrepreneurs should create ample time to adequately observe employees' attitude to work and take necessary precautions towards preventing the likelihood of talent turnover in their businesses.

2.   The entrepreneurs should demonstrate a significant interest in tackling the talent retention challenges by using a variety of highly effective strategies to promote team work, workplace justice, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment.

3.   The entrepreneurs should refine their talent retention strategies from time to time to reflect the emerging changes in the business environment in their home countries. This is necessary to cushion the impact of macro-economic factors such as exchange rate volatility and inflation on the purchasing power of the employees.

4.   The entrepreneurs should provide an innovative compensation and reward system to make their employees reluctant to think about departure from their businesses. Such compensation and reward system may include salaries and allowances, profit sharing, bonuses, quarterly picnic, end of the year welfare package, and other benefits, depending on employees' levels of contributions to business performance.

5.   The entrepreneurs should put succession plans in the front burner as they implement various talent retention strategies such as career development opportunities, training programmes, and mentorship.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors hereby confirmed non-existence of any conflict of interest in connection with this article.

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Evaluating the Factors Influencing the Perception of Young Healthcare Professionals Towards Labour Emigration in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nations of the world has the obligation to have appropriate representation of the health care professionals in their regions to enhance the universal coverage of their citizens. Young health care professionals who perhaps, can easily adapt to globalizations have become the new target for labour migration in Nigeria. This might be occasioned by the gap or deficit created by COVID-19 deaths in the developed world. The study therefore, engaged students on the verge of graduation to elicit the local factors driving their perception for labour migration. The study utilized simple random sampling technique to get to the prospective respondents. The copies of quantitative questionnaires were administered to 384 final year students studying medicine, nursing, and other paramedical sciences (medical laboratory science, pharmacy and physiotherapy). The data collected were analyzed using ordinal regression. The results show that perception about national security (B = 1.615, p < 0.001) and health workers' welfare challenges (B = 1.160, p < 0.001) are the driving force for endorsing labour migration for young healthcare professionals. This perception for labour migration might create challenges for our health indices such as perceived maternal and child morbidity and mortality, among others, and the nations strive to achieving some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) might be threatened. There is therefore, need for stakeholders in the healthcare sector to come up with inclusive strategic plans that could ameliorate the brain drain in the health sector.

Keywords: Healthcare workforce, Health workers welfare, Labour migration, Security, Young healthcare professionals

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Évaluation des facteurs influençant la perception des jeunes professionnels de la santé à l'égard de l'émigration de main-d'œuvre au Nigéria

Résumé

Les nations du monde ont la responsabilité d'avoir une représentation appropriée des professionnels de la santé dans leurs régions afin d'améliorer la couverture universelle de leurs citoyens. Les jeunes professionnels de la santé qui peuvent peut-être facilement s'adapter à la mondialisation sont devenus la nouvelle cible de la migration de main-d'œuvre au Nigéria. Cela pourrait être dû à l'écart ou au déficit créé par les décès dus au COVID-19 dans les pays développés. L'étude a donc engagé des étudiants sur le point d'obtenir leur diplôme pour connaître les facteurs locaux qui motivent leur perception de la migration économique. L'étude a utilisé une technique d'échantillonnage aléatoire simple pour choisir les répondants potentiels. Les copies de questionnaires quantitatifs ont été administrées aux 384 étudiants de dernière année en médecine, en infirmiers et dans d'autres sciences paramédicales (sciences de laboratoire médical, pharmacie et physiothérapie). Les données collectées ont été analysées à l'aide d'une régression ordinale. Les résultats montrent que la perception de la sécurité nationale (B = 1,615, p < 0,001) et les problèmes de bien-être des travailleurs de la santé (B = 1,160, p < 0,001) sont les facteurs moteurs de l'adhésion à la migration de main-d'œuvre pour les jeunes professionnels de la santé. Cette perception de la migration de main-d'œuvre pourrait créer des défis pour nos indices de santé tels que la morbidité et la mortalité maternelles et infantiles perçues, entre autres, et les nations qui s'efforcent d'atteindre certains des Objectifs de développement durable (ODD) pourraient être menacées. Il est donc nécessaire que les parties prenantes du secteur de la santé élaborent des plans stratégiques inclusifs qui pourraient atténuer la fuite des cerveaux dans le secteur de la santé.

Mots-clés : Personnel de santé, Bien-être des travailleurs de la santé, Migration de main-d'œuvre, Sécurité, Jeunes professionnels de la santé

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Introduction

Nations and organisations get some level of sustainability from the "feeder team" – the young ones who will eventually take the mantle of leadership in their different professions. In the health sector, the early career professionals addressed here are the final year students in Medicine, Degree Nursing and Paramedical Sciences (Medical Laboratory Sciences, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy). These young healthcare professionals are so essential due to their resilience, adaptability to new technologies, and their fast-learning curves. A study by Aslund, Anders and Oskar (2009)[1] indicated that early migration has a higher index for successful integration in the labour market. An added advantage of the young professionals is the ability to take much higher work load with little strain as most of them might not be experiencing the co-morbidities that come with aging. It is, therefore, pertinent to work out modalities that could make this young health care professionals to practice in their own nations that trained them. However, certain local factors might hinder these aspirations especially in the developing countries. The study, therefore, considered eliciting the local unfavourable factors that could influence young healthcare professionals' perception for labour migration. The local factors considered include, perception of infrastructural facilities (health facilities), national security and welfare of the health workers.

The relevance of this study cannot be overemphasized as there is paucity of literature on the perception of the young health workers and migration. This paucity of information is buttressed by United Nations Secretary-General in 2014 when he stated that the nexus between youth and migration is huge and means to addressing the challenges are inadequate[2]. The study, therefore, undertook the underlisted objectives for analysis.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives are to:
1. examine the perceived influence of infrastructure (health facilities) on the young healthcare professionals towards labour migration in Nigeria
2. to investigate the perceived influence of the national security on the young healthcare professionals, towards labour migration in Nigeria

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[1] Aslund, Olof; Bohlmark, Anders and Nordstrom Skans, Oskar (2009) Age at Migration and Social Integration (Bonn: IZA Discussion Paper No. 4263)

[2] UN 2014. Migration and Youth: International Migrants Day 2014

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3.   to evaluate the perceived influence of the welfare of health workers on the young healthcare professionals, towards labour migration in Nigeria

Adequate healthcare infrastructural facilities are some of the factors that could enhance professionalism as it provides the platform to put theory into practice for a better patients' outcome. In parts of Africa, the basic infrastructure such as regular water supply[3] and constant power supply[4] is lacking in close to half of the primary health services. Poor funding in developing countries such as Nigeria has led to inadequacy of diagnostic tools, which is the hallmark of modern medical practice as only 15% of populations in Africa can access diagnostic services[5]. Inappropriate diagnostic tools could lead to wrong diagnosis, complicating the patients' conditions and resulting to increased admissions, giving rise to competitions for bed spaces. In Africa, for critically ill people, there is 1 intensive-care bed for 100,000 population[6], however, India has 7 intensive-care beds for 100,000 population[7].

The most important duty of any government as enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution is the protection of life and property (Adamu & Rasheed, 2016)[8]. This enables everyone within the governed space to apply their trade and investments with confidence. Nigeria is having its own share of security challenges, ranging from terrorism by the Boko Haram, banditry, kidnappings, militancy and secessionist agendas. These diverse security challenges have capacity to minimise opportunities and creativities of the employees and entrepreneurs within that domain (Poole, 2021)[9]. The perception of the capacity of these threats to one's survival and career development could be enough push factor for migration (Adhikari, 2013)[10]. The limiting factor of insecurity is not only operational at the individual level, as studies have shown that the nations plagued by conflicts could not achieve any of the Millenium Development Goals (United Nations, 2019)[11]. There is the need, therefore, for a concerted effort to tackle insecurity nation-wide if we hope to retain our young

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[3]   WASH in health care facilities: Global Baseline Report 2019
[4]   WHO/World Bank report "Access to Modern Energy Services for Health Facilities in Resource-Constrained Settings". One in 4 health facilities was found without access to electricity
[5]   African Development Bank Group 2022. Strategy for quality health infrastructure in Africa 2022-2030
[6]   Craig, J., Kalanxhi, E. and Hauck, S., 2020. "National estimates of critical care capacity in 54 African countries",
[7]   International cancer control portal, India country report, International Cancer Control Partnership, 2020.
[8]   Adamu, A., and Z. H. Rasheed. "Effects of Insecurity on the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Northern Nigeria
[9]   Poole, A., 2021. Migration as conflict risk-management: Testing the new economics of labour migration as a framework for understanding refugee decision-making
[10]   Adhikari, P., 2013. Conflict-induced displacement, understanding the causes of flight. American Journal of Political Science 57, 82–89.
[11]   United Nations, 2019. International migrant stock 2019

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healthcare professionals and strive towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The reward system in any organisation or nation could determine the turnover of the employees and perhaps, their level of commitment. This is because, financial motivation is an important pull factor for employees globally. The popular West African poll survey carried on Nigerian doctors showed the impact of poor remuneration in driving emigration of doctors to the developed countries (NOIPolls. 2018)[12]. This outcome was buttressed by a study of migration in six African countries which showed that poor remuneration increases the tendency of labour emigration to the developed world (Awases *et al.*, 2004)[13]. The study by Adebayo and Akinyemi (2022)[14] added other variables, apart from good salary in the developed world, to include conducive working environment and opportunities for career development abroad as triggers for emigration. This perhaps, draws the attention of the Nigerian government to the need for the current upward review of the national minimum wage to Seventy Thousand Naira (70,000.00) a month, particularly with the current exchange rate of over a Thousand and Five Hundred Naira to a Dollar (N1,500=1$).

Controlling international migration has become a tasking socio-economic and political dimension, more so, with the rising insecurities, high youth unemployment, political instabilities, ecological problems, among others in different parts of the world. Individuals' experiences of these brands of insecurities could be devastating and could be driving their responses to migrate at all odds (Schon, 2019; Steele, 2019).[15,16] There is therefore, the need for a delicate balancing in the migration checks, so that no regions' healthcare system will be rendered dysfunctional.

The study leveraged on the theory by Everett Spurgeon Lee[17], a sociologist, who conceptualised the Theory of Migration in 1966, which was an enhancement of earlier Ravenstein's 'Law of Migration' published in 1885. The theory of migration is also known as the "push-pull theory." The theory explains the positive (pull: compels one to stay) and negative (push: compels one to leave) characteristics of a given place. There is also the perception of the differences between the place of domain and place

[12]   NOIPolls. 2018. Emigration of Nigerian Medical Doctors.
[13]   Awases, *et al*. 2004. Migration of Health Professionals in Six Countries: A Synthesis Report.
[14]   Adebayo, A., and O. O. Akinyemi. 2022. "What Are You Really Doing in This Country?": Emigration Intentions of Nigerian Doctors and Their Policy Implications for Human Resource for Health Management."
[15]   Schon, J., 2019. Motivation and opportunity for conflict-induced migration: An analysis of Syrian migration timing. Journal of Peace Research 56, 12–27
[16]   Steele, A., 2019. Civilian resettlement patterns in civil war. Journal of peace research 56, 28–41.
[17]   Everett, Spurgeon Lee. 1966. A Theory of Migration. Demography, 3(1), 47-57

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of destination. Labour emigration is considered when the push factors overwhelm the pull factors within a particular domain, such as overwhelming security challenges and poor emoluments. To retain employees, therefore, the pull factors have to be strengthened or reinforced.

Materials and Methods

Quantitative method was used for the study, which also involved cross-sectional survey. The population of study include final year medical students, nursing students, and other paramedical final year students in pharmacy, medical laboratory science and physiotherapy at the University of Lagos, College of Medicine. The five (5) point Likert scale was used to get the respondents perception on how health facilities condition, security issues and welfare of health workers could influence them to consider practicing outside the country after graduation. The mean of these Likert scale variables will be calculated and used in the analysis.

The sample size of the study was determined using the Cochran (1963)[18] formula

$$ n = \frac{}{} $$

$$ n = \frac{.\quad.\quad(\ .\ )}{.} = 384 $$

where, n is the sample size, z is the selected critical value of desired confidence level, p is the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population, q=1-p and D is the desired level of precision (acceptable error).

Where z = 1.96 which is z value for 95% confidence limits, p is 0.5, q= (1-p) = 0.5, and D= 0.05% which is the acceptable error of the estimator at 95% confidence interval.

The reliability of the instrument from the pilot study was done, and the Cronbach's alpha was 0.82. The content and face validity of the items in the questionnaire were reviewed by experts in Psychology, Human Resources and Employment Relations and Sociology and their corrections were effected to enhance the quality of the questionnaire.

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[18]   Cochran, W. G. 1963. Sampling Techniques, 2nd Ed., New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc

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Sampling technique involved the use of simple random sampling to distribute copies of questionnaires to the 384 final year students in the category. The questionnaires were distributed to the students present in their classes just before their lectures started, after obtaining consent. The researcher and the assistants waited to collect the copies of the questionnaire from the students in order to enhance their participation. Three hundred of the questionnaires were duly completed, giving a response rate of 78%.

The data collected was tested for normality and ordinal regression analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.

Results

The results of the data analysis are as documented below:
Table 1: Test of Normality

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		Shapiro-Wilk	
	Statistic	Sig.	Statistic	Sig.
IFS	0.119	0.000	0.954	0.000
SEC	0.253	0.000	0.851	0.000
WELL	0.264	0.000	0.845	0.000

IFS (health infrastructure), SEC (security), WELL (health workers welfare)

Test of normality shows whether the data from the variables follow a normal distribution. The p –value of the variables is statistically significant both for Kolmogorov-Smirnov [for sample size more than 100] and Shapiro-Wilk [for sample size less than 100]. Therefore, the variables do not follow a normal distribution, ordinal regression was used in place of linear regression.

Table 2: Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.640	.409	.403	.48729	.409	68.300	3	296	.000

The Model Summary has a p – value < 0.01, indicating that the regression model fits the data. The R^2 value of 0.409 shows that the independent variables (health infrastructure), SEC (security), WELL (health workers welfare), cumulatively

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explained 40.9% variability in the perception of young healthcare professionals to emigrate outside the country for professional practice.

Table 3: Ordinal Regression of the Influence of Independent Variables on Migration

Parameter		B	Std. Error	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Wald Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
						Lower	Upper
Threshold	[MIG=2.00]	5.425	1.1383	.000	226.965	24.382	2112.779
	[MIG=3.00]	6.475	1.1037	.000	648.974	74.601	5645.582
	[MIG=3.25]	7.758	1.1011	.000	2339.473	270.299	20248.422
	[MIG=3.50]	8.262	1.1017	.000	3873.764	447.041	33567.482
	[MIG=3.75]	9.119	1.1053	.000	9129.321	1046.159	79667.144
	[MIG=4.00]	10.559	1.1304	0.000	38522.542	4202.525	353117.730
	[MIG=4.25]	11.471	1.1633	0.000	95848.527	9803.545	937103.869
	[MIG=4.50]	12.314	1.2260	0.000	222890.858	20159.947	2464308.727
	[MIG=4.75]	12.965	1.3023	0.000	427002.152	33256.063	5482634.431
IFS		.176	.2337	.451	1.193	.754	1.886
SEC		1.615	.1983	.000	5.026	3.407	7.413
WELL		1.160	.2296	.000	3.189	2.033	5.001

Dependent Variable: Migration (MIG)
Model: (Intercept), IFS (health infrastructure), SEC (security), WELL (health workers welfare)

The threshold rows indicate different categories of the variable "perception for labour migration" (which is the dependent variable) and each coefficient (B) shows the log odds of moving from one category of migration to the next higher category.

The table 3 shows that perception about the influence of national security in determining young healthcare professionals labour emigration is a positive one, and is statistically significant (B = 1.615, p < 0.001). The odds ratio of 5.026 indicates that, for every unit increase in the national security challenges, there is 5.026 odds of the young health professionals endorsing emigration. Also, every unit increase in the health workers welfare challenges, there is 3.189 odds of the young healthcare professional's perception endorsing labour emigration (B = 1.160, p < 0.001). However, the influence of health infrastructure is not statistically significant (B = 0.176, p > 0.05).

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Discussion

The study examined how perception of challenges in health facilities, national security and health workers welfare in making young healthcare professionals to endorse labour emigration on graduation. The young professionals arguably, are the bedrock of any industry, and gives hope of sustainability of any profession. Their importance in healthcare cannot be overemphasized, as they bring in their youthful energy and technological advantage into the industry. Retaining young professionals within certain geographical boundaries could be a challenge, as they see themselves as global citizens. Understanding their perception towards labour migration could, therefore, be meaningful for national workforce planning. The perception of security challenges was considered as the most potent push factor for consideration of emigration.

The outcome corroborated the study by Adhikari (2013) which showed that insecurity in the area of domain could make individuals to perceive limitations on self-development and therefore, decide to emigrate to regions more conductive for career development. Security challenges could impede young healthcare professionals from attending local conferences and workshops, and might minimise exchange programmes among schools. Limitations in self-development could broaden to cut across decisions to invest in physical infrastructure for entrepreneurship. Investors' fear of security challenges could cut down the level of entrepreneurship in the area. This could reduce the development of the area, and minimise the national development. Perhaps, this might be the reason that the Nigerian Constitution was emphatic on protection of life and property as the primary aim of the government (Adamu and Rasheed, 2016). The endorsement of labour migration based on security challenges could be a reflection that Nigeria is not yet winning the war against insurgency, banditry, kidnappings and militancy that is affecting the different regions of the country.

Health workers' welfare challenges could range from salaries and emoluments, to training and development for career enhancement, among others. Motivating healthcare workers by enhancing their salaries and improving their training and development could modify their perception about labour migration. Perceived healthcare workers' welfare challenges in this study encourages the consideration for emigration. This is in keeping with the studies from NOIPolls (2018) and Awases *et al*. (2004) that indicated that poor remuneration of employees is a potent factor influencing the decision of employees to emigrate to the developed countries. It also corroborated the research findings of Adebayo and Akinyemi (2022) that poor salary

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drives emigration of doctors abroad. Adequate remuneration could help young professionals to embrace their training needs for skill acquisition, procure instrument needed for their practice in their chosen specialised fields, among others. This self-help equipment becomes more compelling in developing world where health facilities lack adequate diagnostic tools due to poor funding of health institutions (African Development Bank Group, 2022). In Nigeria, a new minimum wage of 70,000 Naira per month (one US dollar being exchanged for a little more than 1,500 Naira) which averages less than two dollars per day, might constitute another push factor for labour migration.

Conclusion

One of the most important outcomes of this study is the awareness that even young healthcare professionals are already considering labour migration even when they are on the verge of their graduation. In a conducive environment, perhaps, the perception of the young healthcare professionals could have been to graduate, have a viable career development and invest meaningfully in their area of domain. The investment is expected to bring profit to enhance the well-being of the investors and the community of operations. However, the perception of the level of insecurity, and poor emoluments could threaten this entrepreneurial spirit. Perception of labour emigration for early career professionals in health could be a signal for possible inadequate labour force in the future. This could increase health workers' work load, usher in more resentment and burnout syndrome and perhaps, increase morbidity and mortality of the populace. The human resource downturn could also signal the ill preparedness in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Recommendations

There is the need, therefore, for government to review the security architecture with a view to significantly minimise the high perception of insecurity in the nation. This could make the nation more investment friendly and improve the retention of our trained professionals.

The emoluments of health professionals should be such that could minimise labour emigration and reduce the workload of our health workers.

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The government could also make the proposed students' loan easily accessible and lucrative enough to make students enter into an agreement that could make them work for certain period of time before emigration.

Conflict of interest Declaration

We, the authors of this study, hereby declare that there is no conflict of interest in writing this paper. There is no sponsorship in cash or kind.

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Jacob, Japa, Japada: A Theological and Socio-economic Reflections on Genesis 30:25, 30 in the Light of Nigerian Youth Emigration

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Abstract

History is replete with accounts of people's movement from one place to another (migration) either for temporary or permanent settlement in the new locations. In the biblical account for instance, human migration began with Adam and Eve when banished from the garden to cultivate land for living (Gen. 3:23-24). But every event of migration whether voluntary or involuntary is occasioned by certain factors. It could be in search of better livelihood or as an escape from some unpleasant circumstances. Since around 2017-2023, Nigeria witnessed mass emigration of young professionals and artisans. This alarming phenomenon, commonly referred to as 'japa', raised different concerns for different people. While some worry about the brain drain effect on Nigeria socio-economy, others are concerned about the possible backlashes on the emigrants themselves. This paper examined a similar situation in Jacob narrative in the book of Genesis to appraise the japa syndrome. Adopting narrative critiscism and comparative method, the study descriptively engaged the text by analysing the narrative of Jacob and comparing the narrative plot to Nigeria recent migratory tides. Findings reveal that while migration is inevitable in human communities, the connotative intent of the word japa portends hopelessness on one's land of birth and complete detachment from it. The study therefore, concluded that just as in the case of Jacob in the Bible, emigration should not only be conceived as an escape, but as a venture to acquire fortune in order to better one's home land and further its prosperity.

Keywords: Jacob's migration, Japa, Japada, the Book of Genesis, Nigerian youths

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Jacob, japa, japada : Réflexions théologiques et socio-économiques sur Genèse 30 :25, 30 à la lumière de l'émigration des jeunes Nigérians

Résumé

L'histoire regorge de récits de déplacements de personnes d'un endroit à un autre (migration), que ce soit pour une installation temporaire ou permanente dans les nouveaux lieux. Dans le récit biblique par exemple, la migration humaine a commencé avec Adam et Ève lorsqu'ils ont été bannis du jardin pour cultiver la terre pour survivre (Genèse 3 :23-24). Mais chaque événement de migration, qu'il soit volontaire ou involontaire, est provoqué par certains facteurs. Il peut être de la recherche de meilleurs moyens de subsistance ou d'une échappée de certaines circonstances désagréables. Depuis 2017-2023, le Nigéria a connu une émigration massive de jeunes professionnels et artisans. Ce phénomène alarmant, communément surnommé japa, a suscité des inquiétudes différentes aux personnes diverses. Alors que certains s'inquiètent de l'effet de la fuite des cerveaux sur la vie socio-économie du Nigéria, d'autres s'inquiètent des répercussions possibles sur les émigrants eux-mêmes. Cet article a examiné une situation similaire dans le récit de Jacob dans le livre de la Genèse pour évaluer le syndrome du japa. Adoptant une critique narrative et une méthode comparative, l'étude a abordé le texte de manière descriptive en analysant le récit de Jacob et en comparant l'intrigue narrative aux récentes marées migratoires du Nigéria. Les résultats révèlent que la migration est inévitable dans les communautés humaines, l'intention connotative du mot japa laisse présager le désespoir sur la terre de naissance et un détachement total d'elle. L'étude a donc conclu que, tout comme dans le cas de Jacob dans la Bible, l'émigration ne doit pas seulement être conçue comme une échappée, mais comme une entreprise pour acquérir une fortune afin d'améliorer son pays natal et de favoriser sa prospérité.

Mots-clés : la migration de Jacob, le japa, le japada, le livre de la Genèse, les jeunes Nigérians

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Introduction

Movement of people from one place to new locations for temporary or permanent settlement dates back to the beginning of human history. Biblical account of human history reveals that migration began with the first family. When they ate the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve were banished from the garden to cultivate another land for living (Gen. 3:23-24). Soon afterwards, their first son, Cain migrated to settle in the land of Nod after murdering his brother (Gen. 4:16). This migratory trend from the earliest history continued throughout the Bible. Secular history also affirms this fact of migration. Emina William Uli and Nduonofit Larry-Love Effiong say that the world's history is history of migration and throughout the past 2000 years or more, humans have migrated, seeking new-found lands, natural resources, better social, cultural, and economic conditions or escaping wars, persecution, or ethnic tensions.[1] Christopher Agbonkhese states that according to the National Geographic Society, migration took place throughout human history. According to him, East Africa seems to be the cradle of human history as the earliest groups of people moved from there to their current location on the globe.[2] Thus, migration has occurred over centuries, right from the time people moved to regions of the world without human habitation, to the more recent shift in global population bringing about different forms of migration such as labour migrations, refugee migrations, and urbanisation.[3]

Migration can be voluntary or involuntary, but certain factors cause migration. In involuntary migration, the forced displacement may be due to deportation, human trafficking, slave trade, asylum, ethnic cleansing, medical care, job opportunities, political instability, and natural disasters among other factors. Abimbola Oladayo notes further that research classifies the factors responsible for immigration and emigration into push and pull factors. The push factors, like aforementioned, forcefully thrust people into leaving a place. The pull factors, on the other hand, attract individuals to a new place. They include better climate, increased job opportunities, security, and better living standards.[4] Definitely, migration is inevitable and its growing importance cannot be overlooked. Of a truth, international migration provides significant mutual financial and social benefits for migrants, and their host countries.

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[1] Emina W. Uli and Nduonofit L. Effiong, "Migration: The Mediterranean as Death Trap for African Youths." *IJMGS* 2 no. 2 (2022): 195

[2] Christopher Agbonkhese, "Japa: The Causes and Effects of the Migration of Information Technology Professionals in Nigeria" *International Journal of Migration and Global Studies (IJMGS)* 3 no1 (2023): 50

[3] Abimbola Oladayo, "Economic Impact of Migration: A Case Study of the United States of America and The Federal Republic of Nigeria" *IJMGS* 2 no 1 (2022): 62

[4] Oladayo, 63

Therefore, it is no surprise that; "currently, one out of every 35th individual represents an international migrant" and "three-quarters of all international migrants are in only 12% of all countries across the globe."[5]

While migration is inevitable, the recent cases of mass emigration in Nigeria, especially among the youths, is certainly a reason for concern. This mass exodus of teaming vibrant Nigerian youths is believed to be caused by poverty, economic crises, political instability, insecurity, low pay, lack of social amenities, and other undesirable conditions. Hence, the emigration is in search of solution to their socio-economic woe.[6] Although, migration of African to Europe and America in search of better living condition is not new. Agbonkhese relates it to the arrival of merchant capitalists from Europe (around 1500 to 1800 AD) in Africa to establish protectorates and live on its vast tracts of land for hundreds of years. He notes that this colonial ties between Europeans and Africans affects the current global migratory movements.[7] Because of the growing attention to this migratory tide, this study relates Jacob's migration in the Book of Genesis to the phenomenon.

The study draws parallel between Jacob's situation and that of many Nigerian emigrants. In both cases, migration is an escape from undesirable situation. But Genesis 30:30 reflects the psychology of Jacob about migration. The text reveals that while migration is not a bad phenomenon as it were, the desire for the good of one's homeland should be taken serious. This study therefore, examines the text of Gen 30:25, 30 in the overall spectrum of Jacob's narrative. It compares the situation to Nigerian challenges, and offers some reflections for the emigrants from the narrative.

Objective

The study examines migration narrative of Jacob in the book of Genesis with a view to using it to address the current emigrational trend in Nigeria. Specifically, the study provides information about 'what and why' of recent surge in emigration. It also explains the term *japa* and *japada*; and applies the two to Jacob's story in order to recommend positive attitudinal inclination towards emigration. It calls on the emigrants to keep a return in view while planning to travel abroad, and also calls on the government to innovatively see how to turn the tide of brain drain, caused by japa,

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[5] Oladayo, 63

[6] Olawale O. Peter, "Harnessing Home-Grown Alternatives for Economic Sustainability in Nigeria: The Book of Ruth" *IJMGS* 3 no 2 (2023): 127

[7] Agbonkhese, 50

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to gain by creating alluring environment that will attract people back to the country to use their earned wealth from foreign lands to build Nigeria.

Materials and Methods

This study adopts narrative criticism to analyse the text of Genesis 30:25, 30. Narrative criticism is used because the passage of discussion is a narrative literature. Narrative criticism analyses how an author uses narrative characters and plot to communicate meaning in a text. In this study, this is done through exegesis two key verses to underscore how Jacob viewed his homeland and foreign land. Comparative method is also employed to compare and appraise the *japa* syndrome among Nigerian youths, and migration of Jacob in the book of Genesis. For instance, Jacob's emigration was to flee from unpleasant situation just as the case with many young Nigerian emigrants. The host was blessed by his dedicated services just as many Nigerian emigrants too give commitment to work and build the economy of their host nations. Also, Jacob's host provided some amenities but exploited him in similar way as many emigrants are exploited though they enjoy some basis amenities. The paper uses descriptive analysis to effectively compare Jacob's migration in the book of Genesis to current Nigerian situation to offer some theological and socio-economic reflections. Bible text is the primary source of data in the study while secondary sources such as documented outcome of empirical research, journal publications and Bible commentaries as well as dictionaries provide data on migration in Nigeria and Jacob migration story. The text of Genesis 30: 30 is subjected to exegetical scrutiny to elucidate the point of focus of the study.

Results

The staggering statistics of Nigerian youth migrating the country, though alarming, has some justifications. The unfavourable conditions, some of which are noted in the discussion below, give rise to the phenomenon currently dubbed: *japa* (escape). The statistics below helps in putting the situation in perspective: In 2018, there is a surge in visa applications from Nigeria to Schengen countries like Germany, Hungary, Finland, Italy, and Spain. A total of 88,587 visa applications were said to be received. 2020 statistics show an increase of 51% in the rejection rate of Schengen visa applications lodged by Nigerians. Also, recent statistics by the UK government reveal that 486,869 study visas were granted as of June 2022, about 71 per cent more than

that of 2019. In point of fact, Nigeria ranks third after India and China, increasing from 8,384 to a record 65,929 applications for study visas to the UK.[8]

Another report from Afrobarometer, a pan-African research network, in one of their surveys in Nigeria interviewed random, stratified probability sample of 1,600 adults between 26 April and 10 May 2017. Below are their key findings:

▪ More than one in three Nigerians (35%) say they have considered emigration, including 11% who say they have given "a lot" of thought to the idea.

▪ Respondents who have a post-secondary education (44%), who live in cities (42%), and who are younger than 35 (39%) are particularly likely to consider emigration.

▪ Economic reasons dominate motivations for emigration. Three-fourths of those who have considered emigration cite as the main reason finding work (35%), escaping economic hardship/poverty (31%), or pursuing better business prospects (10%).

▪ The most popular destinations for Nigerians who have considered emigration are North America (32%) and Europe (21%). About one in five say they would go to Ghana (9%), another country in

West Africa (5%), or somewhere else in Africa (6%).[9]

In the Bible, Jacob's migration also has justification. But like him, those who, for certain reasons have escaped the scourging situations in Nigeria and Africa must also find some justifications for return at some later time. If plan to return is kept in view, then Nigeria challenges would be conceived as collective responsibility of all. Therefore, emigration will not just be an escape from Nigerian but and an enterprise to seek fortune to build Nigeria.

Discussion

Nigerian youths and migration

Inclement climatic conditions, war, and economic difficulties are among the causes of migration. These various causes are rightly captured as 'pull of a better life, the push

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8   Olatunji Ololade, "From Japa to Japada: Greening the Nigerian pasture (1)." The Nation, September 7, 2023, Accessed January 12, 2024, https://thenationonlineng.net/from-japa-to-japada-greening-the-nigerian-pasture-1/

9   Thomas Isbell and Oluwole Ojewale, "One in three Nigerians have considered emigration, most to find economic opportunity" *Afrobarometer Dispatch,* (27 Aug., 2018): 1-2 Accessed January 12, 2024, ab_r7_dispatchno231_migration_in_nigeria_1.pdf

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of danger or despair, forces of market and the call of the human heart.'[10] Migration may be voluntary or involuntary and it can as well be seasonal. It can also be permanent; long term or short term.[11] Migration is actually not a bad thing, provided it is a well-thought-out action. As matter of fact, Damilola Adegoke states that international human migration, is an increasingly global phenomenon in the 21st century and this has been made easier in an increasingly globalised world of improved communication technologies and transportation.[12] Volumes have been written about migration from prehistoric times to colonial era as well as postcolonial times in Nigeria.[13] Also, much has been written on the phenomenon, and causes of youth emigration from Nigeria. This is what has become popularly known as *Japa.* Attention is here given to youth migration in Nigeria and the causes.

Since about the last two decades, massive transnational migration of Africans, including Nigerians, to other parts of the world, especially Europe and United States of America (USA). The emigrations have been through illegal routes, porous land borders, the Sahara, and across the Mediterranean into Europe. Some are through legalised routes with the required documents. This irregular migration culture is a notorious endeavour. Over the years, it has led to the deaths of many Nigerians as well as other 'back-door' migrants in the Sahara Desert, the Maghreb region, and the Mediterranean.[14]

The situation became worsened following the COVID-19 pandemic when many developing countries experienced intense socio-economic challenges leading to upsurge in migration in search of better opportunities. North America and Western Europe are the preferred destinations of this new wave of migrants, although they are not necessarily the only final destinations of choice. Scholars attribute the surge in emigration pattern to several reasons; chiefly socio-economic. But the impacts of COVID-19 are also significant. Prior to COVID-19 pandemic in late 2019, living

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10   William A. Duyile and John U. Nwachukwu "Japa' Phenomenon and Nigeria Students in the Mix of a Proxy War in Ukraine." *Matondang Journal ISSN: 2828-1942 (Online)* 2, no. 1 (2023): 1

11   D. Harmon, *West, 1800 to Present Lagos*, (Philadephia: Chelsea House Publisher, 2020),

12   Damilola Adegoke, '"Japa": An Exploratory Study of the Roles of Social Media in an Out-Migration Trend in Nigeria.' Social Media + Society, October-December (2023), 4. Accessed December 27, 2023,   sagepub.com/journals-permissions DOI: 10.1177/20563051231203691 journals.sagepub.com/home/sms

13   See for instance, Enenche Ogwuche, "Migrants and the National Question: A Study of the Nigerian Migration Experience." *Centre of Excellence in Migration and Global Studies* 1 no. 2 (2021): 1-24. Christopher Agbonkhese, "Japa: The Causes and Effects of the Migration of Information Technology Professionals in Nigeria International." *Journal of Migration and Global Studies (IJMGS)* 3 no1 (2023): 50 -51. Dokun Oyeshola, "Young Nigerians' Migration in the Era of Sustainable Development Paradigm in Nigeria: Some Challenges." *IJMGS* 2 no.2 (2022): 3-10

14   Samuel K. Okunade and Oladotun E. Awosusi, "The Japa syndrome and the Migration of Nigerians to the United Kingdom: An Empirical   Analysis."   Comparative   Migration   Studies,   (2023),   1   Accessed   March   16,   2024, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-023-00351-2.

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conditions of Nigerians were already on the brink of collapse but the pandemic intensified its 'terror' on the people. The period welcomed inflation, unemployment, and other economic vices that overwhelmed the country. Adegoke remarks about the connection between migratory behaviours in Africa the factors of unemployment, political instability, poverty, infrastructural decay, economic opportunities, and the enticing promises of better facilities abroad.[15] Others also cite the case of 'pull' of better educational environment, and 'push' of Nigeria dysfunctional education.[16] Okunade and Awosusi give statistics showing that many Nigerian immigrants in UK mainly used study visa as step to seek relocation for better prospect and living. The statistics also support the claim that youth are those involved in the outmigration.

According to their findings, respondents were between the ages of 20 and 50 and hail from different Nigeria geopolitical zones. The age bracket of 36–40 years has the highest number with a percentage of 38.8%, while the age bracket of 20–25 years has the lowest percentage of 8.7%. The age bracket of 46 has an appreciable rate of 13%. The respondents were mostly postgraduate students, while a very small proportion (7%) were undergraduate students. Male population was the highest, with a percentage of 52.2%, while the female population had 47.8%. Also before leaving Nigeria, 87% of the respondents were middle-class individuals. Some were business owners, while 13% of the respondents were unemployed. Of the 87% in the middle class, 73.5% were gainfully employed and had businesses running, while 26.1% were underemployed.[17] Africa is home to some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised youth in the world. Many of these young relocate due to their inability to explore their potential or achieve their dreams in their home countries. So worrisome is the situation that young people would graduate from the university at young ages and would be jobless for many years such that at age 40, many still live with, and are being fed by their parents.[18] This leads to desperation among many youths to the point that many take reckless adventure in their bid to migrate. Danjibo, Sabiu, Uli and Effiong chronicle some of these in their articles.[19] Further, Imhangbe blame ineffective leadership which

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[15] Adegoke, 4

[16] William A. Duyile and John U. Nwachukwu "'Japa' Phenomenon and Nigeria Students In The Mix Of A Proxy War In Ukraine." *Matondang Journal ISSN: 2828-1942 (Online)* 2, no. 1 (2023):1-10

[17] Samuel K. Okunade and Oladotun E. Awosusi, "The Japa syndrome and the Migration of Nigerians to the United Kingdom: An Empirical Analysis." Comparative Migration Studies, (2023), 3 Accessed March 16, 2024, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-023-00351-2.

[18] Emina W. Uli and Nduonofit L. Effiong, "Migration: The Mediterranean as Death Trap for African Youths." *IJMGS*, 2 no. 2 (2022): 192-193

[19] Uli and Effiong,

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lead to infrastructural decay, poor governance, poor policies and structure as catalyst for youth emigration.[20]

Japa and Japada

Japa is about the most popular slogan that gains press in Nigeria and abroad in the recent times. Japa syndrome is recently being popularised by young Nigerians, but the practice is not limited to their class. It is about Nigerians of all works of life relocating abroad for the much-talked about greener pastures.[21] According to Taiwo Adisa, the trend started with the brain drain syndrome of the early 1990s, but it took a new turn in recent years, when Nigerian-trained medical practitioners, information technology experts and digital and non-digital savvy young and middle aged, civil servants, paramilitary personnel and even drivers join the migration train.[22]

Japa is a Yoruba word coined to designate current migratory tides in Nigeria (especially youths' emigration to Europe and America). According to Okunade and Awosusi, japa means 'fleeing' beyond the shores of Nigeria. That is, deploying any migration strategy (regular or irregular) to escape from Nigeria's territory to other parts of the world.[23] Afunugo, quoting another scholar's submission, says it is a Yoruba expression meaning "to run, flee, or escape."[24] He stresses further that the word takes firm root in the aspiration that young Nigerians have to leave the country for good. But analysing the word, japa comprises of two parts: *ja* and *pa*. Ja (a verb) means cut, cut tie, sever, separate usually with force. Pa on the other hand can be a verb or an adverb. As verb it means kill (eg *pa eranko* kill an animal). As an adverb it can still mean kill (eg *tee pa* match it to death, *gun un pa* stab him to death). But sometimes, pa shows the intensity with which an action is done. So, it is usually translated as doing something intensely, exhaustively, completely, very well or perfectly. For instance, *o gan pa* he is completely still etc. This second sense of pa is intended in the coined slogan of japa. Therefore japa literally means to sever completely or perfectly or to seriously cut tie with. But the intent is to make a good escape from an unpleasant situation. It is in this wise that the general notion of japa as flee or escape is very right. Adegoke adds that japa is not essentially illegal or irregular

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20 Osayamen S. Imhangbe, "Stemming the Tide of Emigration of Persons from Nigeria through Effective Leadership Practice: The Role of Leadership Education" *IJMGS,* 2 no. 2 (2022): 48-73

21 Taiwo Adisa, "The Orita meta that Connects Japa, Japada and Sekuseyes," *Nigerian Tribune,* October 8, 2023, Accessed february18, 2024 https://tribuneonlineng.com/the-orita-meta-that-connects-japa-japada-and-seku-seyes/ para 1

22 Adisa, 3

23 Okunade, and Awosusi, 2

24 Kenechi N. Afunugo, "Japa Syndrome and its Challenges to the Nigeria's Labour Force: A Search for Religious Solutions." *Ohazurume: Unizik Journal of Culture and Civilization,* 2, no. 2 (2023): 73

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migration; it is suggestive of those with legal means to leave their country with some pawning material possessions to satisfy this desperate wish for a better living outside of the country. This route of relocation requires financial resources that the young adults cannot afford on their own; therefore, the proportions of those leaving are in the middle class and those in mid-level career positions.[25] From the coinage of the word japa as analysed above, one notices an undertone of emigration without intent of returning or hope that Nigeria will get better. It seems the word is coined with a feeling of relief in mind that one has finally escaped danger. In this case, the desire or wish to return is absent because the hope of things getting better is not envisioned.

Japada is a word used in some quarters to denote the return from abroad to Nigeria. Taiwo Adisa says "On the other hand of japa is those that japada (return home) after encountering unfavourable conditions in their chosen foreign locations"[26] Also, while giving a lecture on brain drain in Nigerian institutions of higher learning, a professor (Khalid Adekoya), charges the government to urgently reverse the 'japa' syndrome to 'japada' through proper funding of education and research in the country.[27] This shows that the term is gaining increasing use.[28] Though not yet as popular as japa, japada is intended to describe a return back to Nigeria either on account of deportation or other unpleasant consequences of improper migration. It also involves desire to return because of better opportunities at home. Japada, like japa, also has two components: ja and pada. We already know what pa means. Pada simply means return.

Jacob: The Jacob narrative begins in Gen 25:19ff with the *Toledot* (genealogy) formula and a description of the struggle between Esau and Jacob during their birth. Indication of their conflict with one another is highlighted by the stew-birthright negotiation story in 25:27-34. The brewing rivalry between the two is interrupted by the story of Isaac facing a famine, like Abraham before him, though it underscores the centrality of involuntary migration in the ancestral narrative.

Jacob, as presented in the Bible, is an enigma! The biblical account of his character presents the reader with some of the most eclectic and puzzling stories in the Bible. Jacob is the third of the three great Hebrew patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). Abraham is the father of Isaac and Isaac the father of Jacob. In some ways, Jacob is

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[25] Adegoke, 4

[26] Adisa, 3

[27] Rasheed Abubakar, "Reverse 'Japa' To 'Japada', Don Urges Nigerian Govt." *Independence*, November 3, 2023, Accessed february18, 2024 https://independent.ng/reverse-japa-to-japada-don-urges-nigerian-govt/ Par 3

[28] Olatunji Ololade "From Japa to Japada: Greening the Nigerian pasture (1)." *The Nation*, September 7, 2023, Accessed January12, 2024 https://thenationonlineng.net/from-japa-to-japada-greening-the-nigerian-pasture-1/

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an unusual hero fluctuating between good and bad portrayals. He is sometimes conniving, a crafty opportunist, a trickster, an angry and embittered father as well as discriminatory husband. John Anderson remarks that about the most pervasively troubling issue within the stories of Jacob is that of his character. Not only is he unabashedly portrayed as one who deceives and tricks to gain what he desires, he is even named as such. Recognising these seemingly unflattering traits in the presentation of his personality, many scholars often respond by reducing Jacob to nothing more than a morally corrupt individual.[29]

Jacob and his twin brother, Esau are born to their parents (Isaac and Rebekah) after some years of waiting (Gen 25:20). They are born in response to payers probably at Beer-lahai-roi around 2006 BC.[30] The narrative reveals that they had prenatal struggles in their mother's womb which serves as harbinger of their later years struggles through their lives and future histories of their respective progenies. In the Old Testament world, just like many African cultures, naming a child is an auspicious occasion. Thus, Esau is so named because of his hairy appearance but Jacob's name ('one who takes by the heel' or by derivation; 'a supplanter') comes from his unusual behaviour at birth. Although Esau and Jacob are twins, they exhibit little or no resemblance in character. Jacob chooses a quiet domestic lifestyle which makes him stay close to home and probably working closely with the sheepherding business of the family. Esau, on the other hand, chooses a difficult occupation of a hunter (Genesis 25: 27). For some strange reasons, the parents are respectively partial towards each of the boys- the father favours Esau while the mother favours Jacob! This sets the stage for later trouble that led to Jacob's migration from his land of birth.

Migration of Jacob

In the patriarchal narratives, migration is not unique to Jacob. It begins with Abraham, who migrates to Canaan from Mesopotamia. On arrival in Canaan, Abraham is forced by famine to flee to Egypt (Gen 12:10). He eventually returns to Canaan, where his son Isaac also faces a similar situation of famine that forces him to migrate (Gen 26:1). But rather than leaving Canaan, Isaac drifts within its boundaries. Jacob, Isaac's son, grows up in Canaan, but spends his early adulthood as an asylum seeker while avoiding the aggression of his brother, Esau. He takes refuge with his family in

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[29] John E. Anderson, "Jacob, Laban, and a Divine Trickster? The Covenantal Framework of God's Deception in the Theology of the Jacob Cycle." *Perspectives in Religious Studies Journal of the NABPR* 34 (nd), Accessed December 15, 2023, Jacob_Laban_and_the_Divine_Trickster_Th.pdf

[30] R. O. Rigsby, "Jacob," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch* eds. T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker, (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, nd), 462

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Mesopotamia and returns to Canaan after 20 years. To put it in the way of an author, "Abraham is an environmentally induced externally displaced person; Isaac is an environmentally induced internally displaced person; and, Jacob is an asylum seeker who subsequently repatriates by choice."[31] The narratives in Gen 12–36 beckons on readers to consider migration. Very little work on the ancestral narrative foregrounds the issue of migration. Strine comments that perhaps the first to recognise the prominence of the theme of migration in Genesis was John Van Seters, though it informs his approach tangentially. He also notes the recent volumes by David Frankel and Elizabeth Robertson Kennedy and an article by Guy Darshan as giving a larger role to migration in Genesis.[32]

Under normal circumstance, the firstborn receives certain inheritance rights including a double portion of material inheritance, family headship with a special emphasis on spiritual leadership as well as father's deathbed blessings. This is reflection of Ancient Near East custom. In this practice, the family estate was typically divided into a number of portions corresponding to the number of sons plus one such that the firstborn would receive two portions.[33] According to their birth order, these privileges are to go to Esau. But by some scheming and dubiousness together with the mother's connivance, Jacob takes all these rights and privileges from Esau! The embittered Esau vows not to stay still. While the details of Rebekah and Jacob's ruse to gain the patriarchal blessing for Jacob instead of Esau are familiar, it is worth noting the end of Gen 27 where the circumstances of Jacob's departure from Canaan are reckoned. The bitterness of Esau towards Jacob produces homicidal intentions, which Rebekah discovers. On gaining knowledge of this, she counsels Jacob to flee Canaan and seek safety with Laban in Haran. This is the background to Jacob's migration.

Jacob in a foreign land

On arriving Haran, Jacob meets Rachel, who then introduces him to Laban, her father. Jacob is well received into Laban's house. He explains reasons for his migration from Canaan to Paddanaram (29:13b). Laban, on the other hand, declares his willingness to protect Jacob by calling him "my bone and my flesh" (29:14a). On account of this familial recognition, Jacob falls under Laban's protection. He is granted the privilege of exploring economic prosperity in the new land, and safety from the threat of his

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[31]   C. Strine, "Your Name Shall No Longer be Jacob, but Refugee: Involuntary Migration and the Development of the Jacob Narrative." in *Scripture as Social Discourse: Social-Scientific Perspectives on Early Jewish and Christian Writings*. (London:T&T Clark , 2018): 51-70.

[32]   Strine, 2

[33]   Rigsby, 462

brother. A month after his arrival, "Laban said to Jacob, 'Just because you are a kinsman, should you serve me for nothing?'" (Gen 29:15a). Despite inviting Jacob to set the wage, the text leaves Laban's motivation ambiguous. One fact to be born in mind is that Jacob escapes danger in his homeland and seeks asylum in Haran. He is thus, a refugee.

Jacob's refugee status illuminates the power dynamics at play with foreigners even on modern times. Usually, asylum seekers do not choose where they live, cannot work legally, and sometimes survive on subsistence earnings. At times, constant threat of deportation makes life complicated for them. They often remain at the mercy of the government, do not live as citizens, but on time limited and revocable visas. Applying modern circumstances to the ancient context, it is evident that the one granting protection to the asylum seeker possesses remarkable power over them. As long as the threat of expulsion exists, an asymmetric power relationship exists as well. Laban's duplicitous behaviour explained by this model.

Laban takes advantage of Jacob's status as a refugee. And Jacob has little recourse. According to von Rad, 'Benevolent Laban is a master of deceit'[34] He agrees that Jacob's seven years of service will warrant marrying a daughter (29:19) but without warning or regret he gives Jacob the older, unwanted daughter Leah. Laban claims that 'It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the older. Wait until the bridal week of this one is over and we will give you that one too, provided you serve me another seven years' (Gen 29:26-27). Claus Westermann remarks about this that Jacob agrees because he has no option.[35] Strine notes that Westermann is correct, but he does not elaborate on the reasons or consider the implications of the situation. Because Laban assures Jacob's livelihood and safety, Jacob lives in an unequal power relationship with him. Just like all refugees, he is in a subservient position to the one who grants asylum. The refugee is marginalised, disempowered, and circumscribed in their ability to pursue their rights due to fear of expulsion. Strines states further all this is compressed into the short, dismissive statement of Laban with which he begins his explanation: "It is not done thus in our place" (Gen 29:26a).[36] Although Laban has welcomes Jacob like family and grants him asylum, he remains an outsider, not a part of the host community. Jacob's options are severely limited in this situation. He expresses desire to marry Rachel, but is given Leah. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Jacob accepts Laban's one-sided offer to serve for additional

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[34]   Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary,* trans. John H. Marks. (London: SCM Press, 1961), 292.
[35]   Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12–36: A Commentary*, trans. John K. Scullion S.J. (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985), 467
[36]   C. Strine, 7

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seven years for Rachel without resistance or negotiation because of the unequal power relationship between them. This might just be the motivating factor for his decision and comment in Gen 30:30 when he acquires some fortunes.

Jacob and Japada: Examination of Gen 30: 25, 30
Gen. 30: 25
וַיְהִ֕י כַּאֲשֶׁ֛ר יָלְדָ֥ה רָחֵ֖ל אֶת־יוֹסֵ֑ף וַיֹּ֤אמֶר יַעֲקֹב֙ אֶל־לָבָ֔ן שַׁלְּחֵ֙נִי֙ וְאֵ֣לְכָ֔ה אֶל־מְקוֹמִ֖י וּלְאַרְצִֽי׃
Gen. 30: 30
כִּ֡י מְעַט֩ אֲשֶׁר־הָיָ֨ה לְךָ֤ לְפָנַי֙ וַיִּפְרֹ֣ץ לָרֹ֔ב וַיְבָ֧רֶךְ יְהוָ֛ה אֹתְךָ֖ לְרַגְלִ֑י וְעַתָּ֗ה מָתַ֛י אֶֽעֱשֶׂ֥ה גַם־אָנֹכִ֖י לְבֵיתִֽי׃

Genesis 30:25 *Now it came about when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my own country.*

30:30 *"For you had little before I came, and it has increased to a multitude; and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned. But now, when shall I provide for my own household also?"*

Increase that comes to the business of Laban reminds of many Nigerian emigrants who labour assiduously to better the economy of the host nation. According to biblical record, Jacob is a quiet tent dweller back at home. But on getting to the foreign land, he works tirelessly to the point of multiplying the fortune of his host. Ditto, many young Nigerian emigrants take diligence, hard work, commitment and efficiency along. So, regardless of status or type of job, the zeal to do their best undergirds their actions and this impact positively on their productiveness, and the overall economy of their host countries. The truth is; if half of the dedication, commitment and zeal that many African emigrants put to work in the foreign lands are invested in their homeland, Africa's development and economy would have been better.

After about two decades, Jacob acquires wives, children and some fortunes. But something he has nursed in mind for long finds expression following an event in his life: *Now it came about when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my own country.* The passage opens with וַיְהִי and it happens, and it came to pass. This is an inflection of הָיָה *hayah*. Hayah shows existence. The verb makes a strong statement about the being or presence of a person or thing. However, it is often given the simple translation of *become* or *come to pass*.[37] In situations where the verb is used for emphasis of a

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[37] W. E. Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words.* (Nashvile :Thomas Nelson, 1996), 13

person, emotion or thing, it indicates that their presence (or absence) is noticeable- making a real difference to what is happening (Gen 9:2; Judges 3:10). When the verb is used with particles, it colours its emphasis. For instance, in passages setting forth blessing or cursing, the verb does not only specify the object of the action but it also shows the dynamic force behind and within the action.[38] Thus, the verb shows emphasis of Jacob's decision to return home having felt satisfied with a complete blessing occasioned by the birth of Joseph by his favourite wife.

Another point to notice is how Jacob expresses his decision; שַׁלְּחֵנִי וְאֵלְכָה אֶל־מְקוֹמִי *let me be sent to my place*. The word שׁלח *send* is in *piel* form, which often describes state of being. Not only does Jacob expresses desire to be sent away, but he also states where he desires to go- his homeland. This request means a lot to Laban, his host. He lost no time in telling Jacob how much he benefits from his (Jacob's) sojourn in his place and pleads with him to stay on with him. Laban also proposes new wage packages as incentive for Jacob just to keep him from returning to his homeland (Genesis 30:27-28). It is at this level that Jacob comes up with a stronger expression of his wish to return to his homeland: וְעַתָּה מָתַי אֶעֱשֶׂה גַם־אָנֹכִי לְבֵיתִי *But now, when shall I provide for my own household also?*

Jacob protests Laban's travesty in his proposal of better wages. He claims that he has served Laban diligently over the years such that his wealth has increased and his flock protected. Then, with a rhetorical question, he asks: *when shall I provide for my own household also?* Jacob buttresses what Laban earlier says, that his presence has caused Laban's wealth to grow. He now contrasts that to his own status by introducing his question with וְעַתָּה *but now…* as if to say "I have served you for years and you admit that my service has brought you fortunes. But now what becomes of me? How do I make my own fortunes?" Another word is אֶעֱשֶׂה It is *qal* imperfect 1st common singular of עָשָׂה It means to make or fashion a thing (Genesis 3:21; Isa 44:17), create (Genesis 1:7), perform (Exodus 11:10) prepare (food) (Genesis 18:7), take care of (2Sam 19:25). In all instances of its uses, the intent is that of action, performance or preparing something. So, the New International Version (NIV) rendering of the text "*But now, when may I do something for my own household?"* still captures the translation of many versions that have it as *"But now, when shall I provide for my own household also?"*

The other expressions that require attention are גַם־אָנֹכִי *I also*, and לְבֵיתִי *for my house*. בַּיִת can be translated as house or household depending on the context.

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[38] Vine, 13

Apparently, Jacob is referring to a household here. The passage gives no indication that Jacob's family is really destitute to the point of seeking an escape. More so, he indicates his willingness to return home in earlier verse. Therefore, Jacob undoubtedly means his home country by the word גַם־אָנֹכִי בֵיתִי *also* is employed in the context of the contrast that Jacob makes in the verse. If Laban's business and country has been blessed on account of Jacob's emigration to Laban's land, then Jacob, by that expression, is saying "me too" what have I to gain and how do I bless my home land too.

From the foregoing, it is evident that while Jacob, has earlier japa to Paddanaram on account of a threat to his life, he nonetheless has the love of his home country at heart such that at the slightest opportunity, he shows intention to japada. He loses no time in making this known to his host and he also grabs an opportunity to see this happen as soon as he can. From the Biblical narrative, every action of Jacob following his declaration of intention to return to his home country is a preparation towards returning to Canaan. It is at this time that renegotiation of wages is ratified with him (Genesis 30:29-43). It is after this that he calls his family to meeting to discuss the agenda of home return (Genesis 31: 4-15), and soon afterwards, he leaves with his family.

It should be noted that Jacob flees home because of a particular challenge at home- the threat of his brother. Of course, there is also the prospect of marriage in the foreign land following his parents' interest. Jacob marries and raises a family. He could just decide to stay back in Paddanaram where he has no physical threat to his life. As at the time of his decision to return home, Esau is still alive and could still nurse the old grudge against him. But in spite of it, he decides to return all the same. The gravity of the danger that lays ahead of him appears more palpable when, on the edge of Seir, Jacob divides his family and properties into groups in hope that if some of the groups are attacked by Esau, the others may escape (Genesis 32:7-21). Not only that, he makes the groups into delegations with gift to placate Esau. Yet, he still leaves Mesopotamia for Canaan! It is after his return that he builds his family and future.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study investigates Jacob's migration in the book of Genesis and relates it to the *japa* syndrome which is a current Nigerian reality. It is discovered that Jacob's migration is caused mainly by a threat to his life. Similarly, many Nigerian emigrants feel threatened by harsh economic realities, insecurity, unemployment, poor living

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standard, poor health provision etc. and escape through migration hence the colloquial *japa*! But escape is not the same as deserting one's homeland. Therefore, once fortune smiles on Jacob, he returns home to better his land of origin. In similar vein, while young emigrants may not be blamed for their 'escape' and desire to explore their potentials in the foreign lands, the idea of total desertion of the country needs being corrected. From the findings, the study recommends as follows:

- every intending emigrant should not only make plan for their exit but also a plan to return to make positive impact in Nigeria. This will guide their conduct, savings and lifestyle in manners that will be mutually beneficial to themselves, the host nation, and their home country.
- hard work should be encouraged either at home or abroad as means of acquiring fortune and gaining economic independence.
- exploitation of emigrants should be discouraged.
- Nigeria government should seek ways to turn brain drain to gains by creating enabling environment that will attract emigrants who have acquired intellectual, and economic fortune back to the country and reverse the tide of massive emigration.

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Nascent Entrepreneurs in North-Central Nigeria's Agri-Business: Opportunity and Necessity

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Abstract

The reasons why some aspiring entrepreneurs are more involved in new venture-creation activities than others remain uncertain despite the diligent efforts of experts. Consequently, the changing status of emerging entrepreneurs may be seen on a spectrum that spans from one extreme to the other. At every stage, aspiring entrepreneurs can obtain and evaluate fresh information about the prospects they are pursuing that was not previously accessible. As a result, they may then modify or confirm their plan to go forward. In this context, the ongoing early-stage entrepreneurial endeavour necessitates nascent entrepreneurs to have enough trust in the viability and practicality of the possibility in agri-business. As a result, this paper attempts to evaluate the identification of business opportunities by nascent entrepreneurs in agribusiness with reference to selected entrepreneurs in Nigeria. To achieve this, five specific objectives are raised to guide the study; the effect of risk tolerance, resourcefulness and innovation, networking skills, and market knowledge on opportunity/necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs. The study's theoretical underpinning was based on integrating the two adopted theories: the push and pull factors model and the theory of planned behaviour. The study employed exploratory and descriptive research designs to answer research questions in line with the study objectives. Probability sampling techniques through purposive and simple random sampling were employed to select a sample size of 195 selected entrepreneurs in north-central Nigeria. Various variables influence aspiring business owners' recognition of entrepreneurial prospects and requirements. Findings reveal that risk tolerance is critical in identifying requirements and possibilities, emphasising its relevance in forming entrepreneurial endeavours. The major national financing agencies must exchange data insights and lessons learned from their entrepreneurial programmes. This should include programmes that provide grants and loans for monetary and non-monetary interventions such as financing for equipment, payroll assistance, and help to start a company.

Keywords: Opportunity, necessity, nascent entrepreneurs, agri-business, Nigeria.

Les entrepreneurs naissants dans l'agro-business du centre-nord du Nigeria : opportunité et nécessité

Résumé

Les raisons pour lesquelles certains entrepreneurs en herbe sont plus impliqués dans les activités de création de nouvelles entreprises que d'autres restent incertaines malgré les efforts diligents des experts. Par conséquent, l'évolution du statut des entrepreneurs émergents peut être observée sur un spectre qui s'étend d'un extrême à l'autre. À chaque étape, les entrepreneurs en herbe peuvent obtenir et évaluer de nouvelles informations sur les perspectives qu'ils poursuivent et qui n'étaient pas accessibles auparavant. En conséquence, ils peuvent alors modifier ou confirmer leur plan pour qu'il s'avance. Dans ce contexte, l'effort entrepreneurial en cours au stade précoce nécessite que les entrepreneurs naissants aient suffisamment confiance dans la viabilité et la praticabilité de la possibilité dans l'agro-industrie. En conséquence, cet article tente d'évaluer l'identification des opportunités commerciales par les entrepreneurs naissants dans l'agro-industrie en référence à des entrepreneurs sélectionnés au Nigéria. Pour y parvenir, 5 objectifs spécifiques sont soulevés pour guider l'étude ; l'effet de la tolérance au risque, de l'ingéniosité et de l'innovation, des compétences en réseautage et de la connaissance du marché sur l'identification des opportunités/nécessités des entrepreneurs naissants. Deux théories ont été adoptées pour l'étude : le modèle des facteurs d'attraction et de répulsion et la théorie du comportement planifié. L'étude a utilisé des modèles de recherche exploratoires et descriptifs pour répondre aux questions de recherche conformément aux objectifs de l'étude. Des techniques d'échantillonnage probabiliste par échantillonnage aléatoire intentionnel et simple ont été utilisées pour sélectionner un échantillon de 195 entrepreneurs sélectionnés dans le centre-nord du Nigéria. Diverses variables influencent la reconnaissance des perspectives et des exigences entrepreneuriales par les futurs propriétaires d'entreprise. Les résultats révèlent que la tolérance au risque est essentielle pour identifier les exigences et les possibilités, soulignant sa pertinence dans la formation des efforts entrepreneuriaux. Les principales agences nationales de financement doivent échanger des informations sur les données et les leçons tirées de leurs programmes entrepreneuriaux. Cela devrait inclure des programmes qui fournissent des subventions et des prêts pour des interventions monétaires et non monétaires telles que le financement d'équipements, l'aide au paiement et l'aide à la création d'une entreprise.

Mots clés : l'opportunité, la nécessité, les entrepreneurs naissants, l'agro-industrie, le Nigéria

Introduction

The concept of nascent entrepreneurship has been debated across the literature as essential to sustained economic development and social growth because it often entails the establishment of new businesses and innovation. For instance, according to a World Economic Forum[1], SMEs account for over 71% of all employment, about 91% of all businesses worldwide, and, in some estimations, up to 70% of the world's GDP. This demonstrates how SMEs power the world's economy. In another report by FATE (2023), SMEs made up 49.6% of the country's GDP in 2022, 87.8% of employment, and 96.8% of enterprises. From this report, Nigeria achieved an entrepreneurial index score of 0.59 out of 1.0, which suggests that the country has performed somewhat better than average in terms of the growth of entrepreneurship. With an index score of 0.81 out of 1.0, the perception of opportunities performed the best out of the five pillars. Despite the challenging economic climate, most entrepreneurs have a positive outlook for their companies' future and want to grow them next year (FATE[2]).

Nigeria, rich in agricultural resources, finds itself at the nexus of need and opportunity for agribusiness enterprise. Unfortunately, the nation has been suffering from food insecurity, high unemployment rates, and underutilisation of agricultural potential while having plenty of arable land and a growing population (Sarmah and Saikia[3]). In the effort of successive governments, the Nigerian government now strongly emphasises encouraging new business ventures and developing and assisting competent individuals in launching their agricultural enterprises via innovation and technology (Ardichvili *et al.*[4]). Regretfully, Grégoire *et al.*[5] observed that nascent entrepreneurs in the agriculture industry struggle with a lack of financing, which limits their capacity to invest in cutting-edge technology, get high-quality inputs, and expand their businesses. In addition, many businesses are prevented from obtaining loans or credit facilities by conventional financial institutions' strict criteria and collateral

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1   World Economic Forum "Future Readiness of SMEs and Mid-Sized Companies." Retrieved online from: https://www.weforum.org/publications/future-readiness-of-smes-and-mid-sized-companies-a-year-on/ [Accessed: 12/05/2024]

2   FATE Institute "State of entrepreneurship in Nigeria Report." Retrieved online from: https://fatefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/State-of-Entrepreneurship-in-Nigeria-Report-2022-1.pdf [Accessed: 12/05/2024]

3   Sarmah, A. and Saikia, B. "Business challenges of the nascent and mature micro small and medium enterprises (MSMEs): A comparative analysis from India." *J Glob Entrepr Res 13*, (2023), 20. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40497-023-00364-2

4   Ardichvili, A., Cardozo, R., and Ray, S. "A theory of entrepreneurial opportunity identification and devt." *Journal of Business Venturing, 18*(1), (2023) 105-123.

5   Grégoire, D. A., Barr, P. S., and Shepherd, D. A. "Cognitive processes of opportunity recognition: The role of structural alignment." *Organization Science, 21*(2), (2020), 413-431.

demands (Bishop and Nixon[6]). This underfunding creates a vicious cycle of underdevelopment and lost opportunities by impeding innovation and making agricultural businesses less competitive (Gupta *et al.*[7]).

According to research by Agboola *et al.*[8], inefficiencies in the market and inadequate infrastructure in Nigerian agribusiness exacerbate the difficulties faced by business owners. These issues include inadequate storage facilities, erratic electricity supplies, and subpar road networks, which all lead to post-harvest losses and higher transaction costs, which lower the profitability of agricultural businesses. However, Suchart and Wittaya[9] linked nascent entrepreneurs' inability to operate their agriculture business successfully to a lack of necessary technical skills and market knowledge. Nigeria has a young population with growing desires to start their businesses, but many do not have access to specialised training programmes or networking skills.

Given this vacuum, it is essential to address the barriers emerging company owners in Nigeria's agricultural business need to overcome to realise the industry's enormous potential and promote equitable economic progress. In order to give entrepreneurs the necessary skills and market knowledge, focused resourcefulness and innovation, improved market connections and infrastructure, and improved access to funding are all in need of effective interventions.

Objectives

a)   To examine whether risk tolerance affects nascent entrepreneurs' opportunity and necessity identification;

b)   To explore how resourcefulness and innovation influence nascent entrepreneurs' opportunity and necessity identification;

c)   To determine the effect of networking skills on nascent entrepreneurs' opportunity and necessity identification and

d)   To determine the extent to which market knowledge influences nascent entrepreneurs' opportunity and necessity identification.

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6   Bishop, K., and Nixon, R. D. "Venture Opportunity Evaluations: Comparisons between Venture Capitalists and Inexperienced Pre-Nascent Entrepreneurs." *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, 11*(1), (2016) 19–33. https://doi.org/10.1142/S1084946706000246

7   Gupta, A., Batra, S., and Gupta, V. K. "Gender, culture, and implicit theories about entrepreneurs: a cross-national investigation." *Small Business Economics, 58*(2), (2022), 1073–1089. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-020-00434-9

8   Agboola, J. O., Afolabi, YA and Odebunmi, A.T. "Examination of Opportunity Identification by Nascent Entrepreneurs in South-Western Nigeria: An Effectuation Perspective." *European Journal of Business and Management, 9*(1), (2017) 108-131.

9   Suchart, T. and Wittaya, C. "What Skills Do Nascent Entrepreneurs Need? The Evidence from Thailand." *European Research Studies Journal, 3*(2A), (2017), 250-263.

However, the methodology will be a survey of 9,598 agribusiness farmers who have received start-up funding throughout Nigeria. However, due to the covering cluster, this was confined to the North-central with 405 aspiring agri-business farmers. The sample size will be determined using the researcher's advisor technique. A purposive random sampling will be adopted to choose up-and-coming agri-business owners for 6 to 24 months (from new business owner-manager to new entrepreneur).

Nascent Entrepreneurs

The concept of nascent entrepreneurs (NE) has been referred to as the people who, alone or in collaboration with others, are actively engaged in starting a new firm and want to become the owner or co-owners of this economic unit (Joáo et al.[10];). Meanwhile, Mitchell et al.[11] viewed NE as a stage in the entrepreneurial process where an individual has completed the gestation stage and their entrepreneurial intention. At this point, the entrepreneur is committing time and resources to the tangible foundation of their business idea. Tripopsakul[12] posits that NE studies can be broadly classified into three categories: (1) research areas that centre on the individual or entrepreneur; (2) research areas that emphasise environmental, regional, or macro characteristics in the process development; and (3) research areas that focus on the actual activities of the entrepreneurs during the early stages of the firm.

Opportunity vs Necessity

According to the World Economic Forum 2023 report, nations' entrepreneurial activities have been divided into two major groups, necessity-driven entrepreneurs and opportunity-driven entrepreneurs, by the push/pull theory utilised in this research (Alomani et al.[13]). According to Hamamatsu and Fujita, the need for opportunity entrepreneurial motives that were originally used to drive the establishment of new businesses and served as the foundation for entrepreneurial decision-making have been superseded by the idea of push and pull factors. Opportunity entrepreneurship generally relies on unique market opportunities or voluntary involvement, but need

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[10] João, F. R., Goel, R. K. and Göktepe-Hultén, D. "Factors facilitating the inventing academics' transition from nascent entrepreneurs to business owners." Chapters, in: David E. Audretsch and Erik B. Lehmann and Albert N. Link (ed.), Handbook of Technology Transfer, chapter 5, pages 75-102, (2021) Edward Elgar Publishing.

[11] Mitchell, J. R., Israelsen, T., and Mitchell, R. K. "Entrepreneurial cognition research–an update." In M. M. Gielnik, M. S. Cardon, and M. Frese (Eds.), The psychology of entrepreneurship: New perspectives (pp. 5–25). (2021), Routledge.

[12] Tripopsakul, S. "Factors Influencing Opportunity Driven Nascent Entrepreneurs in Europe and Asia." European Research Studies Journal, European Research Studies Journal, 0(3A), (2017), 774-782.

[13] Alomani, A., Baptista, R., and Athreye, S. S. "The interplay between human, social and cognitive resources of nascent entrepreneurs." Small Business Economics, 59(4), (2022) 1301–1326. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-021-00580-8

entrepreneurship focuses mostly on needs. The primary driving forces behind pull (necessity) and push (opportunity) entrepreneurs are shown in Table 1 (Kollmann *et al.*[14]).

Table 1: Opportunity and Necessity Entrepreneurs

Opportunity-Driven NE	Necessity-Driven NE
Market Opportunity	Unemployment
High economic profit	Lower education
Social recognition	Language barrier
Personal development	Dissatisfying labor market
Independence and autonomy	Family pressure
Rejecting stereotypical feminine identities	Lower-income

Source: Adapted from Kollmann *et al.*

However, particularly in nations like Nigeria, it is critical to comprehend the traits of recently emerging entrepreneurs and what separates requirement entrepreneurs from embryonic opportunity entrepreneurs from a policy standpoint. Given the importance of entrepreneurship in reducing poverty and creating jobs, governments invest significant funds in new venture businesses (Krueger[15]). In addition, programmes that promote entrepreneurship tend to focus on disadvantaged populations that often become necessity entrepreneurs (Morris *et al.*[16]). Focusing on opportunity entrepreneurs is also critical (Leković *et al.*[17]). This suggests that the same variables may not impact opportunity entrepreneurs as necessity entrepreneurs due to potential differences in their socio-economic and perceptual traits.

Furthermore, because opportunity entrepreneurs are more likely to be motivated to work for themselves rather than for pay, they tend to manage their businesses better, have higher success rates, and produce better business results. These factors have implications for economic growth, development, and business performance. That said, a beginning company founded on need can always grow into a profitable enterprise

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[14] Kollmann, T., Kuckertz, A., and Stöckmann, C. "Continuous Innovation in Entrepreneurial Growth Companies:: Exploring the Ambidextrous Strategy." *Journal of Enterprising Culture, 17*(3), (2019), 297–322. https://doi.org/10.1142/S0218495809000370

[15] Krueger, N. F. Jr. "*Opportunity recognition.*" In Handbook of Entrepreneurship Research (pp. 161-176). (2019) Springer.

[16] Morris, M. H., Schindehutte, M., and LaForge, R. W.. "Entrepreneurial marketing: A construct for integrating emerging entrepreneurship and marketing perspectives." *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 10*(4), (2022) 1-19.

[17] Leković, B., Amidžić, R., Vojinović, D., and Ivanović-Đukić, M. "Drivers for the Internationalization of Nascent Entrepreneurs and New Business Owners in Southeast European Countries." *Journal for East European Management Studies, 28*(1), (2023) 182–214. https://doi.org/10.5771/0949-6181-2023-1-182

over time (Lourenço *et al.*[18]). Additionally, the motivations for starting a firm opportunity and necessity interact differently with business cycles (Santos *et al.*[19]). Because various variables promote or hinder the establishment of new businesses, extending and promoting opportunity- and necessity-based entrepreneurship may need distinct policies and programmes (Gosztonyi and Judit[20]).

Hypothesis Development

Table 1 summarises empirical studies on the construct variables: prior knowledge, social network, self-efficacy, proactive personality, alertness, and creativity. This study considered nascent entrepreneurs' positive and negative outcomes, opportunity identification, and necessity entrepreneurs.

Table 1: Summary of Empirical Review of the Constructs

Constructs	Study	Nascent Entrepreneur	Opportunity Identification	Necessity Entrepreneur
Risk tolerance	Singh *et al.* (2008), Lourenço *et al.* (2015), João *et al.*, (2021); Klyver and Arenius, (2022)	+/+	+/-	+/-
Resourcefulness and innovation	Suchart and Wittaya (2017), St-Jean *et al.*, (2023); Baciu *et al.* (2020), Cordier and Bade (2024)	-/+	+/+	+/-
Networking skills	Laukkanen (2024); Tremml (2020);	-/+	-/+	-/+

[18] Lourenço, F., Sappleton, N., and Cheng, R.. "Gender and Business Ethics of Enterprise Students and Nascent Entrepreneurs Engaged in Entrepreneurship Education." *The Journal of Entrepreneurship, 24*(2), (2015) 186-203. https://doi.org/10.1177/0971355715586891

[19] Santos, G., Silva, R., Rodrigues, R. G., Marques, C., and Leal, C. "Nascent Entrepreneurs' Motivations in European Economies: A Gender Approach Using GEM Data." *Journal of Global Marketing, 30*(3), (2017), 122–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2017.1302542

[20] Gosztonyi, M. and Judit, C.F. "Profiling (Non-)Nascent Entrepreneurs in Hungary Based on Machine Learning Approaches." *Sustainability*, 14(1), (2022), 3571. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14063571

	Mohan *et al.* (2018), Darmanto *et al.* (2023)			
Market knowledge	Martiarena *et al.*, (2023); Yacus *et al.*, (2019); Leković *et al.*, (2023), Darmanto *et al.* (2023)	+/-	+/-	-/+

Source: Emprical Analysis (2024)

Hypothesis Development

Risk Tolerance and Opportunity/Necessity Identification

Since entrepreneurship is inherently risky, budding business owners may display different degrees of risk aversion. Some may be more comfortable taking calculated chances to achieve their objectives, while others may be more risk-averse (Klyver and Arenius[21]). In their study of business enterprise students and aspiring entrepreneurs' participation in entrepreneurship education, Cavich and Chinta[22] focused on a population understudied in earlier research. Dana *et al.*[23] have disclosed that the relationship between gender and ethics varies based on whether the research sample comprises students pursuing entrepreneurship or enterprise. Similar empirical findings by Dimov[24] demonstrated that academic entrepreneurship tendencies are consistently influenced by scientists' positive attitudes towards commercialising results; risk aversion and academic discipline did not have a statistically significant impact (Rotefoss and Kolvereid[25]). For instance, Morris *et al.*[26] found that whereas doctorates had the opposite impact on firm ownership, they decreased the inclinations towards

[21] Klyver, K., and Arenius, P. "Networking, Social Skills and Launching a New Business: A 3-Year Study of NE." *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 46*(5), (2022), 1256-1283. https://doi.org/10.1177/1042258720967063

[22] Cavich, J. and Chinta, R. "Nascent Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, and the Moderators of Race, Gender, and Government Support." *Entrepreneurship Research Journal, 12*(3), (2022) 363-389. https://doi.org/10.1515/erj-2020-0542

[23] Dana, L.P., Crocco, E., Culasso, F. *et al.* "Business plan competitions and NE: a systematic literature review and research agenda." *Int Entrep Manag Journal,* 19(1), (2023) 863–895. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-023-00838-5

[24] Dimov, D. "Nascent Entrepreneurs and Venture Emergence: Opportunity Confidence, Human Capital, and Early Planning." *Journal of Management Studies, 47*(6), (2021) 1123-1153.

[25] Rotefoss, B., and Kolvereid, L. "Aspiring, nascent and fledgling entrepreneurs: an investigation of the business startup process." Entrepreneurship and Regional Development, 17(2), (2015), 109–127. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985620500074049#

[26] Morris, M. H., Schindehutte, M., and LaForge, R. W.. "Entrepreneurial marketing: A construct for integrating emerging entrepreneurship and marketing perspectives." *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 10*(4), (2022) 1-19.

fledgling entrepreneurship. It was shown that individuals with the highest amounts of startup capital and high-risk tolerance also had the highest growth expectations and were more likely to be men, based on UK data collected from a sample of embryonic entrepreneurs between 2010 and 2020. Nonetheless, it was determined that, at the nascent stage, expectations of development play a crucial role in shaping future outcomes; women are disadvantaged by gendered risk adversity, and a tiny cohort of deviant males has the highest expectations of growth. Based on this, the following hypotheses were developed:

H_{01}: *Risk tolerance has no significant effect on the opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs*

Resourcefulness and Innovation and Opportunity/Necessity Identification

Nascent business owners often need to be inventive in order to discover methods to get beyond difficulties and barriers with little money. Some strategies include using networks, looking for mentoring, or bootstrapping their venture (Mohan et al.[27]). This suggests that highly creative people who can innovate within their sectors are often successful entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, the methods of innovation systems have been offering insights into several nations' competitiveness and economic performance (López et al.[28]). They discovered that intricate interactions between those creating, disseminating, and using diverse forms of information lead to innovation and technological advancement (Hopp and Stephan[29]). Accordingly, a nation's capacity for innovation is primarily determined by the relationships these players have with one another as components of a larger knowledge generation system and application of related technologies. Elena-Loreni et al.[30] discovered that new and emerging businesses are encouraged to pursue entrepreneurship via government participation in high-quality assistance programmes. Since these programmes usually target formal rather than informal entrepreneurs, this link is primarily noticeable in high-income

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[27] Mohan, P., Watson, P., and Strobl, E.. "Nascent Entrepreneurs in Caribbean Small Island Developing States: Opportunity Vs Necessity." *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, 23*(4), (2018) N.PAG. https://doi.org/10.1142/S108494671850022X

[28] López, A., Neves, P., and González, M. G. "Constraint appraisal as predictor of taking entrepreneurial action among nascent entrepreneurs." *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 71*(4), (2022), 1275–1303. https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12354

[29] Hopp, C., and Stephan, U. "The influence of socio-cultural environments on the performance of nascent entrepreneurs: Community culture, motivation, self-efficacy and startup success." *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development, 24*(9/10), (2018), 917–945. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2012.742326

[30] Elena-Loreni B., Delia, V., Theofild-Andrei, L., Delia, G. and Cecilia-Nicoleta, J. "The Association between Entrepreneurial Perceived Behavioral Control, Personality, Empathy, and Assertiveness in a Romanian Sample of NE." *Sustainability, 12*(1), (2020), 10490; doi:10.3390/su122410490

nations where the formal sector is greater. Hence, the hypotheses are as a result of this formed:

H02: Resourcefulness and Innovation have no significant influence on the opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs

Networking Skills and Opportunity/Necessity Identification

Developing a network of connections and relationships may be very important for aspiring business owners since it can provide them access to resources, guidance, and possible collaborations or clients (Chadwick and Raver[31]). Ioscha and Marco[32] addressed how entrepreneurs' networking with strong and weak social links affects company launch and the degree to which social skills augment or diminish these influences. They combined insights from behavioural and skill views on network agencies. They discovered that, regardless of social skills, networking with weak ties increases the likelihood of a business launch, while frequent networking with close social ties increases entrepreneurs' chances of launching a business when they have high networking skills but decreases their chances when they have low social skills unlike the findings of Ivano and García-Pereiro[33], which indicate that the three main preconditions to becoming an opportunity-driven fledgling entrepreneur in Europe and Asia are perceived business opportunity, fear of failure, and educational attainment. This suggests that, in Asia but not in Europe, entrepreneurial networking affected the probability of becoming an opportunity-driven young entrepreneur. In a different case, Darmanto *et al.*[34] empirically revealed that although a PhD decreased the inclinations towards beginning a firm, it negatively impacted company ownership. On the other hand, Thai fledgling entrepreneurs score lowest in accounting and financial competence (3.42), human resource skills (3.67), management skills (3.97), marketing skills (3.98), and technology skills (4.09). This shows inconsistencies in the networking skills, and thus, hypotheses were formed:

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[31] Chadwick, I. C., and Raver, J. L. "Psychological Resilience and Its Downstream Effects for Business Survival in NE." *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 44*(2), (2020) 233-255. https://doi.org/10.1177/1042258718801597

[32] Ioscha, C. and Marco, B. "The relationship between business regulation and nascent and young business entrepreneurship revisited." (2022), Post-Print hal-03889871, HAL.

[33] Ivano, D. and García-Pereiro, T. "The Moderate Impact of Gender Egalitarianism on Nascent Entrepreneurship at the Individual Level. Evidence from GEM Data on Some European Countries." *L'industria, Rivista di economia e politica industriale 3*(1), (2024), 405-428, doi: 10.1430/92512

[34] Darmanto, S., Ekopriyono, A., Hikmah, A. and Ratnawati, A. "Investigating the development of entrepreneurial behavior among nascent digital entrepreneurs." *Cogent Business and Management, 10*(2), (2023). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2023.2247875

H03: Networking skills have no significant effect on the opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs

Market Knowledge and Opportunity/Necessity Identification

Entrepreneurs' success depends on knowing the market and seeing possibilities (St-Jean *et al*.[35]). For this reason, aspiring business owners might study the market to determine the level of demand, level of competition, and trends in the sector. For instance, training programmes for aspiring entrepreneurs are intended to enhance their entrepreneurial abilities and, more broadly, to produce learning since entrepreneurship is a difficult vocation, particularly during the beginning period (Gosztonyi and Judit[36]). Early-stage business owners that embrace innovative inventions and new technologies tend to focus more on international clients and marketplaces. The early internationalisation of entrepreneurs is also greatly influenced by external factors like GDP per capita, openness, financial development, unemployment, corruption, government effectiveness, the rule of law, regulatory quality, political stability, the voice of accountability, economic stability, and institutional factors. This suggests that success in NE depends on possessing the necessary market knowledge; hence, the hypotheses were formed:

H04: Market knowledge has no significant influence on the opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs
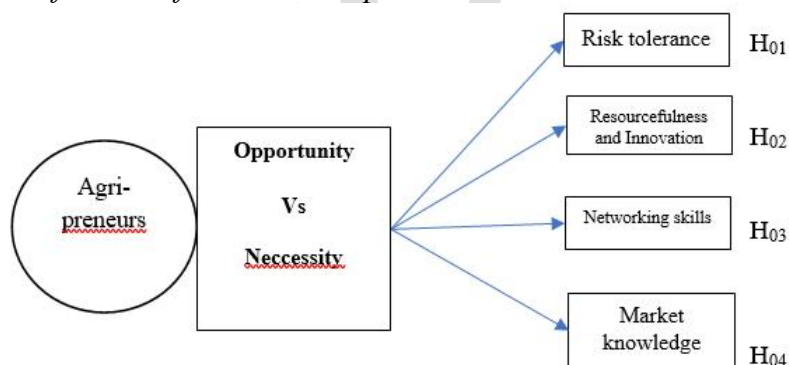

Fig. 1: Study's Framework
Authors' Conceptualisation (2024)

35 St-Jean, E., Tremblay, M., Barès, F. and Simionato, M. "Effect of nascent entrepreneurs' training on their stress: the role of gender and participants' interaction." *New England Journal of Entrepreneurship, 26*(1), (2023), 20-39. https://doi.org/10.1108/NEJE-10-2021-0064

36 Gosztonyi, M. and Judit, C.F. "Profiling (Non-)Nascent Entrepreneurs in Hungary Based on Machine Learning Approaches." *Sustainability*, 14(1), (2022), 3571. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14063571

Theoretical Framing

Earlier researchers have used various techniques to elucidate the reason for launching a new company (See Kirkwood, 2009[37]). Nonetheless, push and pull motivating variables are the two categories into which Santos *et al.*[38] divided the motives for entrepreneurship. Push factors are unfavourable elements that significantly impact starting a new firm, such as joblessness and discontent at work. Positive occurrences, like seizing a fresh business opportunity, are linked to positive elements. Profit-seeking possibilities prompt pull-factor-driven entrepreneurs to launch new ventures. Pull-motivated entrepreneurs seek to increase their happiness, while push-motivated entrepreneurs begin their careers due to work discontent (Gupta *et al.*[39]).

According to the Pull and Push hypothesis, people are drawn to become entrepreneurs by compelling prospects, a need, or unfavourable situations. The attraction of prospective benefits like financial freedom, personal fulfilment, and the chance to follow one's hobbies are often the pull factors. These people want to start something new, close a gap in the market, or satisfy a need they see in the community. Conversely, push factors include joblessness, discontent with regular work, or restricted opportunities for professional advancement, which force people to consider entrepreneurship to survive or improve.

Both pull and push forces play a major role in influencing the choice of aspiring entrepreneurs to launch a firm. Some people could be lured to entrepreneurship because they have an innovative company concept or a captivating vision they are enthusiastic about realising (Grégoire *et al.*[40]). These people often exhibit a strong sense of initiative and a readiness to take calculated risks in order to achieve their objectives. On the other hand, some people could be forced into entrepreneurship by outside forces like losing their jobs, experiencing a downturn in the economy, or not being able to grow in their current position in a typical workplace (Alomani *et al.*[41]).

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[37] Kirkwood, J. "Motivational factors in a push-pull theory of entrepreneurship." Gender in Management, 24(5), (2009), pp. 346-364. https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410910968805

[38] Santos, G., Silva, R., Rodrigues, R. G., Marques, C., and Leal, C. "Nascent Entrepreneurs' Motivations in European Economies: A Gender Approach Using GEM Data." *Journal of Global Marketing, 30*(3), (2017), 122–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2017.1302542

[39] Gupta, A., Batra, S., and Gupta, V. K. "Gender, culture, and implicit theories about entrepreneurs: a cross-national investigation." *Small Business Economics, 58*(2), (2022), 1073–1089. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-020-00434-9

[40] Grégoire, D. A., Barr, P. S., and Shepherd, D. A. "Cognitive processes of opportunity recognition: The role of structural alignment." *Organization Science, 21*(2), (2020), 413-431.

[41] Alomani, A., Baptista, R., and Athreye, S. S. "The interplay between human, social and cognitive resources of nascent entrepreneurs." *Small Business Economics, 59*(4), (2022) 1301–1326. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-021-00580-8

They see entrepreneurship as a means of taking control of their financial future and creating chances for themselves in an unstable labour market.

Studying how someone becomes an entrepreneur is important since it is seen as a necessary element of economic development; hence, attempts to understand this process are encouraged (Bishop and Nixon[42]). However, the beginning of every entrepreneurial endeavour is directly related to people's preparedness and desire to locate and launch a new company (Hamamatsu and Fujita[43]). Entrepreneurial intentions and perceived behavioural control become significant in studying entrepreneurial behaviour since people's intentions only result in real behaviour when they feel capable (Kollmann et al.[44]). The current study examined the relationship between the personal traits of nascent Romanian entrepreneurs (personality traits, empathy, and assertiveness) and their level of perceived entrepreneurial behavioural control. This relationship was based on the theory that views perceived entrepreneurial behavioural control as a motivational intention antecedent of actual entrepreneurial behaviour.

Material and Methods

The participants in this research were nascent business owners who had previously participated in entrepreneurial skills education workshops offered by the Nigerian Ministry of Education. These seminars included market awareness, risk tolerance, inventiveness, and resourcefulness. These individuals were graduates of many government-funded institutions with significant financing. According to the statistics, 9,598 people received starting funds throughout Nigeria; however, North-central had over 405 aspiring agri-business farmers. One hundred ninety-five (195) responses were obtained when the sample size was determined using the researcher's advisor technique (See Appendix I). Purposive random sampling is the sampling strategy that entails choosing up-and-coming agricultural company owners for six to twenty-four months (from new business owner-manager to new entrepreneur). Every responder was personally visited and scrutinised by the researcher. Surveys were used to get

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[42] Bishop, K., and Nixon, R. D. "Venture Opportunity Evaluations: Comparisons between Venture Capitalists and Inexperienced Pre-Nascent Entrepreneurs." *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, 11*(1), (2016) 19–33. https://doi.org/10.1142/S1084946706000246

[43] Hamamatsu, S. and Fujita, J. "Adapting the Effectuation Model for Nascent Entrepreneurs: The Function of Acceleration Programs." *Annals of Business Administrative Science*, 20(6), (2021), 211–222. https://doi.org/10.7880/abas.0211021a

[44] Kollmann, T., Kuckertz, A., and Stöckmann, C. "Continuous Innovation in Entrepreneurial Growth Companies:: Exploring the Ambidextrous Strategy." *Journal of Enterprising Culture, 17*(3), (2019), 297–322. https://doi.org/10.1142/S0218495809000370

information, and it was completed between February and March of 2024. The results showed that 185 responses were relevant for further investigation.

Result and Discussion

The following table presents descriptive statistics of respondents; demographic characteristics such as gender, marital status, age, working experience, and employment status.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Marital Status	N	Percentage (%)	Mean Rank
Single	68	36.8	101.11
Married	115	62.2	88.59
Divorce	1	0.5	1
Widow/ Widower	1	0.5	141
Total	185	100	
Chi-Square	6.132		
Df	3		
Asymp. Sig.	0.105		
Age	N	Percentage (%)	Mean Rank
18-25 Years	14	7.6	126.36
26-33 Years	64	34.6	95.76
34-41 Years	68	36.7	90.59
42-49 Years	29	15.7	81.6
Above 49 Years	10	5.4	78.1
Total	185	100	
Chi-Square	7.875		
Df	4		
Asymp. Sig.	0.096		
Nascent agri-preneurs experience	N	Percentage (%)	Mean Rank
Less than 2 years	39	21.1	113.01
2-11 years	74	40	91.11
12-21 years	65	35.1	84.18
22-31 years	7	3.8	83.36
Total	185	100	

Chi-Square	7.575
Df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.056

Source: Research Survey 2024

Simple percentage and Kruskal-Wallis test were used to describe the marital status, age, and year of working experience of nascent agri-preneurs. Table 2 shows that out of 185 cases, 115, representing 62.2%, are married, 68, representing 36.8%, are single, while divorce and widow have equal response rates of 1 (0.5%) each. This signifies that most of the nascent agri-preneurs are married. In describing nascent agri-preneurs among this category of respondents, the result shows that with the mean rank of 141, the married have the highest score of nascent agri-preneurs followed by single, divorced, with mean scores of 101.11, 88.59, and 1, respectively. However, the *Chi-square* of 6.132, *df* 3, and *Asymp sig*. 0.105, the study concluded that the differences between this group of respondents is not statistically significant.

The age characteristics show that about 68 respondents are between the ages of 34 and 41 and constitute the highest proportion of the response rate, with 36.7%. It followed by the respondents who are between the age of 26-33 with 64 responses, equivalent to 34.6%, 42-49 years constituted 29 (15.7%), 18-25 years have a response rate of 14 (7.6%), while only 10 (5.4%) represents respondents who are above 49 years. This shows that most respondents are between 26 and 41 years old, thus highlighting the asymmetric relationship between age and employment. The distribution of WLB across this group shows that respondents age 18-25 have the highest mean rank of 126.36, followed by 26-33 years with the mean rank of 95.76, 34-41 years with the mean rank of 90.59, 42-49 years with the mean rank of 81.6, and above 49 years with the mean rank of 78.1. This shows that the higher the age, the lower the nascent agri-preneurs. The *Chi-square* of 7.875, *df* 4, and *Asymp sig*. 0.096 shows that the difference between this group is statistically significant, confirming that nascent agri-preneurs decrease with the increase in age.

In describing respondents relative to work experience as nascent agri-preneurs, the result shows that most respondents have 2-11 years of work experience. This group has a proportion of 74 (40%) response rate. It followed by 12-21 years, less than 2 years, and 22-31 years with the response rate of 65 (35.1%), 39 (21.1%), and 7 (3.8%) respectively. The mean rank of 113.01 shows that the individual with less than 2 years of working experience in the nascent agri-preneurs has the highest score followed by 2-11 years with a mean rank of 91.11, 12-21 and 22-31 years having the mean rank of

84.18 and 83.36 respectively. These differences are statistically significant within the *Chi-square* of 7.575, *df* 3, and *Asymp sig*. 0.056 confirms that nascent agri-preneurs decrease with the increase in years spent working.

The Structural Model Path Coefficients

The structural model path coefficients confirm the relationship between the variables. The significance of the path coefficients was examined by comparing the t-values to the critical t-values for significance levels of 0.10, 0.05 and 0.01. According to Cavich and Chinta[45], 4000 subsamples were recommended in bootstrapping to computerise the empirical t-value for the significance of path coefficients.
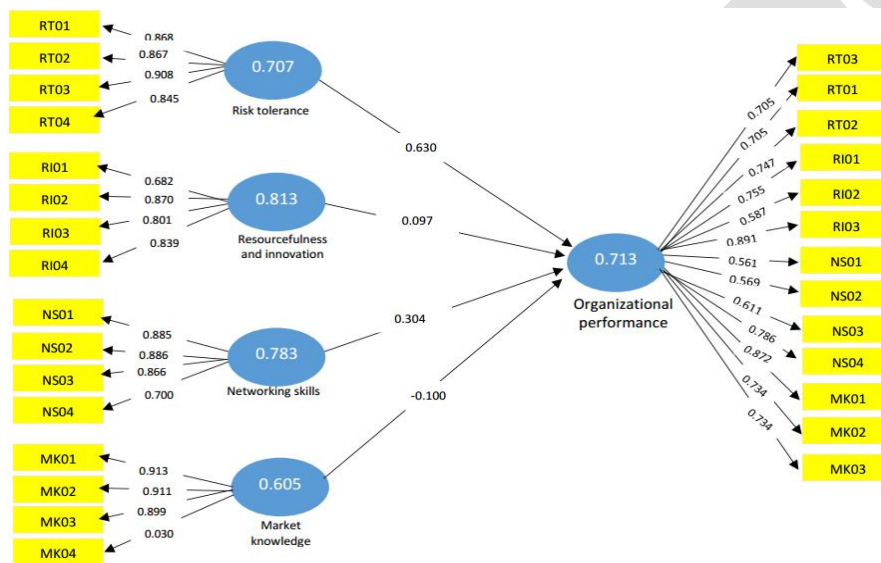
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45   Cavich, J. and Chinta, R. "Nascent Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, and the Moderators of Race, Gender, and Government Support." *Entrepreneurship Research Journal*, *12*(3), (2022) 363-389. https://doi.org/10.1515/erj-2020-0542

Table 3: Assessment of Structural Model

H	Path	B	t-Value	Sig.	Decision
H01	*Risk tolerance -> opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs*	0.411	4.731	0.000	S
H02	*Resourcefulness and innovation -> Opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs*	0.518	0.235	0.001	S
H03	*Networking skills -> opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs*	0.513	5.041	0.051	NS
H04	*Market knowledge -> opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs*	0.518	0.235	0.001	S

S=Supported, NS=Not supported
Source: Researcher's computation, 2024

Based on the outcome in Table 3, the result of the first hypothesis (H_{01}) indicated that risk tolerance has a positive and significant influence on the opportunity identification of nascent entrepreneurs at $\beta = 0.411$, t-value = 4.731, $p < 0.000$. It is significant; the relationship is in the direction as predicted. Next, Resourcefulness and Innovation also found no positive and significant influence on nascent entrepreneurs' opportunity and necessity identification at $\beta = 0.518$, t value= 0.253, $p < 0.001$ in the second hypothesis (H_{02}). More so, the result of the H_{03} shows that Networking skills have a positive and significant effect on the opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs at $\beta = 0.513$, t value= 5.014, $p < 0.51$. In terms of Market knowledge (H_{04}), it positively and significantly influences the opportunity and necessity identification of nascent entrepreneurs at $\beta = 0.518$, t value = 3.235, $p < 0.001$.

Discussion

The study's findings provide fresh insight into the investigation of aspiring business owners from two angles: opportunity and need. On the one hand, it demonstrated how dubious it is to narrow down analysis of complex socio-economic phenomena such as emerging entrepreneurship to only the most ideal necessary. The study highlights how crucial it is to thoroughly analyse the data to get a deeper understanding of the system-level drivers, in contrast to the studies with opportunity seen in the literature on entrepreneurial research. For instance, earlier studies have focused on opportunity-

driven entrepreneurship (Grégoire *et al.*, 2020[46]; Leković *et al.*[47]; Agboola *et al.*[48]). This research fills the knowledge vacuum on the degree to which variations in cognitive approaches influence the probability of becoming opportunity-driven fledgling entrepreneurs. The findings demonstrated that risk tolerance, inventiveness and resourcefulness, and market awareness in Nigerian agribusiness increase one's chances of becoming an opportunity-driven fledgling entrepreneur. This can be supported by the study of Grégoire *et al.*, 2020[49] who found a cognitive process of opportunity recognition with the role of structural alignment. In contrast, it was shown that networking abilities greatly impacted them. This was buttressed by the study of Leković *et al.*[50] , who found certain drivers for the internationalisation of nascent entrepreneurs and new business owners in southeast European countries.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has discovered that risk tolerance is critical in identifying requirements and possibilities, emphasising its relevance in forming entrepreneurial endeavours. Aside from that, resourcefulness and creativity are important in detecting demands, even if they may not significantly influence opportunity identification. This emphasises the need for adaptation and creative problem-solving to meet new needs. On the other hand, networking abilities seem to have no discernible impact on identifying opportunities or needs. This implies that while relationships could benefit other facets of entrepreneurship, they might not directly affect the early detection of market gaps. However, market knowledge is crucial in identifying opportunities and requirements, highlighting the importance of comprehending customer demands and market dynamics to inform entrepreneurial decision-making and steer the course of nascent entrepreneurs.

The major national and subnational financing agencies must exchange data insights and lessons learned from their entrepreneurial programmes. This should include

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[46] Grégoire, D. A., Barr, P. S., and Shepherd, D. A. "Cognitive processes of opportunity recognition: The role of structural alignment." *Organization Science, 21*(2), (2020), 413-431.

[47] Leković, B., Amidžić, R., Vojinović, D., and Ivanović-Đukić, M. "Drivers for the Internationalization of Nascent Entrepreneurs and New Business Owners in Southeast European Countries." *Journal for East European Management Studies, 28*(1), (2023) 182–214. https://doi.org/10.5771/0949-6181-2023-1-182

[48] Agboola, J. O., Afolabi, YA and Odebunmi, A.T. "Examination of Opportunity Identification by Nascent Entrepreneurs in South-Western Nigeria: An Effectuation Perspective." *European Journal of Business and Management, 9*(1), (2017) 108-131.

[49] Grégoire, D. A., Barr, P. S., and Shepherd, D. A. "Cognitive processes of opportunity recognition: The role of structural alignment." *Organization Science, 21*(2), (2020), 413-431.

[50] Leković, B., Amidžić, R., Vojinović, D., and Ivanović-Đukić, M. "Drivers for the Internationalization of Nascent Entrepreneurs and New Business Owners in Southeast European Countries." *Journal for East European Management Studies, 28*(1), (2023) 182–214. https://doi.org/10.5771/0949-6181-2023-1-182

programmes that provide grants and loans for monetary and nonmonetary interventions (such as financing for equipment, payroll assistance, help starting a company, etc.). Lastly, to map areas with limited enterprise capacity interventions and establish initiatives to support private, development, and civil society entrepreneurship training interventions within locations across the nation requiring interventions, the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment works with SMEDAN state-level offices. It would be crucial if they were customised for the target population and local situations.

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Conflict of Interest Declaration

There is no conflict of interest whatsoever.

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Appendix I

Researcher's Advisor Table

Population Size	Confidence = 95.0%				Confidence = 99.0%			
	Degree of Accuracy/Margin of Error				Degree of Accuracy/Margin of Error			
	0.05	0.035	0.025	0.01	0.05	0.035	0.025	0.01
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20	19	20	20	20	19	20	20	20
30	28	29	29	30	29	29	30	30
50	44	47	48	50	47	48	49	50
75	63	69	72	74	67	71	73	75
100	80	89	94	99	87	93	96	99
150	108	126	137	148	122	135	142	149
200	132	160	177	196	154	174	186	198
250	152	190	215	244	182	211	229	246
300	169	217	251	291	207	246	270	295
400	196	265	318	384	250	309	348	391
500	217	306	377	475	285	365	421	485
600	234	340	432	565	315	416	490	579
700	248	370	481	653	341	462	554	672
800	260	396	526	739	363	503	615	763
900	269	419	568	823	382	541	672	854
1,000	278	440	606	906	399	575	727	943
1,200	291	474	674	1067	427	636	827	1119
1,500	306	515	759	1297	460	712	959	1376
2,000	322	563	869	1655	498	808	1141	1785
2,500	333	597	952	1984	524	879	1288	2173
3,500	346	641	1068	2565	558	977	1510	2890
5,000	357	678	1176	3288	586	1066	1734	3842
7,500	365	710	1275	4211	610	1147	1960	5165
10,000	370	727	1332	4899	622	1193	2098	6239
25,000	378	760	1448	6939	646	1285	2399	9972
50,000	381	772	1491	8056	655	1318	2520	12455
75,000	382	776	1506	8514	658	1330	2563	13583
100,000	383	778	1513	8762	659	1336	2585	14227
250,000	384	782	1527	9248	662	1347	2626	15555
500,000	384	783	1532	9423	663	1350	2640	16055
1,000,000	384	783	1534	9512	663	1352	2647	16317
2,500,000	384	784	1536	9567	663	1353	2651	16478
10,000,000	384	784	1536	9594	663	1354	2653	16560
###	384	784	1537	9603	663	1354	2654	16584
###	384	784	1537	9603	663	1354	2654	16586

Open and Distance Learning and Women's Advancement in Information Technology: The NOUN's Experience

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Abstract

This study investigates the potential of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in advancing women's careers in Information Technology (IT), with a focus on the initiatives of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). It aims to investigate how ODL can empower women by addressing gender-based disparities and enhancing career trajectories in IT. Despite the digital era's advancements, women remain underrepresented in IT-related occupations due to cultural norms and persistent gender disparities. ODL has emerged as a promising solution, offering flexible and accessible learning opportunities for women pursuing IT careers. The study utilised the interview and survey approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection from a sample size of 360 female students selected from six geopolitical zones. A total of 360 questionnaires were administered to selected NOUN centres across the six geopolitical zones, with 250 responses received. Additionally, interviews were conducted with 20 staff members to gather deeper insights. Findings reveal that NOUN's ODL programmes benefit female students by offering flexible learning options, personalised support services, and affordable mentorship, which help to mitigate barriers to IT careers. However, challenges such as gender stereotyping, resource scarcity, imposter syndrome, biases, discrimination, and lack of basic computer skills were identified as obstacles to women's empowerment in IT. The study underscores the potential of ODL as a tool for promoting gender equality and inclusivity in the IT sector. It highlights key challenges and proposes strategies to overcome them, contributing valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders. Further research is recommended to investigate the effect of flexible study schedules on women's performance in IT education.

Keywords: Gender Equality, Information Technology, National Open University of Nigeria, Open and Distance Learning, Women's Advancement

L'apprentissage ouvert et à distance et l'avancement des femmes dans les technologies de l'information : l'expérience du NOUN

Résumé

Cette étude examine le potentiel de l'apprentissage ouvert et à distance (AOD) pour faire progresser les carrières des femmes dans les technologies de l'information (TIC), en mettant l'accent sur les initiatives de la National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). L'étude vise à analyser comment l'AOD peut autonomiser les femmes en s'attaquant aux disparités entre les sexes et en améliorant les trajectoires de carrière dans l'informatique. Malgré les progrès de l'ère numérique, les femmes restent sous-représentées dans les professions liées à l'informatique en raison des normes culturelles et des disparités persistantes entre les sexes. L'AOD est apparu comme une solution prometteuse, offrant des opportunités d'apprentissage flexibles et accessibles aux femmes qui poursuivent une carrière dans l'informatique. L'étude a utilisé l'approche de l'entretien et de l'enquête, combinant la collecte de données quantitatives et qualitatives à partir d'un échantillon de 360 étudiantes sélectionnées dans six zones géopolitiques. Au total, 360 instruments ont été administrés à des centres NOUN sélectionnés dans les six zones géopolitiques, avec 250 réponses reçues. En outre, des entretiens ont été menés avec 20 membres du personnel pour recueillir des informations plus approfondies. Les résultats révèlent que les programmes AOD du NOUN bénéficient aux étudiantes en offrant des options d'apprentissage flexibles, des services de soutien personnalisés et un mentorat abordable, qui contribuent à atténuer les obstacles aux carrières informatiques. Cependant, des défis tels que les stéréotypes sexistes, la pénurie de ressources, le syndrome de l'imposteur, les préjugés, la discrimination et le manque de compétences informatiques de base ont été identifiés comme des obstacles à l'autonomisation des femmes dans l'informatique. L'étude souligne le potentiel de l'ODL en tant qu'outil de promotion de l'égalité des sexes et de l'inclusion dans le secteur informatique. Elle met en évidence les principaux défis et propose des stratégies pour les surmonter, apportant des informations précieuses aux décideurs politiques, aux éducateurs et aux parties prenantes. Des recherches supplémentaires sont recommandées pour étudier l'effet des horaires d'études flexibles sur les performances des femmes dans l'enseignement informatique.

Mots-clés : L'égalité des sexes, Les technologies de l'information, L'Université nationale ouverte du Nigéria, L'enseignement ouvert et à distance, la promotion de la femme

Introduction

Women's education has become a globally recognised priority, with increasing emphasis on gender equality in academic pursuits[1]. Over time, societal views on the standing of women's access to education have evolved, resulting in efforts to dismantle barriers such as cultural norms, economic inequality, and discriminatory practices at both national and international levels[2]. Achieving gender parity in education is critical for advancing development goals, as reflected in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4, which emphasizes universal access to quality education[3]. Educating women not only empowers them personally but also leads to social advancement, economic growth, and improved health outcomes[4]. Ensuring equal educational opportunities for women is essential to achieving broader developmental objectives[5].

In Africa, and particularly in Nigeria, attitudes toward women's education have shifted, with growing recognition of the importance of gender equality in academic success[6]. Efforts to overcome obstacles such as cultural expectations, socioe-conomic challenges, and gender stereotypes have been made. The Nigerian government and various organizations have implemented guidelines to encourage girls' education and encourage women's participation in both academic and professional sectors[7]. Despite this progress, women, particularly in rural areas, still face significant barriers, including limited access to education and societal pressures that may influence their career choices[8]. Nonetheless, there is an increasing awareness in Nigeria of the

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[6] Toyin Ajibade Adisa et al., "Social Dominance, Hypermasculinity, and Career Barriers in Nigeria," *Gender, Work & Organization* 28, no. 1 (2021): 175–94.

[7] ADEOTI ADEREMI AKINWALE, "GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS: EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS TO DRIVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SUB–SAHARAN AFRICA," *International Journal of Innovation Research and Advanced Studies*, 2023.

[8] Nisreen Ameen, Nnamdi O Madichie, and Amitabh Anand, "Between Handholding and Hand-Held Devices: Marketing through Smartphone Innovation and Women's Entrepreneurship in Post Conflict Economies in Times of Crisis," *Information Systems Frontiers* 25, no. 1 (2023): 401–23.

transformative power of education for women's empowerment. Furthermore, women still do not receive the same treatment as men worldwide, though education has dramatically improved this assertion in many countries[9]. Even though education in Nigeria is a powerful tool for transformation and emancipation, women continue to be viewed as inferior or lowly[10][11][12].

NOUN's commitment to creating a supportive learning environment allows women to pursue education while balancing other commitments. By offering online resources, flexible study schedules, and remote support services, NOUN addresses obstacles such as time constraints and geographical limitations. This approach helps to close gender gaps in education, providing women with equitable opportunities to succeed in the industries. Research from Pakistan and Nigeria indicates that remote and open learning supports women's enrollment and empowerment[13]. By recognising the benefits of women's active participation in education and their jobs, NOUN creates a supportive environment that allows women to pursue their education through open and remote learning while managing their personal and professional obligations. NOUN helps women overcome obstacles, including time and location limitations, by offering online resources, flexible study options, and remote support services[14]. Despite being established in 1983, NOUN didn't begin full-fledged activities until 2002 according to Adeleke et al.[15]. It was founded to provide a range of people with flexible and affordable options for higher education, including those who cannot attend traditional universities due to their employment, families, or geographic location[16]. NOUN,

[9] Veronica Olubunmi Adesua, "Implementation of Educational Policy for Socio–Economic and Political Emancipation in Nigeria," *British Journal of Education* 10, no. 10 (2022): 51–59.

[10] Ajibade Adisa et al., "Social Dominance, Hypermasculinity, and Career Barriers in Nigeria"; Anne Dwyer et al., "Suitability of Text-Based Communications for the Delivery of Psychological Therapeutic Services to Rural and Remote Communities: Scoping Review," *JMIR Mental Health* 8, no. 2 (2021): e19478; Gordon Monday Bubou and Gabriel Chibuzor Job, "Individual Innovativeness, Self-Efficacy and e-Learning Readiness of Students of Yenagoa Study Centre, National Open University of Nigeria," *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching & Learning* 15, no. 1 (2022): 2–22.

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[12] Ajibade Adisa et al., "Social Dominance, Hypermasculinity, and Career Barriers in Nigeria"; Dwyer et al., "Suitability of Text-Based Communications for the Delivery of Psychological Therapeutic Services to Rural and Remote Communities: Scoping Review"; Bubou and Job, "Individual Innovativeness, Self-Efficacy and e-Learning Readiness of Students of Yenagoa Study Centre, National Open University of Nigeria."

[13] Sumera Hasan et al., "Challenges Regarding Access to Higher Education among Rural Women in Punjab Pakistan: Impact & Implication," *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 11 (June 30, 2023): 2624–2630, https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.1102.0554.

[14] Hasan et al.

[15] Adeleke and Adeleke, "ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA A VERITABLE ALTERNATIVE."

[16] Oba-Adenuga Adeleke and Olusegun Adeleke, "Access To University Education: National Open University Of Nigeria A Veritable Alternative," 2021, 281–300.

which offers a wide range of programmes in numerous subjects, including information technology, has promoted open and distance learning in Nigeria. Through NOUN, a wide range of programmes including IT-related at different study levels is available for postgraduate and undergraduate degrees. A handful of NOUN's IT-related programmes are displayed in the Table below. These programmes give students, especially women, a solid foundation in IT concepts, regulations, and practical skills to compete with their peers in the labour market.

Table 1: NOUN Information Technology-related programmes across Faculties

Programs Code	Program Title	Host Faculty
7406	Ph.D. Management Information System (MIS)	ACETEL Programs
7405	Ph.D. Cyber Security (CS)	ACETEL Programs
7404	Ph.D. Artificial Intelligence (AI)	ACETEL Programs
7403	M.Sc. Management Information System (MIS)	ACETEL Programs
7402	M.Sc. Cyber Security (CS)	ACETEL Programs
7401	M.Sc. Artificial Intelligence (AI)	ACETEL Programs
5402	Ph.D. Information Technology	Sciences
5401	M.Sc. Information Technology (Internet Options)	Sciences
5305	PGD Information Technology	Sciences
5209	B.Sc. Mathematics/Computer Science	Sciences
5203	B.Sc. Computer Science	Sciences
5202	B.Sc. Information Technology	Sciences
4503	Ph.D. Educational Technology	Education
4403	M.Ed. Educational Technology	Education
4214	BLIS - Library and Information Science	Education
4205	B.Sc. (Ed) Computer Science	Education

Source: NOUN, 2024

Though the broader benefits of women's education for families and society are widely accepted, less attention has been paid to the potential for empowering women in IT-related fields, where they are significantly underrepresented[17]. Nigeria's 2021 ranking of 139 out of 153 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report highlights a troubling

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[17]   Victor Olugbenga Ayoko et al., "History and Developments of Schools Administration in Nigeria: From Natives to Present," *International Journal of Education and Teaching Zone* 2, no. 3 (2023): 389–400.

reality: women are largely passive users of technology, while men dominate the nation's tech industry[18]. Empowering women in IT is crucial in today's digital age, with scholars such as Gordon and Gabriel emphasizing the need for substantial educational investments to integrate women into IT careers[19]. This shift requires stakeholders to prioritize women's participation in the technology sector.

Hence, this study investigates the potential of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in advancing women's careers in Information Technology (IT), using NOUN as a case study. The following objectives will be used to achieve this goal:

1.   Investigate general perceptions regarding the academic progression of women in Nigeria.
2.   Explore the benefits female students gain from enrolling in IT-related programmes at an Open and Distance Learning Institution like NOUN.
3.   Identify and understand the challenges NOUN faces in its efforts to empower female students pursuing IT-related programmes.
4.   Propose strategies for NOUN to overcome obstacles in empowering female students pursuing IT-related programmes.

Theoretical Framework

The feminist theoretical frameworks that are frequently used to examine the societal, structural, and cultural obstacles that have traditionally prevented women from entering traditionally male-dominated industries like technology serve as the foundation for this study. It relates to women's advancement in Information Technology (IT) and Open and Distance Learning (ODL), and it clarifies how ODL, particularly through organisations like the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), can function as a transforming tool for women's empowerment and IT development.

Gender Inequality and Structures of Patriarchy

The patriarchal structures that uphold and sustain gender disparities in education are criticised by feminist theory, especially in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) domains like information technology (Beck, 2022). For women who might experience familial or societal restrictions that keep them from attending

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[18]   Kamila Habib et al., "Impact of Education and Employment on Women Empowerment," *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences: Proceedings* 8, no. 3 (s) (2019): pp-62.

[19]   Hasan et al., "Challenges Regarding Access to Higher Education among Rural Women in Punjab Pakistan: Impact & Implication."

traditional universities, NOUN's ODL platform provides an option. NOUN helps women overcome social norms and gender preconceptions by facilitating remote learning, which enables them to pursue IT education and career advancement[20].

The Use of Education as an Empowerment Tool

According to feminist theory, education can be a very effective means of empowering people, especially women who have experienced marginalisation in traditional educational settings (Pasque & Nicholson, 2023). It makes the case that education gives women the agency and self-assurance they need to confront and change restrictive societal institutions in addition to imparting information and skills. NOUN gives women the flexibility to pursue IT education on their terms, enabling them to juggle career and academic goals with their obligations as mothers and wives[21]. Increased social mobility, financial freedom, and a larger presence of women in the IT industry can result from this empowerment through ODL.

Shaking Up Conventional Gender Roles

The goal of feminist theory is to undermine the old gender norms that keep women in the home and limit their access to the workforce and technology (Dosunmu & Dichaba, 2021). By enabling women to pursue IT education without having to leave their communities or move to metropolitan areas where colleges are frequently located, NOUN's ODL programmes challenge traditional gender norms. This adaptability redefines gender norms by enabling women to acquire technological skills and enter an area that has historically been controlled by men[22].

The Digital Divide: A Feminist Critique

While equal access to digital resources sustains current gender disparities, feminist theory suggests that technology should be an equalising force (Wickens & Miller, 2020). By providing IT education to women from all around Nigeria, especially the rural areas, NOUN is actively working to close the digital gap[23][24]. Through the

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[20] Figen Yaman Lesinger, Hülya Şenol, and Nesrin Hürriyetoğlu, "Empowering Women through Online Education: A Case of North Cyprus," *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 10, no. 8 (2022): 504–11.

[21] Naila Kabeer, "Gender Equality, Inclusive Growth, and Labour Markets," *Women's Economic Empowerment: Insights from Africa and South Asia*, 2021, 13–48.

[22] Julia Ranta, "Women Entering Tech-Challenges Women Face in the Technology Industry," 2022.

[23] Aguboshim, Obiokafor, and Nwokedi, "Closing ICT Usability Gaps for Nigerian Women and Girls: Strategies for Reducing Gender Inequality"; Ranta, "Women Entering Tech-Challenges Women Face in the Technology Industry."

[24] Ranta, "Women Entering Tech-Challenges Women Face in the Technology Industry."

integration of mobile-friendly platforms and the provision of offline learning opportunities, NOUN guarantees the participation of women from underprivileged backgrounds in the digital economy, thereby enhancing their socioeconomic standing.

A crucial framework for comprehending how Open and Distance Learning contributes to women's advancement in IT is provided by feminist theory. Feminist theory views ODL programs, such as those provided by NOUN, as instruments for challenging conventional gender roles, tackling intersectional inequality, breaking down patriarchal systems, and empowering women via education. To make sure that women are not left behind in the quickly developing field of information technology, feminist theory emphasises the significance of developing inclusive, adaptable, and accessible educational options.

Materials And Methods

Data for this study was gathered using the survey and interview method. Quantitative data from students was collected through the survey method while the interview techniques were used to collate qualitative data from NOUN employees. Integrating these two techniques results in a complete understanding of the opportunities for women's empowerment inside NOUN's IT programs.

For the investigation, a multistage sampling strategy combining non-probabilistic and probabilistic sampling techniques was used. The 119 study centres in NOUN were first divided into 6 clusters using a cluster random sampling technique. These clusters are referred to as geopolitical zones. Second, one study centre was chosen at random from each zone using a purposive sampling technique. These are the South East Centre (Enugu), South-South Centre (Calabar), North East Centre (Buchi), North West Centre (Kano), North Central Centre (Jos), and South-West Centre (Lagos). The use of purposive sampling was justified by the selection of only locations with sizable student populations. Thirdly, the study's sample size consisted of 360 female students, since 60 of the students were chosen through a systematic random sampling procedure from each of the six clusters. Taro Yamen's algorithm was used to determine the study sample at a 0.04 confidence level. Data instruments were given to the faculty desk officers at each chosen centre for student responses. Three hundred and sixty instruments were supplied, with sixty (60) data instruments delivered to each of the selected study centres. Out of the 360 instruments that the students were given, 250 completed questionnaires were returned. To achieve the research aim, the instrument was divided into sections, Section A – General Perception on gender equality, and

Section B - Benefits of ODE, each of which contains ten questions. Section A sampled fifty (n = 50) NOUN students about their general understanding of gender equality while Section B sampled 200 female students studying IT-related programmes about their experiences as IT students at NOUN.

An interview session was organised with twenty (n = 20) staff members, including academic staff, administrators, and technicians handling student complaints, to gain more insight into female IT students' unique difficulties. The data that was acquired was recorded, coded *(ticked and coded as 1),* and analysed. A descriptive statistical approach was adopted in this investigation. Descriptive statistical analysis comprises collecting, interpreting, analysing, and summarising data to portray data as charts, graphs, and tables.

Results

Table 1
Responses from NOUN Students on the perception of female academic advancement/gender equality (n = 50)

S/N	QUESTIONS	SD	D	SA	A	U	Total Percentage
Section A (Academic Advancement/Gender Equality)							
1.	Males in Nigeria have better mental capabilities than females	2 (4%)	3 (6%)	30 (60%)	10 (20%)	5 (10%)	100%
2.	Women are generally treated as inferior to men in most aspects of life.	2 (4%)	5 (10%)	25 (50%)	15 (30%)	3 (6%)	100%
3.	Education does not give women a sense of belonging in society.	0 (0%)	7 (14%)	20 (40%)	20 (40%)	3 (6%)	100%
4.	I don't think ODL is one of the most accessible strategies for equal educational access in Nigeria.	2 (4%)	8 (16%)	25 (50%)	10 (20%)	5 (10%)	100%
5.	I don't think ODL can help to meet the objectives of SDG 5	0 (0%)	3 (6%)	30 (60%)	15 (30%)	2 (4%)	100%

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	for equality and inclusive Education						
6.	There exists a social bias towards women venturing into IT-related fields.	5 (10%)	5 (10%)	15 (30%)	20 (40%)	5 (10%)	100%
7.	Nigerian women in IT are not as ambitious as Nigerian men.	1 (2%)	4 (8%)	35 (70%)	10 (20%)	0 (0%)	100%
8.	Distance learning is suitable for training women whose religion does not permit them to go out.	3 (6%)	5 (10%)	20 (40%)	20 (40%)	2 (4%)	100%
9.	Quality Education in IT can also be acquired through the ODL program.	3 (6%)	5 (10%)	25 (50%)	15 (30%)	2 (4%)	100%
10.	I don't think that Open and Distance Learning can help empower Nigerian women in IT-related fields significantly.	2 (4%)	7 (14%)	25 (50%)	15 (30%)	1 (2%)	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024
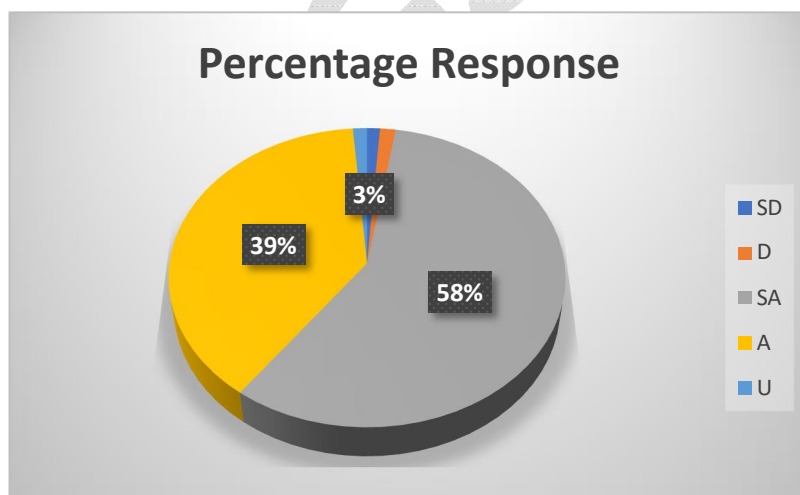
Figure 1: Perception of female academic advancement/gender equality

The responses to NOUN students' views on gender equality and women's academic achievement are graphically represented in Figure 1. Based on the answers to each question, we would conclude that a more significant majority of respondents (58%) strongly support the statement posed in the questions, indicating that the notion that women's academic achievement in Nigeria is meaningless due to gender. Because of this assertion, gender inequality among women continues to be a significant problem.

Table 2
Responses from Female Students in IT-related Fields (n = 200)

S/N	QUESTIONS	SD	D	SA	A	U	Total %
Section B (Benefits derived from ODE)							
1	Open and distance education is a flexible and accessible means of learning for all	2 (1%)	3 (1.5%)	125 (62.5%)	65 (32.5%)	5 (2.5%)	100%
2.	NOUN, as an ODE platform, provides affordable learning	0 (0%)	3 (1.5%)	115 (57.5%)	82 (41%)	0 (0%)	100%
3.	The NOUN platform provides an inclusive learning environment	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	110 (55%)	85 (42.5%)	3 (1.5%)	100%
4.	NOUN provides the opportunity to enhance IT skills through its online platforms	1 (0.5%)	2 (1%)	80 (40%)	117 (58.5%)	0 (0%)	100%
5.	NOUN platforms encourage interaction and collaboration with other female students	5 (2.5%)	2 (1%)	100 (50%)	91 (45.5%)	2 (1%)	100%
6.	NOUN provides open learning environments for women of different backgrounds and nationalities	0 (0%)	1 (0.5%)	108 (54%)	90 (45%)	1 (0.5%)	100%
7.	The NOUN platform creates room for	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	130 (65%)	55 (27.5%)	5 (2.5%)	100%

	mentorship, scholarship, and internship for women studying IT						
8.	Open and Distance Education is favourable to women in IT-related fields	3 (1.5%)	2 (1%)	105 (52.5%)	88 (44%)	2 (1%)	100%
9.	A woman can learn IT-related courses at a distance and still take care of her family	5 (2.5%)	5 (2.5%)	138 (69%)	47 (23.5%)	5 (2.5%)	100%
10.	Working IT career women can also study through distance learning at NOUN	2 (1%)	3 (1.5%)	140 (70%)	53 (26.5%)	2 (1%)	100%

Source: Field survey, 2024.
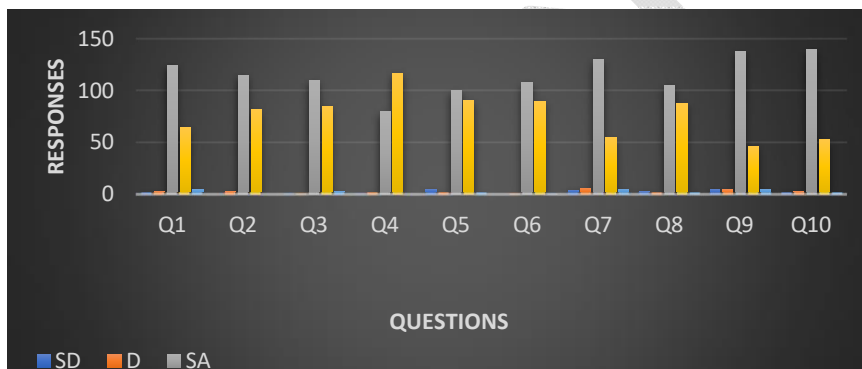
Figure 2: Benefits NOUN female IT students derived from NOUN

The purpose of Figure 2 is to give a visual depiction of the values that NOUN female students enrolled in IT-related programs expressed as a result of attending open and remote learning institutions such as NOUN. After examining all the answers, we can infer that a more significant proportion of respondents chose "agreed" than others. This observation indicates the importance of open and remote education for female students, particularly those pursuing IT-related programs.

Table 3
Challenges NOUN Faces in Empowering Female Students in IT-related Programs

Interviewee	Summarised Students' Experience						
	Gender Stereotypes	Lack of Support Learning Environment	Limited Access to Resources	Work-Life Balance	Impostor Syndrome	Basic Computer Knowledge	Bias and Discrimination
Staff 1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Staff 2				√	√	√	√
Staff 3	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Staff 4			√		√	√	
Staff 5	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Staff 6				√	√		
Staff 7		√	√	√	√		√
Staff 8	√		√	√			√
Staff 9			√	√	√	√	√
Staff 10	√		√		√	√	
Staff 11			√	√	√	√	√
Staff 12		√	√	√			√
Staff 13	√		√	√	√	√	√
Staff 14			√	√			
Staff 15	√		√		√	√	√
Staff 16	√		√			√	√
Staff 17		√	√	√	√		
Staff 18	√			√			√
Staff 19		√	√	√	√	√	√
Staff 20	√		√	√	√	√	
Total (No. Students)	10	9	18	17	15	13	14

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Above is a list of interviewees' comments (qualitative data) collected from NOUN staff members who work directly with students. Several of their comments regarding students' experiences *(ticked and coded as 1)* as outlined in the table, particularly in IT-related programmes act as the obstacles that NOUN encounters in empowering students.

Discussion

As illustrated in Table 1 above, eighty percent (80%) of respondents thought that men and women have different mental capacities. Ninety percent (90%) felt that ODL is essential for equity and comprehensive education, particularly for women, whereas eighty percent (80%) said that women are typically viewed as inferiors in society.

Additionally, eighty percent concurred that ODL offers high-quality IT education as a way of empowerment. Combining the findings, we can say that, in general, it is impossible to overstate people's opinions about how emotion and prejudice have prevented women in society from obtaining an education. This assertion is backed up by Endalcachew Bayeh[25] who asserted that even though education has dramatically improved in many countries, women are still not treated similarly to men everywhere and are still viewed as inferior. Since open and distance education encourages women's enrollment and empowerment, it is essential to create an advantage to reduce this gap because it offers flexible, equitable, and accessible education to everyone including bridging the digital skills in the gender gap. This assertion is supported by [26]West, Kraut, and Ei Chew in their paper titled I'd Blush if I Could: closing gender divides in digital skills through education.

In Table 2, most respondents (98%) agreed that open and remote learning is accessible and adaptable. 97.5 percent agree that NOUN offers its students an inclusive learning environment. 98.5 percent of the participants concurred that NOUN offers a chance to improve digital abilities via her online platforms. Furthermore, 92.5 percent of respondents believed that NOUN accommodates internships, scholarships, and mentorship, particularly for female students with IT-related degrees. In general, over 90% of respondents said that NOUN IT-related programs are more advantageous to women and allow them to work, study, and support their families. The findings suggest that Open and Distance Education can have a substantial impact on the empowerment of women enrolled in IT-related degrees at NOUN by providing flexible and accessible learning options, a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for women, specialised support services, mentorship programs, and IT-friendly courses for working class and family women. This assertion is backed up by Saikia[27] who expressed the opinion that ODE should be brought up as a substitute for increasing educational access and offering opportunities for skill-based learning at a low cost.

Based on qualitative data collated from the interview of 20 NOUN staff members on experiences gathered during interaction with female students as they discharge their daily duties, we were able to come up with some findings. According to them, most female IT students (18) complained about having limited access to resources such as

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[25]   Endalcachew Bayeh, "The Role of Empowering Women and Achieving Gender Equality to the Sustainable Development of Ethiopia," *Pacific Science Review B: Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2016): 37–42, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psrb.2016.09.013.

[26]   Mark West, Rebecca Kraut, and Han Ei Chew, "I'd Blush If I Could: Closing Gender Divides in Digital Skills through Education," 2019.

[27]   Nirupma Barik Saikia, "Empowerment of Women through Post Graduate Level Programmes in Open and Distance Learning Mode: A Case Study of Select ODL Institutions of Assam," 2020.

computer systems/laptops, mobile devices, data, etc. 17 of them struggle to manage their education and work while 15 feel like they are not good enough to compete with men because of imposter syndrome. 14, 13, and 10 students reported experiencing discrimination, low computer knowledge, and gender stereotyping respectively while a negligible portion complained about inadequate learning and environmental support. Combining the interviewees' comments, we can comment that NOUN has multiple challenges in its mission to empower women enrolled in IT-related programmes. These obstacles are typical barriers to the students' effective empowerment. Endorsing this, Okunade et al.[28] asserted that specific barriers women face when pursuing IT employment can keep them from entering and succeeding in the field. For example, when examining how computer proficiency affects ODL students' academic achievement in the sciences, they discovered a relationship between computer proficiency and students' academic success in open and distant education institutions. Moreover, Nisreen Ameen et al.[29] show how difficult it is for most women in developing countries to use ICT devices like computers, smartphones, and the Internet. He critically argued that formal school curricula should emphasise digital skill training starting in primary school to close the knowledge gap about digital realities for women and girls. This breakthrough will allow for the early development of ICT skills and usability education[30]. This assertion is consistent with the study's second goal.

Finally, from the interview report, suggestions were made by the interviewees on how NOUN can overcome some of the challenges they encounter while trying to empower women enrolled in IT. Here are some potential solutions provided to these obstacles:

1. **Promoting Gender-Sensitive Curriculum**: Inclusivity and diverse perspectives should be ensured by updating course materials to reflect women's viewpoints, experiences, and contributions. According to Nieminen et al.[31], gender sensitivity should be encouraged, and also there should be an enhancement of awareness of women's rights, gender equality, and empowerment through new courses or modules.

2. **Fostering Mentorship and Support Programmes**: Female students should be connected with accomplished female alumni, instructors, or business

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[28] Adekunle, Seyi, and Falilat, "Demographic Factors and Status as Predictors of Open and Distance Learning Students Academic Performance in Computer Science."

[29] Ameen, Madichie, and Anand, "Between Handholding and Hand-Held Devices: Marketing through Smartphone Innovation and Women's Entrepreneurship in Post Conflict Economies in Times of Crisis."

[30] Aguboshim, Obiokafor, and Nwokedi, "Closing ICT Usability Gaps for Nigerian Women and Girls: Strategies for Reducing Gender Inequality."

[31] Juuso Henrik Nieminen, "Inclusive Assessment, Exclusive Academy," *Assessment for Inclusion in Higher Education: Promoting Equity and Social Justice in Assessment*, no. December (2022): 63–73, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003293101-8.

leaders, offering guidance, mentorship, and support. Targeted academic, professional, and personal counseling services to help female students overcome challenges and enhance their overall well-being should be provided[32].

3. **Offering Gender-Specific Financial Assistance and Scholarships**: Financial barriers, participation, and retention should be addressed by offering financial aid, scholarships, and grants specifically for female students. Access to external funding opportunities, including scholarships and fellowships aimed at women in STEM or other underrepresented fields should be provided by stakeholders[33].

4. **Providing Capacity-Building and Skill Development Workshops**: According to Saikia et al.[34], female students' employability and confidence through workshops focused on key skills like entrepreneurship, leadership, communication, and digital literacy should be promoted. Empower women with specialized training in assertiveness, work-life balance, and negotiation techniques, fostering their personal and professional growth.

5. **Advancing Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns**: Gender discrimination and stereotypes should be looked into by promoting awareness and advocacy campaigns that encourage an inclusive and gender-equal university culture. Gurrieri et al.[35] in their paper suggest that partnerships with student organizations, alumni, and community members to drive forums, events, and campaigns on women's rights, gender equality, and empowerment should strengthen. A policy that provides female students with flexible learning options, including online courses, part-time study, and distance learning, to accommodate those balancing work and caregiving responsibilities should be considered. Advocates for policies that enable work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling, childcare options, and parental leave, fostering a supportive educational environment for women.

These strategies hope to improve the inclusive, encouraging, and empowering classroom atmosphere by addressing the various issues that female students in NOUN

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[32] Mariluz Guenaga et al., "The Impact of Female Role Models Leading a Group Mentoring Program to Promote STEM Vocations among Young Girls," *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 14, no. 3 (2022): 1–19, https://doi.org/10.3390/su14031420.

[33] J Gazeaud et al., "With or without Him? Experimental Evidence on Gender-Sensitive Cash Grants and Trainings in Tunisia VO - RT - Unpublished Work," *OP* - (Centre for the Study of African Economies, n.d.).

[34] Nirupoma Barik Saikia and Ritimoni Bordoloi, "Socio-Economic Profile of Women Learners of the ODL System with Special Reference to KKHSOU in Assam," *Asian Journal of Distance Education* 15, no. 1 (2020): 1–17, http://www.asianjde.org.

[35] Lauren Gurrieri et al., "Feminist Academic Organizations: Challenging Sexism through Collective Mobilizing across Research, Support, and Advocacy," *Gender, Work and Organization* 31, no. 5 (2024): 2158–79, https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12912.

confront. Through the execution of these programmes, NOUN will be able to make a substantial contribution to the advancement of women's empowerment, gender equality, and the academic achievement and welfare of all students.

Conclusion

From the international to the local, from the government to non-governmental organisations, everyone is putting in a lot of effort to close the gender gap and advance women's empowerment globally. This landmark is only possible, though, if we raise our kids without gender bias from the start and throughout every developmental stage. Additionally, by giving them more options, amplifying their voices, and redefining their authority, we must allow them to exercise their legitimate rights in society freely, in their communities, and in their own lives. The study's conclusion sheds light on how a significant number of people agree with the fact that women are underrepresented in educational advancement, therefore, enrolling in ODL is essential. It also shows that women who enroll in IT-related programmes at NOUN benefit from flexible learning options, specialized support services, reasonably priced mentorship programs, inclusive learning environments, enhanced IT skills, and an affordable, collaborative learning environment that addresses gender-based disparities.

Furthermore, it highlighted some of the challenges NOUN experiences in empowering women enrolled in IT-related programs, including discrimination and prejudice, a lack of basic computer skills, the feeling of being an impostor, a lack of resources, and gender stereotypes. Some recommended strategies to get over these challenges include the creation of gender-sensitive curricula, mentorship and support programs, workshops on capacity building, advocacy and awareness campaigns, etc. Further investigation is needed to find out how to expand capacity, online support networks, mentorship programmes, and flexible study schedules in improving women's involvement, retention, and success in IT education. This research will help policymakers, educators, and stakeholders better understand how ODL may boost women's empowerment in IT-related occupations. They might therefore develop successful programs and interventions to lessen the gender gap in IT employment and education.

Recommendations

Based on recommendations made from the information previously mentioned and the study's findings.

1. The government and private sector should work together to improve digital infrastructure and increase internet connectivity in rural areas so that women can have access to the technology required for open and distance education.

2. Open and distance education programmes should be customised to meet the unique needs of women in various regions and include entrepreneurial, skilled-based courses that are directly related to local employment opportunities.

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Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflict of interest

Ethical Approval

The confidentiality of all participants was strictly maintained. Data was anonymized and stored securely, accessible only to the research team. Personal identifiers were removed to ensure privacy.

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Employee Career Development Plan on Business Operation: A Study of Oriental Foods Industry Limited Kano

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of employee career development plan on business operation with reference to Oriental Foods Industry Limited. Self-structured questionnaire was used to source primary data from 82 respondents who were employees of Oriental Foods Industry Limited, Kano. The study found that career planning and career mentoring significantly affected the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited. The study recommends that Oriental Foods Industry Limited should extensively implement career development strategies, such as career counselling services, career mentors, career planning, and training programmes, as doing so would enhance organizational performance. Oriental Foods Industry Limited should encourage steady career advancement by expanding promotion opportunities and creating new openings for qualified and competent staff in order to prevent stagnation at some levels.

Keywords: Career Development, Career Mentoring, Business Operations, Career Planning.

Le plan de développement de carrière des employés sur le fonctionnement commercial : le cas *d'Oriental Food Industry Limited*

Résumé

L'objectif de cette étude est d'examiner l'effet du plan de développement de carrière des employés sur le fonctionnement commercial a l'égard de Oriental Foods Industry Limited. Des questionnaires auto-structurés ont été utilisés pour obtenir des données primaires de 82 répondants qui étaient des employés d'Oriental Foods Industry Limited, Kano. L'étude a révélé que la planification de carrière et le mentorat de carrière ont eu un impact significatif sur les opérations commerciales d'Oriental Foods Industry Limited. L'étude recommande qu'Oriental Foods Industry Limited mette en œuvre de manière extensive des stratégies de développement de carrière, telles que des services d'orientation professionnelle, des mentors de carrière, une planification de carrière et des programmes de formation, ce faisant améliorerait la performance organisationnelle. Oriental Foods Industry Limited devrait encourager l'avancement professionnel régulier en élargissant les opportunités de promotion et en créant de nouvelles ouvertures pour le personnel qualifié et compétent afin d'éviter la stagnation à certains niveaux.

Mots-clés : le développement de carrière, le mentorat de carrière, l'opérations commerciales, la planification de carrière.

Introduction

Employees in today's world are showing a strong desire to pursue careers that go beyond their jobs[1]. They are searching for jobs that will allow them to further develop their hobbies, character, and skills[2]. In addition to a paycheck and a few perks, they have other expectations from their jobs, and how well their employer meets these expectations will determine how loyal they are to the company.[3] With rising living standards, employees aren't content with a job and the customary perks anymore. Individuals choose a vocation that aligns with their interests, character, skills, and overall circumstances. Regretfully, the majority of businesses have not acknowledged this requirement, and the resources and opportunities they offer prevent employees from advancing in their careers.[4]

Career development as a human resource management aided the workers to be resistant, had confidence in themselves as the company adjusted to varying economic conditions. Through career development, employees became more marketable and had access to a wider range of possibilities, which increased their likelihood of staying with the company[5]. Employees who were in charge of their careers could work effectively with others and meet demands at work. Workers who were enlightened via professional development laid the foundation for managerial ideas to change.[6]

Career development is crucial for the organization and the individual employee, according to Cole[7]. This is so because there is interaction between the organization for which he/she works and the development of the organization through the employee's career. Employees advance in their careers by consistently gaining professional or

1   Firman, Ahmad. "The effect of career development on employee performance at Aswin Hotel and Spa Makassar." *Journal manajemen bisnis* 8, no. 1 (2021): 133-146.
2   Hasan, M. M., and S. A. Chowdhury. "Assessing The Influence of Training and Skill Development Initiatives on Employee Performance: A Case Study of Private Banks in Dhaka, Bangladesh." *Malaysian Business Management Journal* 2, no. 2 (2023): 74-79.
3   Bartlett, John. "Career Centers: A Strategic Approach to Employee Development." *Journal of Human Resource Management* 42, no. 2 (2018): 145-160
4   Kaye, Robert. "Meeting the Evolving Expectations of Employees in Today's World." *Journal of Workplace Psychology* 32, no. 1 (2020): 78-91.
5   Ghani, Bilqees, Muhammad Zada, Khalid Rasheed Memon, Rezwan Ullah, Afraseyab Khattak, Heesup Han, Antonio Ariza-Montes, and Luis Araya-Castillo. "Challenges and strategies for employee retention in the hospitality industry: A review." *Sustainability* 14, no. 5 (2022): 2885.
6   Robbins, Laura. "Aligning Individual Aspirations with Organizational Needs: The Role of Career Planning." *Journal of Career Development* 47, no. 2 (2019): 201-215.
7   Cole, Michael. "The Symbiotic Relationship Between Career Development and Organizational Growth." *Human Resource Management Review* 40, no. 2 (2018): 210-225.

management abilities and experience, which can lead to awards and promotions[8]. Professional progression entails achieving better status and responsibilities within an organization, moving between organizations, or doing both at once. Workers may transfer from one institution to another, perhaps not in the same career, but most likely from one field or level to another[9].

Regardless of size, industry, market, or profile, career development policies are critical strategic considerations for all firms[10]. An organization's productivity, efficacy, morale, and profitability are all directly impacted by the managers' capacity and capability growth. In order to guarantee that their personnel perform at their best now and in the future, high-performing companies are paying more and more attention to the legitimacy of their hiring procedures and are growing correspondingly watchful about the career development of their staff.[11] Ngozi[12] places emphasis on the practice of internal promotions in order to foster the perception that professional development presents a favourable prospect for career advancement, which, in his view, will encourage staff members to stay with the organization.

Pareek and Rao[13] agree and contend that poor performance, ignorance, and a lack of devotion to duty are extremely expensive hurdles in a company; they also contend that career development for employees should be viewed as an investment rather than a cost. It is noted that having workers that are eager to work, well-managed, well-led, highly motivated, and constantly reskilling is essential to high performance levels. An employee's working life is encompassed by career growth. For instance, employee orientation, on-the-job training, experience, professional courses, short courses, postgraduate degrees, or diplomas are the first steps. The cornerstone upon which each employee's competence and self-assurance are constructed is employee development[14].

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[8] Underhill, Brian O. "The Impact of Mentoring on Employee Performance: A Longitudinal Analysis." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 27, no. 3 (2023): 323-340.

[9] Kim, Minsoo, and Robert E. Ployhart. "Career Planning and Turnover: Examining the Mediating Role of Career Satisfaction." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 103, no. 5 (2018): 512-525.

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[14] Coyle-Shapiro, Jacqueline A., and Patricia C. Morrow. "Employee Productivity and Opportunities for Advancement: A Perspective from Organizational Research." Journal of Organizational Behavior 45, no. 3 (2022): 301-315.

Employees are valuable assets to any organization; they play an active role in the company's success that should not be overlooked. Equipping these distinct talents with successful career development becomes critical in order to maximize job effectiveness[15]. There is a level at which individuals find it difficult to advance or be promoted, but the organization requires personnel who perform their tasks well. Lack of career progression following training is a problem. It may not be justified for organizations to continue spending huge sums of money on training that does not result in career development or enhanced organizational performance[16].

Several studies have examined the notion of career progression. For example, Ngozi conducted research on the effects of career development on employee performance in the banking business and discovered that career mentoring improves employee performance. Employee career development has emerged as a top issue for HR departments. Many firms have built career centres to help their employees advance professionally. Employee development is a programme sponsored by a corporation for its employees that focuses on finding, assuring, and eliciting new ideas through planned learning. A lack of career planning for advancement and aligning individual aspirations with organizational needs and possibilities creates significant personal and financial suffering for both the individual and the corporation.

The issue with employee career development on business operations at Oriental Foods Industry Limited is that without a clear and effective career development strategy, employees may lose motivation and see no clear path for professional advancement within the organization. This may result in lower employee engagement, higher turnover rates, and lower productivity, all of which have a detrimental influence on corporate operations. Furthermore, implementing employee career development plans can consume large resources, affecting other parts of the firm. Organizations may struggle to balance the need for professional development with the needs of day-to-day operations, resulting in insufficient investment in employee development and a stagnant workforce[17].

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[15]   Lee, Charlie, and Nicholas T. Bruvold. "Maximizing Job Effectiveness Through Successful Career Development: A Review." *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness* 24, no. 3 (2023): 301-315.

[16]   Gupta, Rajesh, and Jason D. Shaw. "Career Planning and Workforce Agility: Navigating the Challenges of a Dynamic Business Environment." Journal of Strategic Management 45, no. 2 (2019): 145-160

[17]   Orodho, Anthony. "Career Development and Organizational Operations: A Review of the Literature." *Journal of Business Research* 48, no. 3 (2019): 305-318.

Previous studies have not empirically examined the impact of employee career development plans on business operations in the consumer goods industry. Saleem[18] examined the impact of career development on employee performance in oil and gas organizations. He discovered that career development and mentoring had a significant impact on employee performance within firms. Iwuoha[19] evaluated career development and staff motivation in the banking industry. Arthur[20] examines contemporary careers and highlights the need for interdisciplinary inquiry when studying contemporary careers. He emphasizes the dynamic nature of careers in today's rapidly changing work environment and argues that traditional approaches to career research may no longer be sufficient. Daniels[21] studied on employee training as a strategic approach to better return on investment and noted that employee training should be approached strategically, aligning it with organizational goals and objectives. Most of these researches focused on the relationship between career development and employee performance, leaving a gap in understanding how it relates to organizational operations. To address this information gap, the study intended to analyse the effect of employee career development plans on business operations with reference to Oriental Foods Industry Limited.

Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of employee career development plan on business operations with reference to Oriental Foods Industry Limited. The specific objectives are as follows:

i.   To examine the extent to which career planning affect the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited, Kano.

ii.   To check the extent to which career mentoring affect the **business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited,** Kano.

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[18] Saleem "Career Development and Employee Performance: Insights from the Oil and Gas Industry." *Journal of Organizational Development* 28, no. 1 (2019): 78-91.

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Materials and Method

Methodology is an overall plan that spells out the sources, types of data required and the strategies for obtaining such as well as the appropriate tools for analysing them[22]. For this study descriptive research design was employed. The study targeted the employees of Oriental Foods Industry Limited. According to the information from the Human Resource Department in 2024, the total population of employees is 113. This comprises the branch managers, Sales personnels, customer care services and accountants. However, the sample size was drawn from Krejci and Morgan[23] table for determining sample size. Therefore, a sample size of 86 is used for this study. However, random sampling technique was used to select a sample to represent the entire population. Furthermore, this study utilized a self-structured questionnaire as a primary tool for data collection. The questionnaire contained structured questions. The questions are systematic and pre-determined and are presented with exactly the same wording and in the same order to all respondents. Section A captures questions on the demographic characteristics of respondents, Section B entails questions based on the research questions. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are used in the data analysis. The collected data are transferred into statistical package of social science (SPSS) software (version (20.0). Therefore, several statistical tools are employed in analysing the result, including descriptive statistics, such as tables and percentage and inferential statistics such as regression analysis.

Result

Descriptive and Demographic Data

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Gender of respondent		
Description	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Male	46	56.1
Female	36	43.9
Total	**82**	**100**
Age of Respondents		
18-25 years	11	13.4
26-30 years	32	39.0

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[22]   Cresswell, J. W. (2012). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

[23]   Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *30*(3), 607-610.

31-35 years	23	28.0
36 – 40 years	9	10.9
41 years above	7	5.4
Total	**82**	**100**
Education of Respondents		
OND/NCE	17	20.7
BSC/HND	58	70.7
Masters	7	8.5
PhD.	-	-
Total	**82**	**100**
Work Experience		
Less than 1 year	12	14.6
2-5 years	21	25.6
6-10 years	41	50.0
11 years and above	8	9.8
Total	**82**	**100**

The table presents a comprehensive demographic profile of the respondents based on four key categories: gender, age, education, and working experience. The respondents are predominantly male, with 46 males accounting for 56.1% of the total sample, while the female respondents are 36, representing 43.9%. This indicates a slight male majority within the respondent group. The age distribution shows a concentration of respondents in the younger to middle-aged brackets. The largest age group is the 26-30 years category, comprising 32 individuals or 39.0% of the respondents. The 31-35 years group follows with 23 respondents, making up 28.0%. Those aged 18-25 years form 13.4% with 11 respondents, and the 36-40 years group has 9 respondents, which is 10.9%. The least represented are those aged 41 and above, constituting only 5.4% with 7 respondents. The educational qualifications of the respondents indicate a high level of academic achievement. The majority hold a B.Sc/HND, with 58 respondents or 70.7%. Those with an OND/NCE make up 20.7% with 17 individuals. Master's degree holders account for 8.5% with 7 respondents, while no respondents have a PhD. This suggests that the majority have attained at least a bachelor's degree. The work experience of the respondents is diverse, with a substantial portion having moderate experience. The largest group, 41 respondents (50.0%), has between 6-10 years of working experience. Those with 2-5 years of experience account for 21 respondents (25.6%). There are 12 respondents (14.6%) with less than 1 year of experience, while 8 respondents (9.8%) have over 11 years of experience.

Hypotheses Testing and Result

Hypothesis One

H_1:   Career planning does not significantly affect the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.814[a]	.522	482	1.06724

a.   Predictors: (constant) Career Planning

ANOVAᵃ

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Regression	51.022	1	51.022	57.226	.000[a]
Residual	56.254	48	1.115		
Total	107.276	49			

a.   Predictors: (Constant) Career Planning
b.   Dependent Variable: Business Operation

Coefficients ᵃ

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1. (Constant)	7.234	.421	.814	22.658	.000
Career Planning	. 792	.236		7.921	.000

a.   Dependent Variable: Business Operation

The R-square value, as reported in the model summary, is 0.522 (52.22%). Business operations have been used to explain the R-Square, or coefficient of determination, measures of career planning. The fitted model is more appropriate the higher the R-Square value. The ANOVA table shows that the f – calculated is 57.226 with 1 and 48 degrees of freedom. The f – tabulated obtained from the statistical table at 0.05 level of significance of 4.08. Since, the f – calculated (57.226) is greater than the f – tabulated (4.01), the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected and we therefore accept the (H_1) which states that career planning significantly affects the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited. Finally, the coefficient table gives the nature of

relationship between career planning and business operation. From the table, the coefficient of career planning is 0.792. Since the coefficient is positive, we can therefore accept the hypothesis which implies that career planning significantly affects the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited.

Hypothesis Two
H_2:   Career mentoring does not significantly affect the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.848[b]	.700	.784	1.32583

a. Predictors: (constant): Career Mentoring

ANOVA[b]

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Means Square	F	Sig.
1. Regression Residual Total	21.144 84.376 105.520	1 48 49	21.144 1.758	11.039	.001[a]

a.   Predictors (constant), Career Mentoring
b.   Dependent variable: Business Operations

Coefficients [b]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1. (Constant) Career Mentoring	7.842 .782	.756 .225	.448	7.791 3.468	.000 .001

a.   Dependent Variable: Business Operation

The model table above indicates a 78.4% R-Square value of 0.874. The unevenness in career planning is measured by the R-Square, also called the coefficient of determination, which has been explained by business operations. The fitted model is more appropriate the higher the R- Square value. According to the ANOVA table, f-

calculated with 1 and 48 degrees of freedom is 11.039. At the 0.05 level of significance, the f-tabulated value derived from the statistical table is 4.08. The null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected since the f-calculated (12.028) is greater than the f-tabulated (4.08), leading us to accept the hypothesis that career mentoring has a major impact on Oriental Foods Industry Limited's business operations. Since the coefficient is positive and indicates the nature of the relationship between career planning and business operations, we can accept the hypothesis that career mentoring has a major impact on Oriental Foods Industry Limited's business operations.

Discussion

The results of the descriptive statistics reveal that career planning plays a crucial role in the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited. With a correlation coefficient of 0.522, it is evident that there is a moderate to strong positive relationship between effective career planning and the enhancement of business operations within the company. This correlation coefficient indicates that as career planning initiatives improve, there is a corresponding improvement in business operations. The findings are in alignment with previous research conducted by Chen et al.[24] and stoner et al.[25], which also highlighted the importance of strategic career planning in fostering better business outcomes. These studies collectively suggest that career planning not only helps in aligning employee goals with organizational objectives but also plays a pivotal role in operational efficiency and service quality.

In addition to career planning, career mentoring has been shown to have a substantial impact on the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited. The correlation coefficient of 0.700 indicates a strong positive relationship, suggesting that effective career mentoring significantly enhances business operations. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Hilton[26] and Mullins[27] who also identified career mentoring as a critical factor in business success. The p- value associated with this finding is 0.000, which is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05, further validating the statistical significance of the impact of career mentoring.

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[24] Chen, Li, Ying Liu, and Xiao Huang. "The Impact of Career Planning on Employee Motivation and Organizational Performance: A Meta-Analysis." Journal of Applied Psychology 105, no. 3 (2020): 301-315.

[25] Stoner, James A. F., and David R. Gilbert. "Career Advancement and Personal Approaches: An Integrated Perspective." Human Resource Management Review 35, no. 2 (2021): 112-127.

[26] Hilton, Susan. "Career Mentoring as a Catalyst for Personal and Professional Development: A Comprehensive Review." *Journal of Career Development* 47, no. 4 (2022): 401-415.

[27] Mullins, Catherine D. "Formal Career Mentoring Programs: Benefits for Organizations and Participants." Journal of Human Resource Management 42, no. 3 (2020): 201-215.

These studies highlight the importance of career planning and mentoring in fostering a productive and motivated workforce. By providing employees with guidance and support, career mentoring helps in the development of skills and competencies that are essential for operational success. The strong correlation coefficient indicates that as career mentoring practices are enhanced, there is a marked improvement in the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited. This result highlights the role of mentoring in not only improving individual performance but also in driving overall organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, we concluded that career planning and career mentoring   play a crucial role in shaping and impacting the business operations of Oriental Foods Industry Limited. The research provides substantial evidence that these factors significantly influence the overall success and performance of the organization. By implementing effective career planning strategies, Oriental Foods Industry Limited can align employee skills, aspirations, and goals with organizational objectives, ensuring a clear path for professional growth and development. By acknowledging the significance of career planning, and career mentoring, Oriental Foods Industry Limited can strategically leverage these factors to optimise its business operations, attract and retain top talent, and ultimately achieve sustainable growth and success in the highly competitive market.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:
i.   Oriental Foods Industry Limited should extensively implement career development strategies, such as career counselling services, career mentors, career planning, and training programs, as doing so would enhance organizational performance.
ii.   Oriental Foods Industry Limited should encourage steady career advancement by expanding promotion opportunities and creating new openings for qualified and competent staff in order to prevent stagnation at some levels.

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The Consequences of Banditry and Possession of SALW in Shinkafi and Zurmi LGA, Zamfara State

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Abstract

The surge in armed banditry spreading across regions and countries particularly Nigerian is threatening and scary. Such threats, heightened the vulnerability of defenseless citizens as they provide justification for the escalation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW). Cattle rustling, kidnapping, armed robbery, raids on villages or settlements and indiscriminate killings, sexual and gender-based violence, among others are consequences of these threats. The speed at which this global concern is infesting regions and countries particularly Nigeria is unprecedented. This scourge has penetrated hinterlands scaring away farmers from accessing their farm land for farming activities. Zamfara State, in North West Nigeria is worst hit in recent time. While there is undoubtedly, global concern with, and, arguably, action on the scourge of small arms proliferation, there is a continuing and urgent need for more focused analyses of the specific responses and local dimensions of banditry and proliferation of small arms problems. Using Berger and Luckman`s social constructionist, social disorganisation theory by Robert martins drawn from Anomie theory of Emile Durkheim and Social Differentiation Theory by Edwin Sutherland as theoretical frameworks, the study adopts exploratory design to involved thematic analysis of qualitative data gathered through interviews, focus group discussion and case study. The findings show that whereas inter global, regional and national migration and alarms exist, the show of collective and individual concerns is essential to throw searchlights on the problem of surging banditry and illegal traffic of SALW, and for generating the necessary political will by layers of authorities, local awareness, early warning as proactive intervention for solutions are crucial to curb the menace.

Key Words: Armed banditry, SALW, Shinkafi, Zurmi, Zamfara State, 2019-2023.

Les conséquences du banditisme et de la possession d'ALPC dans les zones de gouvernement local de Shinkafi et Zurmi, dans l'État de Zamfara

Résumé

La montée du banditisme armé qui se propage dans les régions et les pays, en particulier au Nigéria, est menaçante et effrayante. Cette menace a accru la vulnérabilité des citoyens sans défense, car elle justifie l'escalade et la prolifération des armes légères et de petit calibre (ALPC). Le vol de bétail, les enlèvements, les vols à main armée, les raids sur les villages ou les implantations et les meurtres aveugles, les violences sexuelles et sexistes, entre autres, sont les conséquences de ces menaces. La vitesse à laquelle ce fléau mondial envahit les régions et les pays, en particulier le Nigéria, est sans précédent. Ce fléau a pénétré dans l'arrière-pays, dissuadant les agriculteurs d'accéder à leurs terres agricoles pour des activités agricoles et l'État de Zamfara, dans le nord-ouest du Nigéria, est le plus touché ces derniers temps. Bien qu'il existe sans aucun doute une préoccupation mondiale et des mesures à prendre pour lutter contre le fléau de la prolifération des armes légères, il existe un besoin continu et urgent d'analyses plus ciblées des réponses spécifiques et des dimensions locales du banditisme et des problèmes de prolifération des armes légères. En utilisant le constructivisme social de Berger et Luckman, la désorganisation sociale de Robert Martins tirée de la théorie de l'anomie d'Emile Durkheim et la théorie de la différenciation sociale d'Edwin Sutherland comme cadres théoriques, l'étude adopte une conception exploratoire pour impliquer l'analyse thématique des données qualitatives recueillies au moyen d'entretiens, de discussions de groupe et d'études de cas. Les résultats montrent que, bien que des migrations et des alarmes inter-mondiales, régionales et nationales existent, la manifestation des préoccupations collectives et individuelles est essentielle pour mettre en lumière le problème de la montée du banditisme et du trafic illégal d'ALPC et pour générer la volonté politique nécessaire des différents niveaux d'autorité, la sensibilisation locale, l'alerte précoce comme intervention proactive pour trouver des solutions sont cruciales pour enrayer la menace.

Mots clés : banditisme armé, ALPC, Shinkafi, Zurmi, État de Zamfara, 2019-2023.

Introduction

The increasing wave of banditry across regions and countries occasioned by the disturbing proliferation of SALW has not only constitute serious humanitarian challenge to the security and development of human rights, and global justice, but dangerously feeding the upsurge of insurgency and terrorism at various levels. Besides being used to kill and displace victims, illegal access, possession and use of small arms constitute significant threat to human and material security which have endangered the development process for years or sometimes decades[1,2]. It follows that no meaningful progress is possible if SALW is not regulated in any society. However, while state and researchers are busy grappling with the politics of banditry and SALW trade, little attention is given to the consequences of banditry and the illegal possession of SALW across the regions of Nigeria. Hence, the focus of this study is to examine The Consequences of Banditry and Possession of SALW in Shinkafi and Zurmi LGA, Zamfara State.

Banditry across northwest Nigeria committed by armed bandits has escalated to other zones where they lay siege on farmers who no longer feel safe to go to their farms for fear of bandit attack. This recent development is painfully affecting food price and food security because only few courageous farmers dare to go to the farm. Beyond food insecurity, political and economic instabilities resulting from banditry, the proliferation and misuse of SALW account for the heightened fear of the unknown by all within and outside the region as captured by Osimen and Akintunde[3]. Other problems such as armed banditry, armed robbery, ethnic and militia restiveness, kidnapping, cultism in tertiary institutions and general insecurity of lives and property are due to the proliferation of SALW. In fact, armed banditry and proliferation SALW are twin threats to global peace. They manifest in, and are intertwined with unsettling social order and peaceful coexistence. However, there are local concerns that provide the enabling environment for the menace as shown below.

Rural banditry and cattle rustling intersect with various significant issues in the Nigerian political economy such as concerns regarding human and national security, shifts in state-society dynamics, the influence of climate change on farming practices and different work sectors, the emerging issue of food security, and the modernisation of agriculture, as well as the matter of relationships between different social groups and maintaining social cohesion within Nigeria's diverse and multifaceted environment.

Sadly, this has led to false beliefs about the difficulties herders bring upon themselves by seemingly choosing a traditional lifestyle for which other culture seems to frown at despite their contribution to the nutritional need for all. This is evidenced by the numerous and violent clashes that pastoralists have with agricultural farmers. As Azam and Gubert [1] have succinctly put it, the perception of nomadic Fulani herders as violent people is common. Viewpoints such as the cow complex and the tragedy of the commons in the pastoralism literature serve to support the inclination to hold nomadic herders accountable for the issues they bring as a professional group. Nomadism as a way of life transcends regular and irregular migration to transhuman movement.

Historically, the phenomenon of migration predates the naissance of modern literacy. In other words, the movement of people from one place to another is as old as human history and back to antiquity. Migration is a multidimensional phenomenon that assumes a variety from such as forced migration, voluntary and involuntary migration, irregular or illegal migration among others.[2] However, as a key aspect of the process of society's development and is inescapably linked with the legends of the origin of most societies around the world; meaning that the histories of many societies around the world are often characterised by tales of migratory movements and human settlements.[3]

Nigeria since its existence has experienced different forms of migration. Among other west African countries, Nigeria stands as the most attractive destination for migrants in the region. About 74% immigrants in Nigeria are from Benin, Mali, Liberia etc., [4] not to mention neighbouring countries like Cameroon, Niger, Chad, and other countries in Africa and the world. The statistics provided by the NPC show that total number of 971, 450 immigrants resided in Nigeria in 2005 and it was projected to increase to about 1.1 million in 2010. [5]

1   Azam, J.P. & F. Gubert. "Migrants Remittances and the household in Africa: A Review of the Evidence". *Journal of African Economies,* Vol. 15 AERC Supplements 2, pp 426-462. (2006).

2   Block, A & Chimienti, M., "Irregular Migration in a globalizing world. In Block A and Chimienti, M (eds) Irregular Migrants: Policy, Politics, Motives and Everyday lives: Ethnic and Racial Studies", Oxon, New York: Rutledge. Pp: 1-15, (2012).

3   Mgbeafulu, M. C., "Migration and the economy: Igbo migrants and the Nigerian economy 1900 to 1975". Linoln, NE. USA: Universe Inc., (2003).

4   Quartey, P. "Migration and Development: Challenges and Opportunities for serving countries, Ghana Country case study". A Report Prepared for the German Marshal Fund of the USA, Washington, (2006).

5   Oyefara, J. L., "Philosophical, Methodological and Ethical issues in migration and urbanization studies". In Oyefara, J. L, ed, *Migration and Urbanization in contemporary Nigeria: Policy issues and challenges*. University of Lagos Press and Bookshop Ltd. Lagos, (2016),

On the other hand, the global migrant origin database estimates that the emigrants from Nigeria were put at 1,041,284. Sudan is most targeted by Nigerians with 24% of the total emigration population followed by the United States (14%) and the United Kingdom (9%) [6]. These migratory configurations provide environment for both crime, development and criminality exchange from where various variants of banditry and related crime emanated within and beyond cross boarder ungoverned space. This space is a social construction situated within those spaces without control nor regulation of social action. This construct is a meaning that finds reality in the work of Berger and Luckman`s "**Social constructionist**" theory.[7]

It demonstrates how meanings of state incapacity to extract legal compliance from a given territorial space it has ownership claim to. This means a space with zero control and regulation of social action. As a fact reflecting how different meanings are socially constructed through interaction and mental processing and given to varieties of social reality in the society, social constructionist theory explains the underpin of system failure but not the societal response to it. Hence, the inclusion theory of "**Social disorganization**" by Robert martins drawn from Anomie theory of Emile Durkheim [8] to address the underpins for lawlessness reflecting armed banditry, uncontrol and unregulated traffic and use of fire arms- SALW. Beyond the underpins of criminality, is yet, another gap of socialisation and orientation the criminal is exposed to or grow up from.

This theoretical gap is addressed by Robert Merton. Building on Durkheim's perspective, he drew up a pedagogical analogy typical of social strain arising from a society that lost total control of the behaviour of its members and described it as disorganised. He posited that in the event of the collapse of social norms and morality representing collective sentiment in any society, social disorganization ensues such that members of the society prioritise survival through any of these various means including conformity, retreatism, rebellion and innovation. This position connects the network of collaborations that sustain the supply chain and value utilisation of banditry and surge in SALW. Also, the **Social Differentiation** theory by Edwin Sutherland finds expression in this connection. First, in the state incapacity to regulate and control her citizens.

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[6]   Ahmadu, H., "Insight into the dynamics and menace of cattle rustling: A case study of Lake Chad Basin Area in Northern Nigeria". *World Journal of Social Sciences,* Vol. 6, No. 1, Pp: 18-33. (2019).

[7]   Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T., "The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge". Garden City, NY: Anchor. (1991).

[8]   Ibid[1]

Secondly, it addresses the connections, cutting across socialisation, orientation, imitation, linkages, networks and collaborations involved in lawless act of banditry and proliferation of SALW. These appropriate the production, supply, distributions channels and utilisation chain engaged by different gangs get socialised in the society.

Efforts by the state to enforce available legal framework that control and regulate the distribution and use of SALW has not yield commensurate success as the incidences of armed banditry continue unabated resulting in shades of violent attacks and intimidations and ungoverned spaces scattered to provide cover and incentive to continue living with and exhibiting criminal tendencies. It is a common occurrence to experience cattle rustling, kidnapping, armed robbery, raids on villages or settlements and indiscriminate killings, sexual and gender-based violence, among others.

However, while there is unrestrained global concern and research on banditry and the surge of SALW that target actionable solution, researchers have only glossed over interrogating the contextual issues underpinning banditry and proliferation of SALW in Zamfara State particularly Shinkafi and Zurmi LGA. Hence, the focus of this proposal is to examine the Consequences of Banditry and Possession of SALW in Shinkafi and Zurmi LGA, Zamfara State (2019-2023). Whereas global concerns are essential for throwing a searchlight on the problem, and for generating the necessary political will by the international community, but the nature and local knowledge, responses and solutions are crucial to critically engage, if global concerns are to lead to an amelioration of local solution. Arising from the foregoing are the following research questions:

Research Objectives

This study seeks to:
1. Examine the nature of armed banditry that feeds from the proliferation of SALW.
2. Interrogate the local concerns contribution to the proliferation of SALW attracting armed bandits.

Materials and Methods: Using Berger and Luckman`s social constructionist, social disorganisation by Robert martins drawn from Anomie theory of Emile Durkheim and Social Differentiation Theory by Edwin Sutherland [9] as a theoretical framework, the study adopted exploratory design involving thematic tabulation and transcription and

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[9]   Ibid[11]

content analysis of qualitative data gathered using interviews, focus group discussion and case study. Non-participant observation involving case-by-case content analyses of criminal precedents form the interpretive background that beefed up the primary data and provided a more robust primary and secondary data interpretation. The need for in-depth knowledge and knowing the exchange and networking pattern of SALW and banditry informed the choice of theory and designs for the study. Purposive sampling adopted to ensure that only those interviewees with relevant experiential and professional knowledge of the issues of concern to the study are involved. In-depth interview (IDI), key informant interview (KII), focus group discussion (FGD) and content analysis of case-by-case relevant precedents constitute sources of primary data to be analysed ethnographically through diligent editing, coding and transcription. While thirty (30) interviews will be conducted, fifteen (15) each for IDI and KII, six (6) FGD will be conducted across the two LGA, three (3) each.

Results

The focus of this section is to present thematic analysis of major findings followed by critical interpretation that connects primary data with secondary. The themes are in line with the research questions and objectives that underscore the research gap set out to fill by the study.

Table 1: Nature and trajectory of armed banditry and proliferation of SALW

Research construct	Instrument	Response
Poor Intelligence gathering	KII	When you see something, say something, best early warning that provide better proactive intervention not reactionary.
Fear of unknown	IDI	There is decline of public confidence in law enforcement and legal framework against insurgency.

The above data indicating the nature and trajectory of armed banditry and proliferation of SALW, point to the works that resonate [10] submission that Nigeria's global ranking along these dimensions is a consequence of the debilitating state of intelligence

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[10] Egwu, S. "The political economy of rural banditry in contemporary Nigeria". In Kuna, M.J. and Ibrahim, J. (Eds.). *Rural Banditry and Conflicts in Northern Nigeria*, Abuja: Centre of Democracy and Development, Pp: 14-67. (2015).

gathering, fear of the unknown, poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy, all of which are compounded by the failure of democratic governance and state inadequacies. Consequent to the foregoing is the most visible impacts of armed banditry in Nigeria involving internal displacement of community residents. According to a 2019 report issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Nigerian Government, over 200,000 persons were internally displaced in several communities of Zamfara State, Katsina and Sokoto States between January-August 2019. [11] The provision of humanitarian assistance for the displaced persons and communities was a complex humanitarian challenge due to the large number of communities affected. Factors arising from irregular and/or zero food distribution, inappropriate shelters, poor medical services and facilities, among others, were evident in some internally displaced camps in the host states. Similarly, a survey conducted in some assessed locations have revealed that 70% of the displaced population expressed irregular food distribution at the IDP camps. [12] A challenge for these outstanding IDPs is how to return to their communities having lost their properties and livelihood from violent attacks and fears of reoccurrence.

Table 2: Nature and trajectory of armed banditry and proliferation of SALW

Research construct	Instrument	Response
Weak state control	KII	Compromised law enforcement system provide ground for crime to fester.
Public discouragement	IDI	There is decline of public confidence in law enforcement and legal framework against insurgency.

The data above reflect weak control, regulation representing incapacity and public discouragement as endemic nature and trajectory of surge in banditry and gun-running. This unregulated proliferation of SALW present the environment for property and human insecurity largely defines the nature of banditry in Nigeria. In corroboration,[13] submit, that human security shares the conceptual space of the people-centric approach to human development punctured by surging insecurity. Thus, central to the idea of human security are two important concerns: freedom from fear intended to indicate

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[11] Ibid9

[12] Abiodun, F., "Democracy and national identities: The travails of national security in Nigeria". *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences,* Vol. 9, NO. 2, Pp: 126-140. (2012).

[13] Ibid2

freedom from violence, and freedom from want, which is intended to indicate freedom from poverty.

Table 3: Local concerns that contribute to armed banditry and proliferation of SALW

Research construct	Instrument	Response
Nomadic culture	IDI	Seasonal movement and contact between pastoralist and sedentary farmers bread conflict, banditry and possession of arms for self-defense.
Local blacksmith/hunting/festival	KII	There are scattered ungoverned spaces where locals fabricate SALW outside the reach of law enforcement and legal framework against insurgency. Local hunting/festivities is part of life that can groom bandit and increase use of SALW.
Family dislocation	IDI	Local communal lifestyle is fast disappearing and that threatens family bond social capital and control.

Table 3 shows that nomadism, local blacksmiths, hunting, festivity and family dislocation within the society as a reflection of people`s ways of life contribute and explain the local concerns that contribute to the surge in banditry, trafficking and use of SALW. This finding find expression in the work of Curott, affirming that the cost of banditry resonates from the four categories as explained below. First is society's loss in terms of the opportunity cost of resources used by bandits. Second is the loss from the opportunity costs of the resources employed by members of society to fend off bandits.

Third is the destruction of assets by acts of banditry. Fourth is the social deadweight loss incurred because members of society shift resources from production processes relatively vulnerable to theft to less vulnerable production processes. In the same vein,

Curott and Fink [14] explore the havoc, family dislocation as a local concern, causes individuals and societies. They argue that by stealing from a member of society, the bandit not only takes from the victim, (thereby breaking a widely accepted rule against theft), but also offends the unwelcome authority that oversees law enforcement. The victim suffers from the losses caused by the act of banditry.

Table 4: Local concerns that support armed banditry and proliferation of SALW

Research construct	Instrument	Response
Poverty/illiteracy	KII	Economic and mental poverty destroy social control and foist impunity to criminality.
Local vigilantism/gun carrying culture	FGD, KII and IDI	The informal community defense system of vigilantism and the culture prescribing the use of gun for coronations and festivities supports the use of gun and gun culture. The consequence includes insurgency and circulation of SALW.

The data above showcase poverty, illiteracy, vigilantism as well as gun carrying cultural festivities as local experiences that support banditry, and surge in gun running. This result is confirmed by Adepoju and Wiel [15] who opined that in the face of the general poverty, illiteracy of citizens of African states, most large and expanding cities simply cannot cope with the management problems associated of illusion related to rational choice of what to do and what not to do. To this end, economic and mental poverty hold sway subverting social control, impunity and criminality.

Furthermore, the informal community defense system of vigilantism and the culture prescribing the use of gun for coronations and festivities supports the use of gun and gun culture. The consequence includes insurgency and circulation of SALW corroborates Kabuiru [16]; Mohammed & Ibrahim, [17] positions that local vigilantism/gun

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[14] Curott, N. A. & Fink, A., "Bandit heroes: Social, mythical or rational?" *The American Journal of Economics & S o c i o l o g y*. Retrieved 23/04/23 from: www.ssrn.com/abstract-1582823/. (2010).

[15] Adepoju, A and Vander Wiel, A. "Seeking greener pasture abroad." Ibadan: Safari Books Ltd. (2010).

[16] Kabuiru, A. "*Why Banditry Persist ……*"in Adewole, H and Ibrahim, S, (eds). *Challenges of Insecurity in Northern Nigeria.* Kaduna: Pacesetter Publishing. (2020).

[17] Mohammed, J. K. & Ibrahim, J (Eds.). Rural banditry and conflicts in Northern Nigeria. Centre for Democracy and Development. (2015).

carrying culture are not helping matter in the effort to stop banditry and gun-running that have exacerbated livestock rustling in the area. Large-scale cattle raids are the specialty of a tribe of livestock bandits in states like Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara, and Kebbi. Even yet, some of these cattle rustler gangs have ties to both local and foreign syndicates; a large number of them are mercenaries employed by Boko Haram. The rustling of livestock provides a substantial source of money for the terror group.

Table 5: Local concerns that support armed banditry and proliferation of SALW

Research construct	Instrument	Response
Weak or absence of legal framework	KII, IDI	Weak and unclear legal framework against armed banditry, traffic and use of arms support the menace.
Compromised justices' system	Case study, KII, FGD	The declining public confidence in the judicial system supports insurgency, traffic and use of arms.
Natural resources	Case study, FGD	Un-manned, unregulated exploration and exploitation of extensive deposits mineral wealth, support lawlessness.

The above data show weak or absence of legal framework, compromised justices' system and Natural resources as local concerns hindering the war against banditry and gun trafficking and use. Literature is replete with recurrent rural banditry in northwest Nigeria largely fueled by the unregulated mining and small arms businesses run by local and foreign interests. Artisans and illegal miners have brought bandits to a place like Zamfara, where they have been pillaging mining sites for gold and money.

Also, experts observed that the federal administration has admitted that there seems to be a link between rural banditry and cases of illegal mining Kabuiru [18] ; Mohammed &Ibrahim [19]. The current socio-existential factors in northwest Nigeria aggravate the security situation there. In rural areas, there is little regulation of the pastoral business, compromised justice system and weak or absence of legal framework. These complex setbacks complicate drive to stop or at least control widespread use of guns in the region and unauthorised artisanal mining. The foregoing combines with forests

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[18]   Adams, O. K. The Role of information technology in national security: A case study of Nigeria. Global Journal of Computer Science and Technology. Vol. 16, No. 3, Pp: 6-14. (2016).
[19]   Ibid[21]

situated close to the numerous porous borderlines along the region's borders. So, borders are poorly defined, under-policed, and poorly administered. This leads to a great deal of illegal behaviour, which is often enabled by criminal syndicates.

Discussion of Major Findings

Drawing from tables one to five as interpreted, the two research questions and objectives below are guides to the interviewers questions and interviewees answers in order to fill the gap earlier stated in the statement of problem dwelt on the nature of trajectory and local concerns characterising armed banditry and proliferation of SALW in parts of Zamfara State with wider implication.

A KII interviewee had this to say:

> Through giving information to the traditional community security structure, threats to security can be addressed. In contrast, the locals out of fear, withhold report of security threat within their communities to security agencies due to absence of confidence despite the heightened campaign in favour of "when you see something say something"[20]

Similarly, another KII in support posited thus:

> The fear of the unknown result into lack of trust between the locals and the law enforcement agencies resulting in poor intelligence gathering and gun running activities.[21]

The above data put together, surmise apparently, a professional assessment, that the factor of fear and loss of confidence in both formal and informal agents of law enforcement systems contribute largely, to the choice of not reporting observed incidents of arm bearing, use, circulation and banditry that escalate to complicate security situation in Zamfara State and beyond by implication.

It follows, therefore, that the deteriorating security situation in Nigeria is a product of fear and lack of confidence in the security system as buttressed by scholars Fayeye [22]

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[20]   KII/Elderly man/ Christian Priest//clergy/63years /Shinkafi /20th April 2024
[21]   KII/Elderly man/ Muslim Priest//clergy/57years /Shinkafi /20th April 2024
[22]   Ibid[16]

and Egwu. [23] They agree that human security should if not for fear and loss of confidence, share the conceptual space of the people-centric approach to control and regulation. Egwu [24] added that to ensure human security, human beings (majority) must be the 'vital core', with a 'fundamental set of functions related to survival, livelihood and dignity' as the irreducible minimum. Banditry, ownership, use and proliferation of SALW get determined when the right conception and perception of security are in place.

Buttressing this finding is the opinion of Osimen and Akintunde [25] and Rufai [26] that the causal factors for banditry and terrorism differ access to SALW that contribute to the extent of exploring locally, capacity deficit of the state that renders it fragile or weak evident in human rights abuses, inequality, fear, lack of confidence and poor service provision and unemployment. In a similar twist, another interviewee had this to say:

> Bandits operate freely because system of control and law enforcement is often compromised and weak. This challenge is about the strongest incentive locally encouraging banditry and proliferation of SALW.[27]

Moreover, another interviewee also observed thus:

> Seeming decline in effective enforcement of legal framework against banditry, wielding, possession of arms and its use have discouraged public confidence in government commitment to control and regulate use and circulation of arms and banditry. [28]

According to the above data, the incidents of unregulated flow/traffic of SALW and banditry heightened because control and law enforcement systems are considered compromised. This largely, pose challenge to containing the menace of increasing arm struggle and trafficking. Extant literature suggests for instance, that in most of Nigeria's rural villages plenty of opportunity for criminal activities abound simply because of weak state capacity to address issues of insecurity. In affirmation to the

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[23]   Ibid[13]

[24]   Ibid[27]

[25]   Osimen, G. U. & Akintunde, B.A. "SALW proliferation and problem of national security in Nigeria". *International Affairs and Global Strategy*, Vol. 29, Pp: 12-20. (2015).

[26]   Rufai, M.A. 'Vigilante groups and rural banditry in Zamfara State': Excesses and contradictions. Internal. Journal of Humanities and Social Science Inventions, Vol. 7, No. 6, Pp: 69. (2018).

[27]   IDI/woman/ town union member /68years /Zurmi/19th April 2024

[28]   IDI/ Female/57 years old / Farmer/Women leader/ Shinkafi/29th April 2024

foregoing, International Crisis Group Report [29] although most communities are well inside the remote ends of the hinterland, it evidenced that inhabitant here are most vulnerable to banditry and arm struggle due to little or no government presence. These scholars both agree that the situation is worsening with the absence of effective community police systems capable of managing the particular security challenges found in the hinterlands.[30]

The widespread contagious socio-existential risk of having weapons indiscriminately in the hands of non-state actors points to endangering the peace and security of both indigenes and settlers in any community. In most rural areas, where there is little regulation of the pastoral business, under-policed, and poorly administered, a great deal of illegal behavior, which is often enabled by criminal syndicates are sustained. In particular, local artisans' device various means to survive such as gun making and gun running. On the heal of this, some interviewees posit thus:

> Well, nomadic lifestyle or culture is related to hunting and gathering. Local hunters are some local iron fabricators who also produce and sell guns and light weapons. This put into perspective, translates into fabricated SALW meant for subsistent hunting of wild animal have contributed in the increasing circulation and distribution of fabricated weapons that has heightened conflicts and criminal activities in the area.[31]

Further, another interviewee says:

> The dislocation of family system by the unequal integration of local socio-economic and political realities to the global knowledge economy has weaken social relations and control. Parenting has gone commercialised into foster system of nanism. The effect of this is a drastic erosion of communal bonding that subvert indigenous values as the nucleus of social control and solidarity. The hitherto communal life style got infiltrated by mechanical solidarity instead of organic solidarity[32]

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[29] International Crisis Group Report. *Violence in Nigeria's North-West: Rolling Back the Mayhem.* African Report: Brussels; Belgium. (2020).

[30] Nadama, M. C. 'Armed Banditry and Internal Security in Zamfara State'. *International Journal of Scientific and Engineering Research* Vol.10, No. 8, Pp: 1219-1225. (2020)

[31] IDI/ Female/57 years old / Farmer/Women leader/ Shinkafi/29th April 2024

[32] IDI/Male/70 years old / Farmer/Opinion leader/ Zurmi/9th April 2024

Furthermore, another has this to say:

> They are using the arms for hunting, drumming and display of arms
> during yearly festivals (Sallah) by the followers of traditional
> institutions contribute to illegal circulation of arms and bandits' cash
> in on this to access arms for criminal activities.[33]

Nomadism is akin to hunting and gathering as the above data affirm not leaving out
the central historic influence that hunting had on local evolution of nomadic life as
fundamental to clash of interest among nomads, whether it is pastorals (herders),
sedentary (subsistent farmers) or hunting bands (forest rangers) operating within the
forest space as platform for banditry, owning and use of firearm as a survival strategy
and self-protection in the jungle. Sadly, this interaction isolates and criminalise
indiscriminately actors in the jungle. Consequently, there is false beliefs about the
difficulties herders bring upon themselves by seemingly choosing a traditional
lifestyle, which limits their ability to be creative and flexible [34] Little wonder,
pastoralists are seen negatively and are frequently held responsible for issues
pertaining to crop damage, farming along cow paths, and water availability. As Bello
& Abdullahi,[35] succinctly put it, the perception of nomadic Fulani herders as violent
people is common. Viewpoints such as the cow complex and the tragedy of the
commons in the pastoralism literature serve to support the inclination to hold nomadic
herders accountable for the issues they bring as a professional group. Another
participant interviewee has this to say:

> Poverty and ignorance feed significantly evolution of banditry,
> criminality and arm struggle. When poor people are inadequately
> informed, some activate various means for survival including banditry
> and gun running[36].

The above data resonates Egwu's [37] observation drawn from the disappointing ranking
of Nigeria been engrossed by the debilitating state of poverty, unemployment, and
illiteracy, all of which complicate and reflect weak state capacity to sustain democratic

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[33] KII/ Female/67 years old /Teacher/Women leader/ Shinkafi/22th April 2024
[34] Clunan, A. L., & Trinkunas, H. A. (Eds.). Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened
Sovereignty. Stanford University Press. (2010).
[35] Bello, B & Abdullahi M. M. Farmers–Herdsmen Conflict, Cattle Rustling, and Banditry: The Dialectics of Insecurity in
Anka and Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara State, Nigeria. (https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/open-access-at-
sage). SAGE Open, (2021).
[36] KII/ Male/49 years old /Lawyer/Youth leader/ Zurmi/28th April 2024
[37] Ibid[36]

ethos that ensure security of lives and property. Hence, he concluded that armed banditry associated with cattle rustling, kidnapping, robbery, and other forms of violent crimes are on the rise, with aggressors motivated largely by economic and commercial motives. This underpins the increasing market space that fuel underground economy of the proliferation of SALW. An interviewee has this to say:

> In our community we use local arms by vigilante and hunters. Vigilantism and lack of control over its activities contributes to the proliferation of arms, conflict and banditry in this community. For anybody to carry arms, there is need for proper licensing and documentation.[38]

In addition, an interviewee has this to say:

> It is a cultural tradition during festivals for youths and entourage of traditional authorities like monarch or title holders to allow the display of varieties of weapons as a showcase of strength, gallantry and authority to the public spectators. The fact that the youths are involve in this parade definitely provides opportunity and incentive that entrench owning, possession and use of arms by individuals. The tendency that some of these owners of weapon will use it for crime, self-defense or show of their personal strength and ego is high[39].

Further, another interviewee reveals thus:

> The local communities use arms traditionally for the purpose of hunting and during festivals. Yes, during yearly festival fir Sallah traditional institution display arms. Through local hunting during festivals, criminality and non-care attitude by the entire community members. During this festivals, emir's entourage display arms as a symbol of strength of the Shinkafi emirate.[40]

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[38] KII/Elderly man/ Earth Priest//clergy/71years /Shinkafi /10th April 2024
[39] KII/ Male/49 years old /Lawyer/Politician/ Zurmi/28th April 2024
[40] IDI/Elderly Woman/ Farmers/member women union executive/60years /Shinkafi/19th April 2024

Again, another interviewee extended the conversation by observing that:

> Hunting in communities in Zamfara state is another popular culture of the people. For decades carrying arms by hunters in search of wild animals for food and commercial purpose is cultural and traditional. The clash of interest among hunters and others is regular occurrence. Banditry evolved from this clash of interest whether in the bush or outside. Spontaneous attacks generate insecurity that is often labeled terrorism. [41]

Other discussants corroborate the above data when they surmised thus:

> The majority of discussants agreed to the informal use of fire arms was for traditional hunting culture and festivity in Zamfara State.[42]

Yet, others discussants say:

> All the discussants agreed the local community use fire arms during hunting before the emerging of bandits who dominate the bush.[43]

Hunting and gathering is as old as human creation. The above data did not disproof this but buttressed it. Generally, in most indigenous communities, festivities usually drum up well organised and mapped display of organic solidarity until recently when some of them have taken the form of restive mechanical solidarity where indiscriminate arms display and banditry are often experienced. Also, Bello & Abdullahi,[44] captured aptly, the place of label that nomadic group is solely responsible for all that support gunrunning and banditry is fallacious. Viewpoints such as this suggest begging the question rather than answering the question of solution and control of insecurity around the illegal ownership, use and circulation of firearm. It is also a noted position scholarly espoused that in any festive or social gathering, there is transactional tendencies to trade in trouble and illegalities so as to create uncertainty that of criminalise the sometimes-innocent victims[49]. An interviewee further reveal thus:

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[41] IDI/Elderly Man/ Farmers/Town union executive/70years /Zurmi/11th April 2024
[42] FGD/ Male/69 years old /Hunter group leader/Politician/ Zurmi/29th April 2024
[43] FGD/ Woman/69 years old /market women group/women leader/ Zurmi/29th April 2024
[44] Ibid[39]

> The justle for unregulated mining and hunting space ownership and
> control generate conflict that contribute to illegal ownership, use and
> wielding of fire arms among local hunters, state and nonstate interested
> actors that snow-balls into conflict, banditry, and the proliferation of
> SALW.[45]

In addition, another interviewee posits thus:

> Lack of standard legal frame work and the culture support use of local
> arms for the purpose of hunting not to engage in any criminal activities.
> Yes, during festival of Sallah.[46]

Yet, another further opines thus:

> The near absence of a clear demarcation between formal and informal
> authority in terms of a definite legal framework to define, detect,
> arrest, prosecute and punish banditry, possession and use of fire arms
> in Zamfara complicate efforts at regulation and control. [47]

The above data largely indict the state capacity and institutional failure. What is
normal is that except legally authorised, citizens are not permitted by law to own, use
or display firearms of any kind. However, in most rural climes particularly in
northwest Nigeria especially Zamfara banditry is further fueled by the unregulated
mining and small arms businesses. [48] Artisanal and illegal miners have transported
bandits to parts in Zamfara as protection to enable operations within the pillaging
mining sites for gold and money. It is a common knowledge that connection exists
between rural banditry and illegal mining by literature and data from the field. [49]

It is supportive therefore, to observe that government ended its mining operations in
Zamfara State since 2019.Transhumance: relatedly, because of unregulated cattle
transportation, it is easy for criminals to infiltrate, and traffic arms which has
exacerbated SALW proliferation, banditry and livestock rustling in the area. There is
increasing cattle raid incidents of livestock bandits in states like Kaduna, Katsina,

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[45] KII/ Male/59 years old /Retired law enforcement/Police/ Shinkafi/15th April 2024
[46] KII/ Male/75 years old /Retired law enforcement/Soldier/lawyer/ Shinkafi/15th April 2024
[47] IDI/Men/ town union member /64years /Zurmi/17th April 2024
[48] Ibid[15]
[49] Getzoff, M., "World's safest countries, 2019". Available at: Global Finance. Accessed from: www.gfmag.com/global-data/non-economic-data/world-s-safest-countries-2019/ accessed on 26/01/2021. (2019).

Zamfara, and Kebbi. Even. Notwithstanding, these gangsters synergise with both local and foreign syndicates largely mercenaries engaged by Boko Haram. This cartel provides a significant source of funding for the terror group. [50] Further explanations of the foregoing drawn from another discussant thus, posits:

> I alluded to known fact that there exist uncontrol extensive natural mineral mining activities in Zamfara state as a major cause and incentive for illegal ownership, use and circulation of firearms and banditry. The criminality and insecurity arising from this reflect conflict of space ownership and control lines.[51]

Supported by another interviewee:

> Most discussant indicted the traditional institution for not adequately regulate its use of arms in festivities and also blamed banditry on the disconnect between formal and informal government authorities identifying, arrest, prosecution and punishment of offenders.[52]

Yet, another supports:

> Although majority of the discussants agreed that arms are usually displayed during festivals, they also observed that no local culture outrightly supports SALW circulation in Zamfara State, but the escalating criminality and insecurity pervading the state because of clash of interest.[53]

The above data replicates the nuances evident in extant literature that when organic solidarity evolves into mechanical solidarity, there is conflict of interests that strains human conducts and relations. Little wonder, Olaniyan, A & Yahaya [54] noted that the availability of small arms and instances of armed insurgency affect the provision by both governmental and non-governmental groups to engage and provide essential social services particularly security. Most time times, field employees of these development organisations face criminals as victims of attacks by armed bandits. The

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[50]   Ibid[34]

[51]   FGD/Elderly man/ herders group leader/ 60years and above/Retired Pam Sec. Geologist/Shinkafi/25th April 2024

[52]   FGD/Elderly woman/member farm produce association/60years and above /Zurma/5th April 2024

[53]   FGD/Elderly man/ Youth group/ 64years and above/Zurmi/14th April 2024

[54]   Olaniyan, A & Yahaya, A. 'Cows, bandits, and violent conflicts: Understanding cattle rustling in Northern Nigeria'. Africa Spectrum, Vol. 3, Pp: 93–105 Palgrave Handbook of small arms and conflicts in Africa. Palgrave macmillan. (2016)

consequence of this unmitigated attacks is to relocate to safer region with conducive business environment without threat to their investment and performance that justifies continued funding of development as against areas where there are rising levels of insecurity.

Discussion Summary

The study provides insight on the effect of fear and declining confidence in law enforcement and government commitment to legally control agencies and institutions responsible for the regulation of fire arm ownership, use, production and circulation. This has affected crime report and statistics that further distort intelligence gathering in the community to enable proactive intervention against bandits and gun running actors. The study indicts government capacity to provide realistic and responsive legal framework to regulate hunting, nomadism, festivities, vigilantism and mining in parts of Nigeria especially Zanfara State having extensive solid mineral deposit. It was discovered that largely, the hitherto existing organic solidarity has evolved rapidly into mechanical solidarity with individualism at the centre instead of community.

The foregoing is not unconnected with the unequal integration of local communal and subsistent lifestyle with economically globalised institution-based cosmology that has dislocated family bond, communal morality and social control. Consequently, poverty and ignorance arising from the mismatch between communalism and globalism present social disorganization compelling all sorts of alternatives as way to survive including banditry and gun running. Banditry spread the trade in arms, use and ownership of SALW for self-survival and protection. Again, the study provides basis that suggest absence of demarcation in roles and responsibility of formal and informal authority in parts of the country particularly Zamfara State.

Conclusion

Poor intelligent gathering, fear of the unknown, weak state control, public discouragement, nomadic culture, local blacksmith/hunters/festival, family dislocation, poverty/illiteracy, vigilantism, natural resources, weak or absence of legal framework and compromised justice system add to exacerbate surge in armed banditry, traffic and illegal use of SALW in Shinkafi and Zurmi LGA of Zamfara State.

Recommendations

1. There is a need for inclusive governance that guarantees equal access to justice and clear demarcation in role and responsibility of formal and informal leadership authority.
2. Access and use of all national asset need to be clearly regulated according to the laws of the land.
3. There is a need for transparent good governance to ensures that law enforcement and punishment reflect the constitution judicial best practice.

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Primary Data (Interviews & Focus group discussion)

In-Depth Interviews (IDI)
1.   IDI/Men/ town union member /64years /Zurmi/17th April 2024
2.   IDI/woman/ town union member /68years /Zurmi/19th April 2024
3.   IDI/ Female/57 years old / Farmer/Women leader/ Shinkafi/29th April 2024
4.   IDI/ Female/57 years old / Farmer/Women leader/ Shinkafi/29th April 2024
5.   IDI/Male/70 years old / Farmer/Opinion leader/ Zurmi/9th April 2024
6.   IDI/Elderly Woman/ Farmers/member women union executive/60years /Shinkafi/19th April 2024
7.   IDI/Elderly Man/ Farmers/Town union executive/70years /Zurmi/11th April 2024

Key Informant Interviews (KII)
8.   KII/Elderly man/ Christian Priest//clergy/63years /Shinkafi /20th April 2024
9.   KII/Elderly man/ Muslim Priest//clergy/57years /Shinkafi /20th April 2024
10.   KII/ Female/67 years old /Teacher/Women leader/ Shinkafi/22th April 2024
11.   KII/ Male/49 years old /Lawyer/Youth leader/ Zurmi/28th April 2024

12. KII/Elderly man/ Earth Priest//clergy/71years /Shinkafi /10th April 2024
13. KII/ Male/49 years old /Lawyer/Politician/ Zurmi/28th April 2024
14. KII/ Male/59 years old /Retired law enforcement/Police/ Shinkafi/15th April 2024
15. KII/ Male/75 years old /Retired law enforcement/Soldier/lawyer/ Shinkafi/15th April 2024

Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
16. FGD/ Male/69 years old /Hunter group leader/Politician/ Zurmi/29th April 2024
17. FGD/ Woman/69 years old /market women group/women leader/ Zurmi/29th April 2024
18. FGD/Elderly man/ herders group leader/ 60years and above/Retired Pam Sec. Geologist/Shinkafi/25th April 2024
19. FGD/Elderly woman/member farm produce association/60years and above /Zurma/5th April 2024
20. FGD/Elderly man/ Youth group/ 64years and above/Zurmi/14th April 2024.

Conflict of Interest: There is no conflict of interest relating to this research paper because all data gathered were extracted after obtaining **due consent and approvals** from the interviewees were obtained. The researcher is committed to **confidentiality** of privacy issues concerning the subject of research.

Human Security: A Panacea to the Rising Japa Syndrome in Nigeria

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Abstract

As endemic poverty and unemployment continue to inflame terrorism, banditry, and other security challenges in the Nigerian Fourth Republic, the country is, much more than at any time since its civil war of the 1960s, facing existential threats. This paper analysed the threats which affect human security, undermine the country's national objectives, and skyrocket japa—Nigeria's slang for desperate emigration—with its attendant implications. Guided by emancipatory realism theory, the paper adopted a qualitative research approach to synthesise ideas and facts from a pool of published scholarly and experts' discourses. The paper revealed that internal conflicts, corruption, inequality, and exclusion embody the human security threats that infect Nigerians with the japa syndrome. The paper further expounded how emancipatory politics could accelerate the achievement of human security in the country. Thus, the paper provides valuable insights on how to curtail the japa syndrome that is eating deep into the country's most productive human resources, and by implication, its developmental potential.

Keywords: Emigration, Fourth Republic, human security threats, Nigerians.

La sécurité humaine : une panacée contre la montée du syndrome de japa au Nigéria

Résumé

Alors que la pauvreté endémique et le chômage continuent d'attiser le terrorisme, le banditisme et d'autres problèmes de sécurité dans la quatrième République nigériane, le pays est, bien plus que jamais depuis la guerre civile des années 1960, confronté à des menaces existentielles. Cet article analyse les menaces qui affectent la sécurité humaine, sapent les objectifs nationaux du pays et font monter en flèche le japa – l'argot nigérian pour l'émigration désespérée – avec ses concomitants. Guidé par la théorie du réalisme émancipateur, l'article a adopté une approche de recherche qualitative pour synthétiser les idées et les faits à partir d'un ensemble de discours publiés par des erudits et des experts. L'article a révélé que les conflits internes, la corruption, les inégalités et l'exclusion incarnent les menaces à la sécurité humaine qui infectent les Nigérians avec le syndrome de japa. L'article explique en outre comment les politiques émancipatrices pourraient accélérer la réalisation de la sécurité humaine dans le pays. L'article fournit ainsi des indications précieuses sur lesquelles réduire le syndrome du japa qui ronge les ressources humaines les plus productives du pays et, par conséquent peut reduire son potentiel de développement.

Mots-clés : l'émigration, la quatrième République, les menaces à la sécurité humaine, les Nigérians.

Introduction

Nigeria's mass emigration experience predated the country's creation by British colonial administrators in the late 19th century. Beside the trade driven migration common in pre-colonial Africa, four simultaneous slave trades—trans-Saharan, Red Sea, Indian Ocean, and transatlantic—had resulted in the forced emigration of over 15 million Africans, among whom over 2 million were from the entity now called Nigeria.[1] During colonialism, the British colonial administrators had utilised locals as labour force, thus facilitating the emigration of many Nigerians to neighbouring West African countries and vice versa.[2]

The Nigerian post-independence mass emigration experience can be broadly divided into four eras, namely: the civil/political unrest era of the 1960s; the petroleum boom downfall era of the 1980s; the military dictatorship era of the 1990s; and the Fourth Republic era since the dawn of the 2nd millennium.[3] In the first era, mass emigration was sparked by hardship arising from the political crises that engulfed the country, which resulted in a military coup, a counter coup, and a civil war. While the mass emigration trend significantly declined in the 1970s (due to the oil boom the country enjoyed), it again skyrocketed in the 1980s in the wake of economic instability. The instability was partly precipitated by sharp decline in oil price, and partly the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) backed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). The SAP, which was wrapped in Western economic values, proved incompatible with Nigeria's having exacerbated the country's economic distress.[4] In the 1990s, economic woes continued to drive mass emigration, while large scale persecution of democratic enthusiasts by the then military dictator resulted in many of them seeking asylum outside the country.

No sooner than a democratic transition ushered the country's Fourth Republic in 1999, ethnoreligious crises in sections of the country began to erupt and gradually became usual occurrences. There has also been rise in the incidents of crimes and the emergence of terrorism and armed banditry. A wide range of human security threats, which include rising public sector corruption, unemployment, porous borders and

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1   Mberu, U. B., & Pongou, R. (2010). Nigeria: Multiple Forms of Mobility in Africa's Demographic Giant. Migration Policy Institute: 2.
2   Arhin-Sam, K. (2019). The Political Economy of Migration Governance in Nigeria. Arnold-Bergstraesser Institute (ABI): 11.
3   Inegbedion, Racheal (2022). Migration and youth in Nigeria. Policy Brief, 4(1).
4   Egwu, G. & Mshelia, I.H. (2024). Leadership Failure as a Drawback to Africa's Socio-Economic Development: Analysis of the Challenges and the way forward. Lapai Journal of Economics 8 (1): 315. https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/lje.v8i1.22

poverty are found to be among the harbingers of the rising insecurity in the country.[5] As these result in another wave of mass emigration of Nigerians, the phenomenon has assumed a unique dimension known in the country as *japa.*

Grammatically, the word '*japa'* simply means 'to flee'. It traces its etymological origin to the Yoruba language of south-western Nigeria, conveying 'the action of swiftly escaping from a potentially hazardous situation."[6] The term, which has technically evolved to become a popular Nigerian slang synonymous with the idea of leaving the country, "traces back to Naira Marley's 2018 song of the same name."[7] While leaving the country simply implies 'emigration', the desperation that surrounds Nigerians' desire to emigrate in recent time negate this simple meaning. As some Nigerians are quoted as saying, "*japa* doesn't mean to migrate; it means to run for your life… I'm done. I'm not doing this anymore. I am running away. I can't cope."[8] Legally or illegally, with or without tangible purpose, the burning desire among most Nigerians today is to deploy any migration strategy to *japa* to just about any other country, hence the term's semblance to a 'syndrome'. And once achieved, it "becomes a lifetime achievement" as it almost certainly provides more opportunities and ease.[9]

The rising *japa* syndrome among Nigerian youth has been a subject of scholarly endeavours.[10],[11],[12,13] Some of them have explored the push and pull factors of the phenomenon, which are broadly categorised as political, economic, and socio-cultural.[14] Others have examined the short and long term effects of the phenomenon

5   Adeniji, A.S. (2019). Democracy and National Security Challenges in Nigeria, 1999-2017. In State, Governance and Regional Integration in Africa, ed. A. Okolie, Hassan Saliu & Gerald Ezirim (The Nigerian Political Science Association).
6   Adediran, K. O. (2024). Japa Syndrome in Nigeria: Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers' Perspective. Nigerian Journal of Social Studies, 27 (1):66.
7   Liu, J. J. 2023. Japa, or to flee or to run: Nigerian youth and the urgency of departure. MoLab Inventory of Mobilities and Socioeconomic Changes: 2. https://doi.org/10.48509/MoLab.6432
8   Ibid.
9   Falola, T. (2022). Japa!, By Toyin Falola. Premium Times, September 2: 'Run!' section, para 3. https://www.premiumtimesng.com/opinion/551986-japa-by-toyin-falola.html
10 Okunade, S. K. (2021). Irregular emigration of Nigeria youths: An exploration of Core Drivers from the Perspective and Experiences of Returnee Migrants. In Intra-Africa migrations: Reimaging borders and migration management, ed. I. Moyo, Laine, J. P., and Nshimbi, C. C. (Routledge).
11 Nwosu, I. A., Eteng, M. J., Ekpechu, J., Nnam, M. U., Ukah, J. A., Eyisi, E., & Orakwe, E. C. (2022). Poverty and youth migration out of Nigeria: Enthronement of modern slavery: 1–13.
12 Olumoyo, A. E. & Abiri O. C. (2023). Japa Syndrome: Causes, Effects and Solutions for Sustainable National Development. International Journal of Development and Economic Sustainability 11 (5): 87-95. https://doi.org/10.37745/ijdes.13/vol11n58795
13 Adediran, K. O. (2024). Japa Syndrome in Nigeria: Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers' Perspective. Nigerian Journal of Social Studies 27 (1): 64-83.
14 Okunade, S. K. & Bakare O. D. (2020). Youth Out-migration in Nigeria: The Dual Role of Social Media as a Cause and Solution. Commonwealth Youth and Development, 18 (2).

on the country and the migrants.[15],[16] In this paper, the findings of these scholarly endeavours are synthesised from human security perspective.

Objectives

This paper seeks to analyse the human security threats that skyrocket *japa* syndrome in the Nigerian Fourth Republic. The paper further seeks to expound the role of good governance in accelerating the achievement of human security which would in turn curtail the rising *japa* syndrome in the country.

Materials and Methods

This paper adopts a qualitative approach. Secondary data are sourced from institutional sources (i.e. web pages and published reports), and academic works (i.e. published books and peer reviewed articles). The data are generated through google search using the keywords: '*japa*', 'Nigerian out-migration', 'human security' and 'human security threats in Nigeria'. Among over 240 results for the four keywords, 100 most relevant were first selected and further filtered to 76, based on the researcher's judgement of their relevance and authenticity.

The selected documents were categorised into three thematic areas as follows: (1) the rising japa syndrome in Nigeria, (2) theoretical explanation, and (3) human security threats in Nigeria. The ideas and facts extracted from them formed the building blocks of this analysis as the researcher offers reasoned lines of explanation to synthesise them.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the rising *japa* phenomenon in Nigeria is first examined. This is followed by a theoretical explanation to the phenomenon, and analysis of the human security threats that precipitated it.

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[15] Adedokun, O. A., and Karzanova I.V. (2019). Impact of Migration on the Economy of Nigeria: Recent Trends. Вестник НГУЭУ 2: 204-211. https://doi.org/10.34020/2073-6495-2019-2-204-211

[16] Afunugo, K. N. (2023). Japa Syndrome and its Challenges to the Nigeria's Labour Force: A Search for Religious Solutions. Ohazurume: Unizik Journal of Culture and Civilization 2 (2): 70-93.

The Rising Japa Syndrome in Nigeria

According to the UN, there are over 272 million migrants (equating 3.5% of the global human population) across various countries in 2019.[17] Of these number, over 1.2 million are from Nigeria, having so increased from 450,000 in 1990.[18] Though this official figure is staggering, the actual figure far surpassed it given that there are a good number of undocumented Nigerian migrants. The figure is thus estimated at about 15 million, with the United States, United Kingdom, Cameroun, Niger, Ghana, Italy and Benin as their top seven destinations.[19] It is observed that "a considerable portion of individuals presently impacted by the *Japa* phenomena articulate a feeling of disappointment towards Nigeria, considering the country as deficient in feasible options for their future."[20] This attitude explains the continuous surge of the *japa* syndrome.

The country now has the highest percentage of intending migrants in sub-Saharan Africa, which, according to the 2021 World Bank report, rapidly increased from 36% in 2014 to 52% in 2018. Indeed, a survey by Afrobarometer in 2018 revealed that in every three Nigerians, one would like to migrate.[21] And these are not mere desires but desperate intentions being backed by concrete efforts. For example, in 2018 alone, a total of 88,587 Nigerians had reportedly applied for visa to Finland, Germany, Hungary and Italy among other Schengen countries.[22] Despite high rejections due to stricter migration laws, not a few number of the visa applicants are succeeding, while others resort to irregular emigration. As of June 2022, for example, UK government statistics revealed that 486,869 Nigerians secured study visas to the UK, 71% more than in 2019.[23] In Canada, the total number of Nigerians granted permanent residency status has reached 22,118 in 2022.[24]

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[17] National Policy on Labour Migration 2020. Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, Federal Republic of Nigeria: 1.
[18] IOM, UN Nigeria (2019). Migration in Nigeria – A Country Profile 2019: 22.
[19] PwC 2019, in National Policy on Labour Migration 2020, 1.
[20] Adediran, K. O. (2024). Japa Syndrome in Nigeria: Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers' Perspective. Nigerian Journal of Social Studies 27 (1): 71.
[21] Isbell, T. & Oluwole O. (2018). One in three Nigerians have considered emigration, most to find economic opportunity. Afrobarometer, Dispatch No. 231.
[22] The Guardian (2019). Nigeria tops Schengen Visa Denials for African Countries. https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria-tops-schengen-visa-denials-for-african-countries/
[23] Okunade, S. K & Oladotun E. Awosusi. (2023). The Japa Syndrome and the Migration of Nigerians to the United Kingdom: An Empirical Analysis. Comparative Migration Studies 11:2. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-023-00351-2
[24] Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). 2023 annual report to parliament on immigration: 59.

For several decades, migration issues have not been among the top priorities of the Nigerian government.[25],[26] But the impact of the phenomenon and pressure from international actors have compelled the government to rise up to the challenge.[27] Consequently, the Nigerian government in the Fourth Republic has made efforts to maximise the benefits of migration while minimising its long and short term negative consequences. In 2000, for example, it facilitated the establishment of Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO), with the aim of leveraging the contributions of Nigerian migrants to national development. In 2014, Annual National Migration Dialogue was initiated to shape the country's migratory orientation. It has since then been drawing stakeholders from the 36 states of the federation to debate and review the impacts of migration on the country.[28]

Furthermore, the Nigerian government has adopted National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP), National Migration Policy (NMP), and National Diaspora Policy (NDP) in 2014, 2015 and 2021 respectively. And in addition to other international treaties, the country has recently (in 2023) ratified both the Migrant Workers Convention (No.143) and the Private Employment Agencies Convention (No.181) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).[29]

Scholars have expounded both the positive and negative impacts of the *japa* phenomenon on Nigeria. On the positive side, it has, against the "largely misapplied" concept of brain drain, surged "brain drip"—"a mechanism for mitigating the overarching suffocation being experienced in the labour market."[30] In addition, it significantly increased remittance inflows, which is "a strategic tool for improving the economic and social outlook of the country by increasing financial credit, providing foreign currency, and improving balance of payment accounts."[31] With $25 billion remittance inflow in 2018 alone, the country had received 3.6% and 55.6% of the years' global and sub-Saharan African totals ($689 billion and $45 billion)

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[25] Darkwah, S.A. & Nahanga V. (2014). Determinants of International Migration: The Nigerian Experience. Acta Universitatis Agriculturae Et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis 62 (2):323. http://dx.doi.org/10.11118/actaun201462020321

[26] Arhin-Sam, K. (2019). The Political Economy of Migration Governance in Nigeria. Arnold-Bergstraesser Institute (ABI): 12.

[27] Ibid.

[28] IOM, UN Nigeria (2019). Migration in Nigeria – A Country Profile 2019: 65.

[29] International Labour Organization (ILO) (2023). Nigeria Ratified ILO Conventions Concerning Migrant Workers And Private Employment Agencies. https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/nigeria-ratified-ilo-conventions-concerning-migrant-workers-and-private#:~:text=Nigeria%20becomes%20the%2029th%20country,181.&text=On%2023%20March%202023%2C%20Nigeria,)%20Convention%2C%201975%20(No

[30] Nwokocha, E. E. (2016). Demystifying the Fallacy of Brain-Drain in Nigeria's Development Discourse: Engaging the Burden and the Contradictions. Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa 18 (2): 30.

[31] IOM, UN Nigeria (2019). Migration in Nigeria – A Country Profile 2019: 59.

respectively—which made it the fifth highest and first recipient of remittances in the world and sub-Saharan Africa respectively.[32] And in prospect, the transnational connections, skills, and technological know-how of many Nigerians in the diaspora is a huge asset that could accelerate the country's development—should a significant number of such emigrants be convinced to return home.[33]

However, it is believed that the negative impacts of the *japa* phenomenon outweigh the foregoing positive impacts.[34] While Nigeria—though a net out-migration country—also host many migrants as Table 3 shows, the demographics of the immigrants and emigrants has gravely increased the country's dependency ratio on one hand, and pave way for brain drain on the other hand.

Table 3: Migration from and into Nigeria, 1990 – 2017

	People living in Nigeria born outside Nigeria	Decennial growth rate (%)	People born in Nigeria living in other countries	Decennial growth rate (%)
1990	460,000	-	450,000	-
2000	490,000	6.52	600,000	33.33
2010	990,000	102.04	990,000	65.00
2017	1,240,000	25.25	1,260,000	27.27

Source: United Nations Population Division (2018), cited in IOM Nigeria (2019: 22).

A significant number of the Nigerian immigrants are unskilled workers, refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries.[35] On the contrary, the emigrants are majorly able bodied youth who leave behind aged parents with younger siblings, and they include "highly skilled professionals in technology, science, and the medical and paramedical fields."[36] And the country hardly attracts a significant number of voluntary return migrants, with "a higher proportion of Nigerian returnees being repatriates, rather than skilled migrants."[37] Should the *japa* trend continue unabated, the huge vacuum in key sectors, though a consequence of poor governance and not the *japa* phenomenon, would become difficult to fill.

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[32] World Bank (2018), in IOM Nigeria (2019): 59.
[33] Ibid.: 59-60.
[34] Olumoyo, A. E. & Abiri O. C. (2023). Japa Syndrome: Causes, Effects and Solutions for Sustainable National Development. International Journal of Development and Economic Sustainability 11 (5): 92. https://doi.org/10.37745/ijdes.13/vol11n58795
[35] IOM, UN Nigeria (2019). Migration in Nigeria – A Country Profile 201: 13.
[36] Ibid.: 62.
[37] Ibid.: 60.

In the health sector, for example, between 2011 and 2019, the doctor-to-population ratio in the country stood at 38 doctors per 100,000 population, grossly short of the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s recommendation of 166 doctors per 100,000 population, and even lower than what obtains in other developing countries as shown in Figure 1.
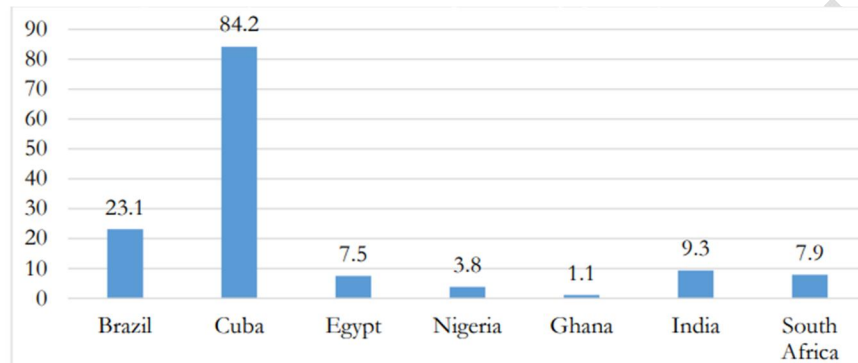

Fig. 1: Density of medical doctors (per 10,000 population), 2011-2019.
Source: World Health Organisation (2021), cited in Ikhide (2021:3).

And the trend of their exodus continues. Between 2021 and 2022, for instance, the number of health care workers who left the country for UK alone was 11,823.[38] As Toyin Falola decries, "if the future depends on innovations and ideas and those who have them prefer to take or have taken their trade elsewhere, then the future is in danger."[39]

Theoretical Explanation to the Rising Japa syndrome in Nigeria

Emancipatory realism theory provides a firm ground for understanding the root causes of the japa phenomenon from human security perspective. Developed by Ken Booth and Richard Jones around the concepts of 'security', 'emancipation', and 'community', the theory came to intellectual limelight in the 1900s. Security, according to the theory, can only be understood and defined by its opposition to insecurity, while emancipation is the only avenue through which insecurity can be overcome.[40] Thus, security means freedom from insecurity—any form of threat that

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[38]   GOV.UK. (2023, February 23). National Statistics: Why do people come to the UK? To Work: 'work visas by nationality' section.   https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-december-2022/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-work#worker

[39]   Falola, T. (2022). Japa!, By Toyin Falola. Premium Times: 'Run!' section, para.5. https://www.premiumtimesng.com/opinion/551986-japa-by-toyin-falola.html

[40]   Booth, K. (2005). Beyond Critical Security Studies. In Critical security Studies and World Politics (259–279), ed. K. Booth (Lynne Rienner Publishers). https://doi.org/10.1515/9781685857536-015

tempers with human freedom. While such freedom means 'emancipation,'—a situation where people are free from any sort of constraint capable of interfering with their fundamental rights,—community is the "medium of security where emancipatory politics is put into practice because here, the individual as the agent of change operates in the community for emancipatory practices to take hold."[41]

The theory therefore believes the world community should be committed to protecting and promoting fundamental human rights and democratic principles. It is thus not just a theoretical commitment but also a political orientation. As the former, "it embraces a set of ideas engaging in a critical and permanent exploration of the ontology, epistemology, and praxis of security, community, and emancipations in world politics" and as the latter, "it is informed by the aim of enhancing security through emancipatory politics and networks of community at all levels, including the potential community of communities—common humanity'.[42]

The concept of security in this theoretical perspective is more aligned to human security which, unlike national security, focuses on human life, dignity, and emancipation as contrasted in Table 1. Before and during the cold war, the conceptions of security was state-centric having revolved around states' safety hence it being referred to as 'national security'. This conception changed after the cold war as "the failing favour of the nation state provided space for the concept of human security."[43] Human security is an inter-disciplinary, prevention-oriented, people-centred, multi-sectoral, comprehensive, and context-specific concept that brings together the human elements of security, rights, and development; while offering the global community a new way of viewing and confronting the wide range of 21st century challenges.[44] It is thus referred to as "the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment."[45]

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[41]   Sezal, M. (2019). Origins of Differentiation in Critical Security Schools: A Philosophic-Genealogical Search for Emancipatory Roots: 79.

[42]   Booth, K. 2005. Beyond Critical Security Studies. In Critical security Studies and World Politics (259–279), ed. K. Booth (Lynne Rienner Publishers): 268. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781685857536-015

[43]   Marriage, Z. (2007). From National Security to Human Security—Less of the Same in Congo? New Faces Conference: 9.

[44]   United Nations (2016). Human Security Handbook: An Integrated Approach for the Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Priority Areas of the International Community and the United Nations system.

[45]   Commission on Human Security (2003). Human Security Now. Final Report: 4.

Table 1: Contrasting Forms of Security

	National Security	**Human Security**
Primary Actor	States	Individuals
Primary Concerns	Regime stability and security	Economic status, health, personal security, and liberties
Primary Threats	Forms of economic, military, or diplomatic coercion	Disease, poverty, and crime
Origin of Threats	Unfriendly states, weak states, and rival states	Non-state actors, transnational issues (e.g., climate change), repressive regimes, and illegally armed groups
Measure of Strength	Military power, economic productivity, control of borders, and appeal of values	Human development index that captures quality of life, educational opportunities, and life expectancy
Basis	National interests	Universal human needs and values
Ultimate End state	National sovereignty, territorial integrity, vitality of government, institutions, and society	Freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of expression, and freedom of beliefs
Legal Basis	United Nations Charter and International Law	Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine

Source: Adapted from Reveron and Mahoney-Norris (2019:3).

The protection and development of human lives, being the strategic concerns at the heart of human security, cut across political, economic and social dimensions, enabling a life free from risk and fear.[46] In this vein, the United Nations Human Development Program (UNDP) identified seven comprehensive dimensions of human security as follows: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security.[47] Insecurity, therefore, refers to the presence of any threat that affects any of these dimensions as shown in Table 2.

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[46]   Hussein, K., Donata G., & Julia W. (2004). Security and Human Security: An Overview of Concepts and Initiatives; What Implications for West Africa? Sahel and West Africa Club. Paris: Issues Paper, SAH/D(2004)547.

[47]   United Nations Development Program (1994). Human Development Report —New Dimensions of Human Security.

Table 2: Human security and their Threats

Type of Security	Examples of Main Threats
Economic security	Persistent poverty, unemployment
Food security	Hunger, famine
Health security	Deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care
Environmental security	Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution
Personal security	Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labour
Community security	Inter-ethnic, religious and other identity-based tensions
Political security	Political repression, human rights abuses

Source: Adapted from United Nations (UN, 2009: 7)

Nigeria is one of the countries where human security threats are most prevalent hence the rising *japa* syndrome in the country.[48],[49] This—viewing through the lens of the emancipatory realism theory—is due to the lack of emancipatory politics at the federal, state and local government levels over the years. As the dark days of military dictatorship got over, and the Fourth Republic democracy evolved through periodic elections and orderly change of governments, emancipatory politics in the country would have precipitated emancipation through effective networks of community at the three levels of government.

Human Insecurity and the Japa Syndrome in Nigeria

Since the inception of Nigeria's fourth republic, there have been constant rise in the threats militating against the country's quest for human security which metamorphosed the yearnings of Nigerians for emigration into *japa* syndrome as analysed above. These are embedded in the four broad categories shown in Figure 2 and subsequently examined.

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[48] Nasirudeen, L. O., & Nahdrah A. K. (2023). Human Security as a Basic Ingredient for the Smooth Running of Society: The Nigerian Experience. RUDN Journal of Public Administration 10 (3): 404-417. https://doi.org/10.22363/2312-8313-2023-10-3-404-417

[49] Creed, X., Zeynep K., & Shyamika J. (2023). Safe for Whom? A Human Security Perspective on Nigeria as a 'Safe Country of Origin'. Journal of Refugee Studies 36 (3): 359-382. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fead002
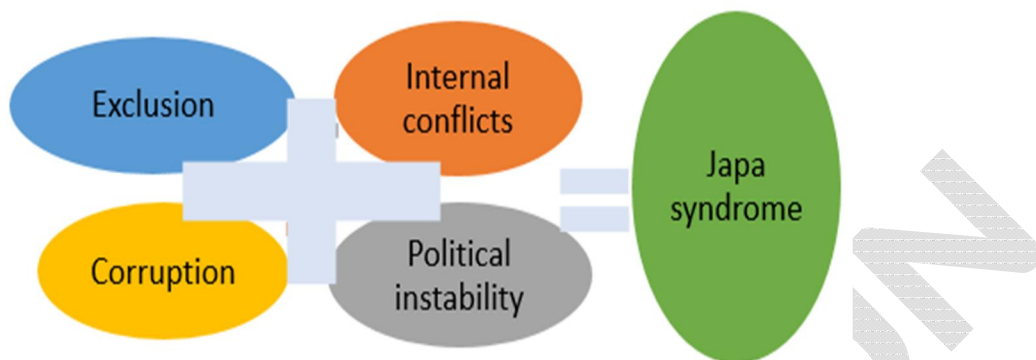
Fig. 2: The root causes of *japa* syndrome in Nigeria
Source: The author

1.   **Internal Conflicts**

Militia groups, which fueled socio-economic conflicts became visible in the country since the early 1990s. In the oil-rich Niger Delta region, for example, more than 20 minority right groups (like the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People [MOSOP]) have emerged in reaction to the government's failure to combat the numerous human security threats bedeviling the region. The return of the country to civil rule in 1999 precipitated many circumstances that made those militias to carry out large scale extra judicial violence in the name of vigilantism or protecting their socio-economic interests. Foremost in this regard were the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF).

Similarly, the Odua People's Congress (OPC), active in the south-west started out as a self-determination group for the Yorubas in 1994, but turned to vigilante activities in 1999. They specialized in "brutality, robbery, torture, lynching and necklacing of both criminal suspects and opponents during inter-ethnic conflict."[50] They allegedly played active roles in the ethnic skirmishes between the Hausa and Yoruba ethnic groups which consumed thousands of lives in the early 2000s.

In the south-east, the Bakassi Boys, officially known as the Abia Vigilante Service (AVS), Anambra Vigilante Services (AVS), and Imo Vigilante Services (IVS) in the three states they were most active, had carried out arbitrary arrests, torture, and killings of suspected criminals. They made "routine public spectacles of some of the criminal

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[50]   Tertsakian (2003), in. Alemika, E. E. O. & Chukwuma I. C. (2004). The Poor and Informal Policing in Nigeria: A Report on Poor Peoples' Perceptions and Priorities on Safety, Security and Informal Policing in A2j Focal States in Nigeria. Centre for Law Enforcement Education:12.

suspects they capture, often parading them naked through the streets, chopping body parts into pieces, and later burning them to the cheering of crowds."[51] Though they were disbanded in 2002, their activities continued unabated.

The introduction of Sharia law in 12 northern states in the early 2000s precipitated a crisis in Kaduna state, resulting in over 63,000 deaths and 3,000 displacements, thus described by the then president as the worst violence since the 1967 civil war.[52] Another ethno-religious crisis had already erupted in Plateau state which, like the Kaduna crisis, claimed thousands of lives, broke the social bond among the people, and lingered.

Those were among the internal conflicts the first fourth republican president failed to curb until he passed the mantle of leadership in 2007. While the next president successfully implemented a disarmament program for the Niger Delta militants, he witnessed the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency in 2009, which peaked in 2014.[53] The Boko Haram terrorism has ravaged the north eastern part of the country and affected over 14.8 million people.[54] Failure to contain the insurgency partly led to the defeat of the third president in 2015 poll. While the victory of the fourth president offered hope to Nigerians, he had, without success, struggled to combat not only the Boko Haram but also armed bandits in the north-west. And in the south-east, violent secessionist agitation by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) had continuously evolved, in addition to the resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta.[55]

2.   Exclusion

The population of Nigeria is estimated to be around 221,279,177.[56] A significant majority of this population are people who are educationally and financially excluded. While education is the key to all sorts of inclusion and empowerment, it is reported

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[51] Chukwuma, I. (2002). Human Rights Dialogue (1994–2005): Series 2 no. 8 (fall 2002): Public Security and Human Rights: Articles: Responding to Vigilantism." Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs: para.6. https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/media/series/dialogue/human-rights-dialogue-1994-2005-series-2-no-8-fall-2002-public-security-and-human-rights-articles-responding-to-vigilantism

[52] Okpanachi, E. (2010). Ethno-religious Identity and Conflict in Northern Nigeria: Understanding the Dynamics of Sharia in Kaduna and Kebbi States. IFRA-Nigeria e-Papers, 07: 25. https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.cetri.be/IMG/pdf/Okpanachi_2010.pdf&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwjin7308NmGAxX3h_0HHZrhApQQFnoECAkQAg&usg=AOvVaw2pC7D-fV-UFVcHocEXtypS

[53] Institute for Economics and Peace (2021). Global Terrorism Index 2020. Measuring the Impact of Terrorism. https://reliefweb.int/attachments/93b527d8-5b8d-3ea1-bc5e-f810e42d45df/GTI-2020-web-2.pdf

[54] United Nations System in Nigeria (2017). United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework: Nigeria - UNSDPF 2018 – 2022: 17.

[55] Home Office (2022). Nigeria: Separatist Groups in the South-East. Country Policy and Information Note.

[56] World Population Review (2023). Nigeria Population 2023 (Live). https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/nigeria-population

that 31% of the adult population in Nigeria are illiterates.[57] Also, there are about 20 million out-of-school children.[58] The telecom access gaps and internet user penetration in the country which respectively stand at 97 clusters and 38% in 2022 show improved, yet unsatisfactory level of digital inclusion.[59],[60]

The financial exclusion in the country, which stood at 46.3% in 2012 led to the launching of National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) with the aim of reducing the gap to 20% by 2020—albeit unsuccessfully.[61] The government's efforts towards financial inclusion and gender parity have been "adversely affected by unforeseen socioeconomic factors such as the economic recession, the precarious security situation in parts of northern Nigeria, and other factors such as the slow uptake of digital financial services."[62] Indeed, unemployment rate has continuously risen, with the unemployment-to-population ratio reaching 77.1% in 2023.[63] This worsened poverty as the country continuously adds to its world-record largest number of extremely poor people (over 80 million in 2018), with multi-dimensional poverty affecting over 63% (133 million) of the people in 2022.[64],[65] With inflation rate also rising from 20.77% to 33.69% between 2022 – 2024, the country is too suffocating to the unemployed and extremely/multi-dimensionally poor citizens, hence their contagious infection with the *japa* syndrome.[66]

57   Suleiman, Q. (2022). International Literacy Day: Adult illiteracy in Nigeria now 31% -Minister. Premium Times, https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/552619-international-literacy-day-adult-illiteracy-in-nigeria-now-31-minister.html

58   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2022). Global Education Monitoring Report. Out-of-school Numbers are Growing in Sub-Saharan Africa. https://www.unesco.org/gem-report/en/2022-out-school

59   Premium Times (2023). Nigeria's Telecom Access Gaps Drop by 53%." https://www.premiumtimesng.com/promoted/604435-nigerias-telecom-access-gaps-drop-by-53.html?fbclid=IwAR2XSedHVRIfCQw7oz98glqfd6C3iyiXVBMG2xU-MGBkxhYKOkPb0rvO_q4

60   Sasu, D. D. (2022). Nigeria: Online Usage Penetration 2018 – 2027. Statista. https://www.statista.com/statistics/484918/internet-user-reach-nigeria/

61   Central Bank of Nigeria (2018). National financial inclusion strategy.

62   Central Bank of Nigeria & Enhancing Financial Innovation & Access (2019). Assessment of Women's Financial Inclusion in Nigeria: 6-7.

63   National Bureau of Statistics (2023). Nigeria Labour Force Statistics Report Q2 2023. https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/download/1241429

64   Adebayo, B. (2018). Nigeria Overtakes India in Extreme Poverty Ranking. CNN https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/26/africa/nigeria-overtakes-india-extreme-poverty-intl/index.html

65   National Bureau of Statistics (2022). Nigeria launches its most extensive national measure of multidimensional poverty. https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/news/78

66   Channels Television (2024). Nigeria's inflation rate soars to 33.69% in April 2024. https://www.channelstv.com/2024/05/15/breaking-nigerias-inflation-rate-soars-to-33-69-in-april-2024/

3.   Corruption

Corruption, in the words of a former Nigerian president, is "the greatest single bane of our society today."[67] It refers to the abuse of public office for private gains in the form of an official giving or accepting undue favour, collecting or giving bribe, and engaging in any act of diversion or misuse of state resources.[68] The history of corruption in Nigeria will necessarily be narrated side by side the history of the country. This is because, it has been in manifestation since the colonial era and at no point in time after independence was the country free from it.[69],[70]

While successive governments continued to declare war against corruption, they have recorded little, if any success as the menace continues to grow. Having realised the impossibility of achieving the MDGs with corruption in the wheels, the first president of the fourth republic declared 'transparency' and 'accountability' as the pillars of his administration. He therefore established two anti-graft agencies, Independent Corruption and other Practices Commission (ICPC), and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) in 2000 and 2003 respectively. These agencies, however, were said to have been mainly used by him to witch-hunt his political opponents.[71] It was observed that lower-level public officials, businessmen and individuals were usually at the receiving end of their convictions, as in most cases, the big fishes evaded conviction through plea bargaining.[72]

While the second president did not live long enough to implement his form of anti-corruption crusade, his successor was infamous for not living up to expectations. Among the brazen corrupt practices under his watch was the loss of $20 billion from the federation account in 2014.[73] The impunity that surrounded such scandals was among the major reasons that led to his defeat in 2015 election. His successor could therefore not resist decrying war against corruption. In his eight year regime, the

[67] Akinwale, A. (2017). Let's Stop Talking About Corruption. The Guardian: para.12. https://guardian.ng/opinion/lets-stop-talking-about-corruption/

[68] World Bank (1997). Helping countries combat corruption: The role of the World Bank. http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/anticorrupt/corruptn/corrptn.pdf

[69] Oluwasanmi, J. O. (2007). Nigeria, Which Way Forward? St. Maotex Ventures.

[70] Ebegbulem, J. C. (2011). Corruption and Leadership Crisis in Africa: The Nigerian Experience. International Journal of Business and Social Sciences 3 (11): 221–227.

[71] Shehu, M. S. (2011). Nigeria: Wikileaks - EFCC Was OBJ's Witch-Hunt Tool. Daily Trust. https://allafrica.com/stories/201109150966.html

[72] Aluko, Y. A. (2009). Corruption in Nigeria: Concept and Dimensions. In Anti-corruption Reforms in Nigeria Since 1999: Issues, Challenges and the Way Forward, ed. U. E. David. & Emeka, E. Okafor (IFRA-Ibadan): 5.

[73] Vanguard. (2014), Missing $20b: I Want The Whole Truth, says Okonjo-Iweala. https://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/02/missing-20b-want-whole-truth-says-okonjo-iweala/

EFCC reportedly recovered assets worth billions of naira having secured 1,280, 2,220, and 3,785 convictions in 2019, 2021 and 2022 respectively.[74]

Yet, the administration was also accused of using the anti-graft agencies to witch-hunt the opposition.[75],[76] Also, the 2022 presidential pardon granted to 158 convicts (including former governors Joshua Dariye and Jolly Nyame) was a negation of the anti-corruption crusade.[77] In fact, many of the president's close allies such as late Abba Kyari (former Chief of Staff) and Rotimi Amaechi (former Minister of Transportation) have not been charged despite their alleged involvement in corrupt practices.[78] Consequently, the country did not see any significant progress in the fight against corruption. In fact, there is an empirical evidence of retrogression.[79]

4.   Political Instability

Political instability is "the propensity of a government collapse either because of conflicts or rampant competition between various political parties".[80] Having experienced 30 months of civil war and 5 successful military coups which culminated in 29 years of military rule, the Nigerian state is apparently a survivor of political instability precipitated by "colonial inheritance and inappropriate political structures and system."[81] Like corruption, narrating its history in Nigeria is tantamount to narrating the country's history. No sooner than its independence in 1960, leadership crisis engulfed the political party controlling the western region (Action Group, AG) resulting in the declaration of state emergency in the region. Then came the census crisis of 1962/63 and the general election crisis of 1966. These led to the country's first military coup, a counter coup, attempted secession of the eastern region and the

[74] Umeorah, C. (2023). EFCC Secured Over 6,000 Convictions in 2 Years – CDG. The Sun. https://sunnewsonline.com/efcc-secured-over-6000-convictions-in-2-years-cdg/

[75] Opejobi, S. (2018). EFCC, ICPC, FIRS, Others Directed to Witch-Hunt Political Opponents – Obasanjo. Daily Post. https://dailypost.ng/2018/07/11/efcc-icpc-firs-others-directed-witch-hunt-political-opponents-obasanjo/

[76] Adeyemi, M. & Akpan-Nsoh I. (2018). FG Using EFCC to 'witch-hunt' Opposition, Akwa Ibom Government Alleges. The Guardian. https://guardian.ng/news/fg-using-efcc-to-witch-hunt-opposition-akwa-ibom-government-alleges/

[77] Odeniyi, S. (2022). Presidential Pardon: Dariye, Nyame, Three Others Regain Freedom. Punch. https://punchng.com/presidential-pardon-dariye-nyame-three-others-regain-freedom/

[78] Thompson, O. O., Afolabi, A. R. & Onifade, C. (2020). When I See the 'Broom', I Will Pass over You: An Assessment of President Muhammadu Buhari's Anti-Corruption Crusade in Nigeria, 2015-2019. Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities 21 (2): 195–232. http://doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v21i2.10

[79] Egwu, G. & Mshelia, I. H. (2023). A Chronology of corruption and leadership woes in Nigeria: 1960–2023. Journal of Social Theory and Research, 3 (2): 17-18. https://publications.jostar.org.ng/chronology-corruption-and-leadership-woes-nigeria-1960-2023

[80] Hussain, Z. (2014). Can Political Stability Hurt Economic Growth? World Bank Group: para.1. https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/can-political-stability-hurt-economic-growth

[81] Okunade, B. (2008). Leadership: The Big Challenge. Ibadan University Press Publishing House: 20.

civil war. Though the country survived the civil war undivided, violence and political conflicts have since then become permanent features of the country's politics.[82]

Owing to "rivalry and suspicions among the various ethnic groups in the country that have culminated in political instability across the entire country", violence and conflicts have always characterised the process of gaining entrance into the corridor of political power.[83] And while electoral agency is by true democratic principles indispensable to democratic survival through its function of conducting credible, free and fair elections, the electoral umpire in Nigeria has always been accused of dancing to the tune of the ruling party, thus exacerbating political instability in the country. Events in the fourth republic have shown that monumental fraud and irregularities have marred elections with only the magnitude subsequently increasing.[84] It was so bad that former president Umaru Yar'adua admitted that his election "had some shortcomings."[85] More worrisomely, however, is the fact that the judiciary, which should grant redress for aggrieved parties also "served as a tool for creating political topsy-turvy that undermined the democratic process".[86]

Conclusion

Since independence, Nigeria's statehood journey has been hampered by internal conflict, exclusion, corruption, and political instability. These account for the underutilisation of the country's enormous resources, exacerbation of human security threats, and waves of mass emigration—which now metamorphosed into *japa* syndrome with its attendant effects. So long as the human security threats are not curbed through emancipatory politics at all levels of governance, the *japa* phenomenon will continue to eat deep into the country's most productive human resources, and by implication, its developmental potentials. Curbing them, however, will undoubtedly provide a firm ground upon which the country's constitutionally defined ideals of freedom, equality and justice among other lofty ideals will be achieved.

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Recommendations

The government at all levels in Nigeria need to make concerted efforts towards combating internal conflicts, exclusion, corruption, and political instability which embody the human security threats prevalent in the country. Useful in this regard is the UN's "guide for practitioners and policymakers who plan to integrate the human security approach into their work," which 'introduces a step-by-step analytical process for the design and implementation of human security initiatives."[87]

The Nigerian government should also design strategies for attracting skilled migrants back home. This should be among the core objectives of the Nigerian National Migration Policy (NMP) and its sector specific policies like the National Diaspora Policy (NDP).

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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The Administration of Open, Distance and E-Learning (ODeL) in the
Context of Environmental Sustainability and Human Mobility

IJMGS Vol4(2), November, 2024
Ayoko V. O. & Ayoko O.

The Administration of Open, Distance and E-Learning (ODeL) in the Context of Environmental Sustainability and Human Mobility

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Abstract

The rate of population growth and global development are threatening the environment due to human activities propelled by survival instinct and ambitious innovations and transformations. These environmental threats are faced by both the global north and global south and manifest as environmental pollution (water, visual, land, soil, thermal, noise, air), rise in global temperature (global warming), release of carbons from industries and automobiles (ozone layer depletion) and disruption of the ecosystem due to deforestation and urbanization. There is a need for strategies to the adverse impacts of climate induced emergencies. The Open, Distance and E-learning (ODeL) system has attained a paradigm shift in recent years and has the potential to promote resilience during turbulent periods. This paper focuses on the enhancement of environmental sustainability through the technology of ODeL in mitigating and adapting to climate-related emergencies. This position paper viewed issues historically and holistically by sourcing secondary data from both print and online sources and arranged them into themes on specific areas for content analysis on the mitigating and adapting strategies that ODeL can use to achieve environmental sustainability. The study discovered that climate emergencies adversely affect the school's health, destroy school infrastructure and retard the teaching and learning process in the school system. The paper suggested green education through ODeL as a vehicle to deliver climate change education to the masses to sustain the environment.

Keywords: Education, Environment, Emergency, Learning, Sustainability

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L'administration de l'enseignement ouvert, à distance et en ligne (ODeL) dans le contexte de la durabilité environnementale et de la mobilité humaine

Résumé

Le taux de croissance démographique et le développement mondial menacent l'environnement en raison des activités humaines propulsées par l'instinct de survie et les innovations et transformations ambitieuses. Ces menaces environnementales font face à la fois global et se manifestent par une pollution environnementale (l'eau, le visuel, la terre, le sol, le thermique, le bruit, l'air), une augmentation de la température mondiale (le réchauffement climatique), la libération de carbone par les industries et les automobiles (l'appauvrissement de la couche d'ozone) et la perturbation de l'écosystème grâce à la déforestation et à l'urbanisation. Il est nécessaire de mettre en place des stratégies pour faire face aux impacts négatifs des situations d'urgence induites par le climat. Le système d'enseignement ouvert, à distance et en ligne (EODL) a connu un changement de paradigme ces dernières années et a le potentiel de promouvoir la résilience pendant les périodes de turbulence. Cet article se concentre sur l'amélioration de la durabilité environnementale grâce à la technologie de l'EODL pour atténuer et s'adapter aux situations d'urgence liées au climat. Cette étude a examiné les problèmes de manière historique et holistique en s'approvisionnant en données secondaires provenant de sources imprimées et en ligne et en les organisant en thèmes sur des domaines spécifiques pour une analyse de contenu sur les stratégies d'atténuation et d'adaptation que l'ODeL peut utiliser pour atteindre la durabilité environnementale. L'étude a révélé que les urgences climatiques affectent négativement la santé de l'école, détruisent les infrastructures scolaires et retardent le processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage dans le système scolaire. Le document a suggéré l'éducation verte par l'entremise de l'ODeL comme moyen de fournir une éducation au changement climatique aux masses pour préserver l'environnement.

Mots-clés : l'éducation, l'environnement, l'urgence, l'apprentissage, la durabilité

The Administration of Open, Distance and E-Learning (ODeL) in the
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Introduction

The practice of preserving the natural environment at the individual, non-governmental and governmental levels for the benefit of the present and future generations is known as environmental protection. The rate of pollution, natural resource depletion, degradation and imbalance in the ecosystem have increased dramatically over the past decades[1]. Humans and the environment are dependent on each other and the changes in the behaviour or activities of humans affect the environment just as climate changes also affect humans. Though the global north has modified practices that protect their environment the impacts of their activities are more felt in the global south. These environmental challenges are caused by both natural occurrences and artificial (human) activities including urbanization, depletion of natural resources, overpopulation, deforestation, pollution, chemical hazards, fossil burning and agricultural activities. These activities have created an imbalance in the ecosystem, which this made the environment vulnerable to disasters and disruptions.

Adequate orientation and awareness of safe environmental practices on the use of natural resources is lacking. Though environmental education was introduced, the coverage is limited to only the urban areas with rural, remote areas and marginalised people disenfranchised from this environment-friendly education.

There is a need to spread this environmental awareness and education to everyone without the barrier of geographical location by embracing the paradigm shift and the transformation in educational technology through open, distance and e-learning methodology on the mitigating and adapting strategies to global environmental emergencies. The development of science and technology though having a lot of negative impacts on the environment, is the main source of sustainable solutions to the impacts just like education is the most vulnerable sector impacted adversely by the climate crisis, education is also a major channel of sustainable solutions to environmental challenges.

ODeL can be accessed in different forms synchronously or asynchronously through the virtual classroom, online courses, teacher-student and student-student interactive portals to listen to lectures and instructions and to submit assignments, ask questions and discuss through the use of internet-enabled digital devices like the laptop, tablets, smartphones or Ipad.

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The Administration of Open, Distance and E-Learning (ODeL) in the
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According to Bosch[2], the second-generation internet availability makes portable communications available in our comfort zones making ODeL acceptable as the most accessible and flexible education methodology for global citizens in different conditions.

The following research questions were raised based on the mitigating and adaptive roles of ODeL in climate emergencies, human mobility and environmental sustainability.

RQ 1: What are the impacts of climate emergencies on the school system?

RQ 2: What roles does ODeL play in promoting environmental sustainability?

RQ 3: what roles does ODeL play in human mobility?

Objectives

This study aims to find out the mitigating and adaptive roles the administration of ODeL play in combating environment-related emergencies and the methodology of ODeL that can be used to deliver education in emergencies for a sustainable environment. Therefore, the specific purposes of this study are:

i. To ascertain the impacts of climate emergencies on the school system.
ii. To ascertain the roles ODeL plays in promoting environmental sustainability.
iii. To ascertain the roles of ODeL in education continuation during human mobility.
iv. To discuss the ways forward on environmental sustainability.

Materials and Methods

This conceptual paper sourced secondary data from both print and online resources on how the administration of Open, Distance and E-Learning enhances Climate Change Resilience in the context of Human Mobility and Environmental Sustainability by looking at issues historically and holistically.

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Concept of Open, Distance and E-Learning in Emergencies

According to Ayoko[3], "Open, and e-learning (ODeL) are made up of three domains, which are: Open learning (Accessible to every citizen without discrimination or marginalization), Distance learning (No distance location or geographical barrier) and E-learning (Synchronously and asynchronously teaching and learning)"
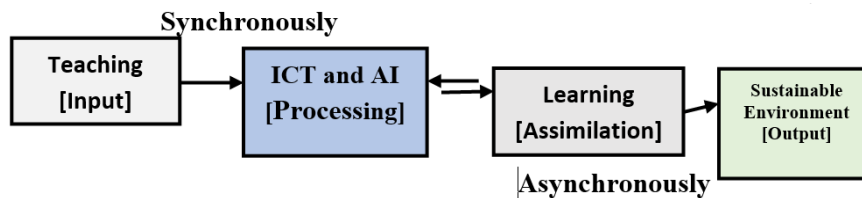

Fig. 1: Model of ODeL for Sustainable Development
Source: Ayoko et al. (2023)

Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODeL) is a mode of teaching and learning process that is delivered remotely through the use of information and communication technology. Students interact among themselves and with their instructors through internet connections from their different and safe locations. According to May[4], sustainable education is possible through ODeL. ODeL can cover the gap in learning due to school closure that contributes to learning loss and educational inequalities experienced by vulnerable school children bringing a sense of normalcy and psychosocial balance which are critical to the students' wellbeing in emergencies.

As observed by Azeiteiro[5], education for sustainable development (ESD) can be achieved through the use of ODeL technology. In climate emergencies such as flooding, global warming, hurricanes, climate-related pandemics and natural disasters, ODeL can be a critical bridge to sustain education continuity from any safe location because it allows accessibility, and flexibility, and provides quality education that can be delivered at the individual pace and schedule[6]. The intersections between ODeL and environmental sustainability are:

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3   Ayoko, V.O. Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODeL): A Panacea for Effective Actualization of Education for Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). World Scientific News, 2024, 192, 128-137 https://worldscientificnews.com/about-us

4   May, R., Cox, V., Kroder, S., & Franklin, G. The Overlooked Dimension of Sustainable Education. Online Submission. 2011. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED529903

5   Azeiteiro, U. M., Bacelar-Nicolau, P., Caetano, F. J. P., & Caeiro, S. Education for sustainable development through e-learning in higher education: Experiences from Portugal. Journal of Cleaner Production, 2015, 106, 308–319.

6   Tavukcu, T., Arap, I., & Ozcan, D. General overview of distance education concept. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2011,15, 3999–4004.

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Accessibility: students and instructors can teach and learn from their safe locations through the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and information and communication technology (ICT).

Flexibility: the teaching and learning process can be delivered at an individual pace and scheduled synchronously or asynchronously, making it possible to balance education with crisis management.

Cost-effectiveness: It is cost-effective in the long run because the cost of transportation, energy usage, classroom maintenance and buildings are eliminated.
Personalization: It allows for the personal interest and needs of the learners.

In conclusion, ODeL can be a teaching-learning delivery method in crisis management for education continuity during climate-related and other emergencies because it can bridge the gap caused by disruptions in conventional classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Sustainability: During the Agrarian period, the thought of sustainable development was born to ensure humans survive through agricultural production[7]. However, the Industrial Revolution ushers in an exponential increase in human population, a high rate of industrial production, and indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources and in return increase in environmental pollution through humans and industrial waste. The rapid human-induced environmental changes make it difficult to maintain balance in the ecosystem, and these have become hazardous for human survival[8]. This results in challenges such as shortages of food, drought, energy issues, environmental pollution and associated health issues, retard economic growths, ecological crisis and social conflicts[9].

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[7] Zhou, H. (2009) The simple thought of sustainable development and practice in ancient China. *Li Lun Dao Bao*, *12*, 39–44.
[8] Kates, R.W & Parris, T.M (2003) Long-term trends and a sustainability transition. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA*, *100*, 8062–8067.
[9] Lyons, R.A.; Rodgers, S.E.; Thomas, S.; Bailey, R.; Brunt, H.; Thayer, D.; Bidmead, J.; Evans, B.A.; Harold, P.; Hooper, M.; et al. (2016) Effects of an air pollution personal alert system on health service usage in a high-risk general population: A quasi-experimental study using linked data. *J. Epidemiol. Community Health*, *70*, 1184–1190.

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As a result of these problems, the search for lasting development and survival of humans and other members of the ecosystem became paramount[10]. This leads to the concept of sustainable development as a socioeconomic transformation guide[11].

The Sustainability concept is complex but very essential for the lasting survival of our planet. Better decisions and practices on environmental protection, natural resource exploitation, equity and inclusion, quality education, well-being and consideration for the future can be achieved through sustainable awareness. The major concepts in the sustainability theory are:

Interdependence: The society, economy and environment though independent are all interdependent and interconnected and decisions in one aspect can impact the others.
Equity: The need of the present must not compromise the needs of the future regardless of Gender, race, religion, status or nationality.

Resilience: The zeal to absorb stresses, trauma and shock and adapt to varying conditions and continuity abilities during crises and adversities.

Participation: All stakeholders must work towards achieving the global goal of sustainable futures

The theory is a concept that can sustain the future and present generation by making decisions that will be just on resource consumption and environmental protection for the continuity of human existence.

Results

RQ 1: What are the Impacts of Climate Emergencies on the School System?

Education is a right of our children and not a privilege. "The climate crisis is an education crisis". The ambition of providing quality and continuous education to children is affected by recurring climate crises such as droughts, wildfires, extreme heat, rising sea levels, floods and so on. The schools are the most affected because students spend most of their time in the school environment.

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[10] Zhao, J. (1991) The theoretical analysis of sustainable development. Ecol. Econ., 12–15.
[11] Klarin, T. (2018) The Concept of Sustainable Development: From its Beginning to the Contemporary Issues. Zagreb Int. Rev. Econ. Bus, 21, 67–94.

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Climate-induced emergencies can lead to learning loss due to school closures during climate events such as overflooding, hurricanes and wildfires. These disruptions can also lead to mobility issues because it will be difficult for easy shuttle teachers and students to the schools. Climate emergency can also affect critical infrastructure such as power supplies and can cause serious damage to school buildings, teaching aids, and road network.

According to WHO[12], climate experiences such as heat waves, extreme precipitation and changes in seasonal and geographic characteristics affect the well-being of school children. The Heat stress caused by global warming due to the increase in global temperature affects the health and well-being of the students and teachers and makes it difficult for them to concentrate on the teaching and learning process. According to Vergunst[13], "The threats associated with climate change can additively, interactively and cumulatively increase the risk of psychopathologies in the young, starting at conception and continuing right through to adulthood."

Both the direct and indirect impacts of climate emergencies on the health and nutrition of children can have adverse effects on their education. Food scarcity caused by droughts or wildfires can result in malnourishment which is linked to poor brain development in children. School children are most exposed to climate-related diseases caused by dehydration, heat rashes, extreme heat exposure and other environmental pollutants.

These can badly affect the cognitive and language abilities. climate events that compromise the water and sanitation of the school environment can lead to diseases like dysentery, cholera and diarrhoea among the students and teachers.

As opined by Paulson & Barnett[14], climate crises such as air pollution-induced asthma can result in higher absenteeism of students and teachers and also those who are displaced or lost their place of residence and sources of livelihood may start to miss classes due to the socioeconomic effects. In addition, air pollutants can cause associated health issues such as dizziness, headaches, tiredness and loss of concentration in the classroom.

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[12] World Health Organization (2009) *Global Health Risks: Mortality and Burden of Disease Attributable to Selected Major Risks.* World Health Organization; Geneva, Switzerland

[13] Vergunst, F et al. (2023) Climate Change and Children's Mental Health: A Developmental Perspective, *Clinical Psychological Science*. DOI: 10.1177/21677026211040787.

[14] Paulson J & Barnett C (2010) Who's in charge of children's environmental health at school? *New Solut.,* 20, 3–23. doi: 10.2190/NS.20.1b.

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Teachers job performance can be retarded while dealing with stress and adapting to the crisis. The zeal to deliver quality education will be diluted because the teachers are often worse hit by school-related climate emergencies. The financial implication of climate emergencies on the school, the host communities and the government to renovate, repair or reconstruct damages is a burden.

The impacts of climate emergencies on the parents are also carried down to the children.

The impact on the livelihood of parents results in the inability to pay school fees or cater for the educational requirements of the children. This may result in school dropout, child labour and child marriage. Climate displacement or migration can lead to permanent breaks from school because refugees or displaced people may not have access to education due to language, cultural or legislative barriers to the place of settlement.

RQ 2: What Roles does ODeL play in Promoting Environmental Sustainability?

In recent years, ODeL has attained a paradigm with many countries having Open Universities to give access to the population of admission seekers into higher education programmes.

According to Egwuasi[15], universally, ODeL is a call to mass literacy, public orientation awareness and a strategy for delivering quality education as revealed by the current trend in Asia, Africa, European and American countries where courses like environmental technology, environmental management and environmental science that expose the learners to methods and practices of environmental maintenance and protection are thought in Open, Distance and e-Learning institutions. An example in India is Indra Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) which creates sustainable agriculture and environmental awareness by offering training and courses for different segments of the society on biodiversity, environmental studies, food and nutrition security, environmental impacts assessment and sustainability science through its school of agriculture[16.]

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[15] Egwuasi, P. I., Emit, P. J & Obot, J. F (2006). "Preference for Open Distance Learning for Enhanced Access and Balanced Development in the 21st Century Nigeria" Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning. 6 (2), 190 -2039.

[16] Anbalagan, G & Srivastava, R (2016) Developing Environmental Awareness Through Open and Distance Learning System. Pakistan Journal of Distance & Online Learning, 1(1), 49-57.

ODeL can also promote environmental sustainability by delivering regular courses or massive open and online courses (MOOC) on environmental-related courses such as green economy, behavioural modifications, geography, climate change, public health, sustainability, global warming, biodiversity, and ozone layer depletion.

The causes and impacts of environmental challenges, the behavioural change and best policies to mitigate and adapt to the unrecoverable changes in the environment and the skills and sustainability opportunities can be suggested[17].

Taking part in Open, Distance and e-Learning projects and activities is another innovative way ODeL can promote environmental friendliness and awareness by directly engaging students in projects and activities that task them to analyse, explore or give suggestions and solutions to environmental problems. Examples are environmental case studies, games, discussions, simulations, puzzles and computer-based tests by collaborating with other learners, enthusiasts and climate experts from different locations or fields. This creates room for the promotion of global thinking and responsibilities, cross-breeding of experiences, ideas and perspectives on climate challenges and promotes teamwork, exposure, smooth relationships, communication channels, creativity and critical thinking on ways forward.

ODeL is a reservoir of various online tools, portals and platforms for climate change education and environmental awareness. Open educational resources (OER) are databases and repositories that house well-researched and relevant studies, resources and information on environmental topics.

Online visualising tools like maps, calculators, charts and graphs can be channeled to estimate the impact and features of environmental occurrences. Networking activities to link and communicate with peers can be achieved through ODeL forums and communities. ODeL can deliver a wide range of innovative resources on environmental education to different locations even in the remotest areas through webinars and e-learning events and conferences, e-learning courses, scholarships, grants and vacancies in the environmental domain. According to Anbalagan[18], the environmental awareness of teachers teaching in ODeL settings is important and current trends in environmental curriculum, evaluation methodology, instructional designs and material development can be done through the ODeL framework.

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[17] Harizan, M.D & Hilmi, M. F. (2019). Effectiveness of Distance Education on Sustainability from Learners' Perspective. International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change, 8(6), 167–181

[18] Anbalagan, G & Srivastava, R (2016) Developing Environmental Awareness Through Open and Distance Learning System. Pakistan Journal of Distance & Online Learning, 1(1), 49-57

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The discharge of life-threatening substances directly or indirectly into the environment is known as environmental pollution. Pollution can be caused both by natural and mostly by artificial means due to human activities. Pollution of the environment can have very hazardous implications on the entire ecosystem balance. The forms of environmental pollution are thermal pollution, noise pollution, visual pollution, water contamination, air pollution and land pollution. ODeL has the potential to positively control the rate of emission and deposit of pollutants to the environment.

According to Herring[19], the ODeL as an environment-friendly initiative can reduce the rate of greenhouse gas emission and control global warming by reducing the rate of moving from one point to the other through the use of automobiles that emit carbon into the atmosphere.

ODeL methodology allows students and teachers to interact at their safe locations without the stress of movement. Furthermore,[20] in their study confirmed that e-learning courses can produce 90% less CO_2 emissions than traditional campus-based courses. The global efforts to protect the ecosystem and natural resources by the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions can be achieved through the methodology of ODeL by saving lands for construction and reserving the rate of water and energy consumption.

ODeL also preserves the forest by reducing the consumption of papers and other materials consumed in conventional schools by embracing soft copies more than hard copies in all academic and administrative processes. ODeL is cost-effective for the students, instructors and the institution because there are drastic reductions in the use of textbooks, school building construction, infrastructure purchase and maintenance and the rate of electricity consumption. Wastages are also reduced and natural resources are conserved, unlike in the traditional school system where piles of waste that are detrimental to the environment are generated. As observed by Campbell & Campbell[21], ODeL prevents the use of public facilities and regular contact with people, this prevents contamination and transmission of infectious diseases. Taking courses through ODeL mode may result in positive behavioural change towards environmental

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19 Herring, Horace and Roy, Robin (2007). Technological innovation, energy-efficient design and the rebound effect. Technovation, 27(4) pp. 194–203

20 Roy, R. Potter, S. and Yarrow, K. (2004) Towards sustainable higher education: environmental impacts of conventional campus, print-based and electronic/open learning systems, in Murphy, D., Carr, R., Taylor, J., Wong, T.M. (eds.), Distance Education & Technology: Issues and Practice, OUHK Press, Hong Kong, 129-145

21 Campbell, J., & Campbell, D. (2011). Distance Learning is Good for the Environment: Savings in Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, 14(4), 1-6

sustainability because ODeL has sustainability characteristics such as affordability, accessibility and equity.

RQ3: What are the Roles of ODeL in Human Mobility?

The phenomenon called human mobility is part of voluntary or forced events experienced by humans. The complex impacts of climate change on human mobility have attracted the attention of policymakers and researchers. Climate-related (im-)mobility such as displacement, planned relocation, forced migration and trapped population are of different types and each requires different mitigative and adaptative measures in terms of the impacts on lives, properties and pursuits. The mitigating roles of Open Distance eLearning (ODeL) in delivering quality educational opportunities to displaced people is crucial to their acquirement of new skills, qualifications and knowledge that can position them to quickly adapt to the new communities especially in locations without traditional schools to improve their chances of employment. ODeL can also support displaced individuals with resources to establish a network of like-minded by linking other displaced people with the needed information on human rights and the governing laws of their new environment. The flexibility and accessibility feature of ODeL makes it particularly the right mode of quality education for displaced individuals because it can be easily accessed from any location on the globe with internet facilities and can be personalised to the needs of the displaced people. ODeL has been channelled to support displaced people in the following instances:

Digital Skills Training: To position displaced people for better employment opportunities, non-governmental organizations such as the International Rescue Committee and Jesuit Refugee Service have taken advantage of ODeL to provide high-demand technical and vocational skills like digital marketing, coding, graphic design, baking, tailoring and data processing to displaced people

Virtual Higher Education: The University of Edinburgh's Refugee scholarship programme and the University of Geneva's online program for refugee students are examples of higher institutions that offer ODeL opportunities remotely for displaced people through the Virtual Higher Education initiative.

Language Learning: The European Commission's Online Language Support programme and the UNHCR's Talking Classrooms Initiative and Continuing Education are good examples of language learning initiatives through ODeL to assist

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displaced people in becoming accustomed to the host communities' languages for easy integration and access to social services.

Refugee Education Programmes: the opportunity for youth and school children to access learning contents and educational resources through ODeL portals. An example is the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium which uses the platform of ODeL to deliver certified higher institution-level content to displaced learners in camps and urban settings.

The employment of technology to bridge the distance between the school and the students for continued education during climate-related emergencies is referred to as Education-in-Climate Emergencies. ODeL methodology can be used to facilitate effective teaching and learning processes during climate disruption when the teachers and students are distant apart, even in the remotest of locations. ODeL has already been tested to be valuable in education-in-emergencies (Xiao, 2018) and there is no difference between conventional and ODeL[22].

ODeL involves a summation of information and communication technologies available, including the application of artificial intelligence (AI)[23].

During the COVID-19 emergency, most countries abandoned traditional education methodology for ODeL because teachers and students were dispersed in different locations due to the ban on social gatherings in public places including schools. The educational institutions were able to maintain and connect with their students by embracing ODeL for the continuity of quality education delivery.

The special distancing enabled by ODeL controlled the spread of the deadly virus and also made sure that the students were not disenfranchised educationally[24]. ODeL makes education easily accessible in the context of climate change education by sustaining the delivery of skills, information and knowledge that relate to necessary mitigative and adaptive mechanisms that are essential to health and wellbeing during climate-related emergencies.

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[22] Russell, T. L. (1999). The no significant difference phenomenon: As reported in 355 research reports, summaries and papers. North Carolina State University.

[23] Bozkurt, A. (2019b). Intellectual roots of distance education: a progressive knowledge domain analysis. Distance Education, 40(4), 497 514.https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1681894

[24] Lizcano, D., Lara, J. A., White, B., et al. (2020). Blockchain-based approach to create a model of trust in open and ubiquitous higher education. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 32*, 109–134.

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Access to healthcare education and survival training is frequently disconnected within displaced populations during climate change emergencies due to the unexpected and life-threatening disruptions that may affect critical school infrastructures which may lead to the closure of the schools, ODeL can be a barrier breaker in the delivery of quality education to the displaced and climate marginalized population on topics such as sustainable practices for wellbeing, adaptation measures and necessary first aids for infections and control.

In areas where the available schools cannot accommodate the displaced population, ODeL can be used to deliver education. Educational institutions that embrace ODeL have the potential to promote climate change resilience that will empower the citizens to address the climate crisis.

Overall, climate emergencies can have a significant impact on the school system, and the government needs to put in place necessary mitigative and adaptive measures to prepare the schools for this crisis. The government and education stakeholders should invest in climate risk reduction to build a sustainable climate-smart school system for our children.

Discussion

As opined by Ayoko[25], globally, ecological crisis, digital transformation and population increase are changing the eco-balance. The need to protect the future by the practices of the present is cogent. This can only be achieved by mass education of the global citizens on the impacts and implications of this crisis through sustainable education methodology. Education as a weapon to combat these menaces to achieve the desired change in practices must be affordable, accessible, equitable and qualitative for mass acceptance and appreciation. These can only be provided by the ODeL methodology of education delivery. ODeL is the most logical strategy to deliver these global sustainable targets. The current global climate issues and experiences have informed the awareness of the direct and indirect impacts on all aspects of life (education, health agriculture, biodiversity, livelihood and socioeconomic) it will impose on the coming generations. This has initiated survival strategies such as going green and sustainability practices.

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[25]   Ayoko, V.O. Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODeL): A Panacea for Effective Actualization of Education for Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). *World Scientific News,* 2024, 192, 128-137 https://worldscientificnews.com/about-us

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Green practices are welcome ideas in the global south because of the birthrate (population) and level of natural wastage. The manufacturing and consuming activities of man are the main cause of climate change and it can only be controlled by imbibing green practices in all endeavours.

The concept of practices applies to the management of energy, green teaching and learning practices, green industrial and manufacturing services, green livelihood and agricultural practices, green construction and architecture and so on[26,27,28]. Education plays a distinct role in character modifications by creating awareness of the link between man and the environment, the environment and sources of energy, and the economy and the environment through climate change education. The achievement of a sustainable development goal (SDG) is dependent on green environmental sustainability which in all is dependent on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The green environment can only be maintained when people's activities are curtailed within the ecological setup of the planet by recycling, reducing and reusing. According to Aithal & Priti[25], the twin target of sustainable development goals (SDG) and environmental sustainability can only be achieved through the employment of science and technology because understanding the concept of climate change such as pollution, gaseous emissions, global warming, ozone depletion, desertification, deforestation and so on can only be through scientific and technological interventions, especially in impact assessment, detection and solution.

In addition, the dissemination of green education can be achieved by incorporating and using green technology initiatives such as ODeL for mass orientation and awareness of green practices through research, workshops, and collaborations between teachers and learners on energy conservation, efficiency and renewable.

Conclusion

The Education in Emergencies (EiE) approach should implement critical climate mitigative and adaptative action to address the shocks on the children and youths to ensure safe and continued education, especially for displaced populations, minority groups, people with disabilities, refugees and other people affected by climate

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[26] Sridhar, A. & Aitha,l P.S. Innovations in Effective Management of Energy using Green Technology, International Journal of Conceptions on Management and Social Sciences, 2015, 3(2), 18 - 22.

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[28] Aithal P.S & Preethi J. How Service Industries Can Transform Themselves into Green Business Industries, International Journal of Management Sciences and Business Research (IJMSBR), 2015, 5(4), 150-158.

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disasters through the philosophy of ODeL to reach the marginalised children and youth with quality, affordable and accessible education

ODeL as a friendly approach to the environment reduces the rate of carbon footprint, discourages deforestation by exhibiting paperless practices, conserves energy by reducing the rate of power consumption, is affordable due to cost-effectiveness, accessible from any location even in emergencies, enables virtual collaborations synchronously or asynchronously and enables a platform for lifelong learning.

Without any doubt, ODeL enhances greener and sustainable environmental practices. On these notes, it is suggested that sustainable development policymakers and governments in different countries should support the application of ODeL not just as an adaptation approach but also as a mitigating approach by investing in the technology and manpower needed for standardized open, distance, digital and online education. The scope of ODeL can also be widened to cater for other social crises such as school dropout, gender imbalance, insecurity, human mobility, disability, marginalisation and cultural practices that are disenfranchising the populace from traditional education, especially in the global south.

Recommendation

Adequate technical and financial resources to monitor, review and evaluate ODeL strategies and modalities regularly during emergencies should be made available. This will give room for capturing approaches according to the trend.

Supportive technology should be incorporated in the design of ODeL for people living with disability to break disability limitations and become more inclusive. The quality and learning outcome of ODeL should be well evaluated and Monitored to the best extent during emergencies and access to open educational resources that are appropriate to context, languages and countries should be maintained.

ODeL should embrace multiple-modality learning strategies. This should be regularly updated based on digital transformation, changing technologies, labour market requirements, and the needs of the learners and facilitators.

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Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

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