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Abstract of 200 – 250 words should be italicised on 11 font size, Times New Roman, using 4 – 6 keywords.

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Resurgence of Coup D'état in Africa and Security Implication for the Region

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Abstract

The resurgence of coup d'état in Africa since 2019 is no doubt a cause for caution considering the political instability occasioned by this dysfunctionality and attendant effects on the region which succeeded in maintaining relative democracy over two decades. It is however of major concern, the form of 'legitimacy' being enjoyed by the new crops of military juntas judging from the massive supports from the people in all the countries (Sudan 2019, 2021; Mali 2020; Tunisia 2021; Guinea 2021; Burkina Faso 2022 (twice); Niger 2023 and Gabon 2023) that the military seized power in spite of the illegality of such action, hence this study investigated the rationale behind resurgence of coup d'état in Africa with the seeming legitimacy, and the security implication for the region. The study employed primary and secondary sources of data, primary data was sourced through in-depth interview of purposely selected respondents who are experts on the subject matter, secondary data comprised of books, journals, and other forms of existing literature while relying on revolutionary theory of social change and frustration/aggression theory, data was analysed using content analysis. Findings revealed that the dysfunctionality in the democratic systems/regimes created social vacuums and yearnings in the hearts of the people who were 'powerless' in themselves to effect the desired change thereby embracing the military as the only 'other force' capable to unseat the irresponsible democratic regime, the new 'status' conferred on these autocratic regimes might be detrimental to the security of the region if not contained. Regional organisations such as African Union and other sub-regional organization must come up with institutional framework to strengthen democratic system as a measure to contain occurrence of coup and maintain security of the region.

Keywords: Africa, Democratic Failure, Coup D'états, Legitimacy, and Insecurity

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

The recent wave of coup d'état which started in 2019 across Africa after two decades of uninterrupted democratic dispensation is a major concern for both the governments and the governed within the region. The situation is more worrisome due to the nature of how this democratic instability has been spreading like wildfire coupled with the attendant acceptability of the abnormality by the people in all the states that coup d'état took place lately (Sudan 2019, October 2021 and war since April 2023; Mali August 2020 and May 2021; Chad April 2021; Tunisia July 2021; Guinea September 2021; Burkina Faso January and September 2022; Niger July 2023 and Gabon August 2023) (Redaction Africanews 2023). The acceptance of these

coup d'états by the people, displayed by their jubilation and support conferred some semblance of 'legitimacy' on these military regimes and their illegal assumption of power. This raises some questions on the democratic regimes across Africa, with the likelihood of more coup d'états to take place in the continent posing a great challenge to the security of the region. Hence this study investigated the rationale behind resurgence of coup d'état in Africa with the seeming legitimacy and the security implication for the region.

Conceptual Definition, Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

For the purpose of clarity, these concepts are defined; Democracy, Coup D'état and Insecurity while Revolutionary Theory of



Social Change and Frustration/Aggression Theory provided basis of analysis and discussion in this study.

Conceptual Definitions

Democracy: the generally referred definition of democracy is defined as government of people by the people and for the people coined by Abraham Lincoln. Beyond this are several other definitions from varying perspective by different authors. Overall, democracy is regarded as the government by the majority of the people. Schumpeter (1994) sees democracy as a system of government in which leaders can be held accountable to the citizen both for its action or inaction. On the other hand, Milewicz (2020) described a democratic setting as one that must have acceptable instruments of institutionalisation, which is a written body of law that has passed through many enduring political norms and bound by a written constitution. While there are some features or characteristic which are yardsticks to measure true democracy. These include popular sovereignty, independent judiciary, conduct of free and fair elections, free and independent press, separation of power among arms of government, respect for human rights, accountability and many more. A true democratic regime must ensure that a large percentage of these features are in operation within the state if not entirely all. The absence of a major aspect of these or all in any democratic system has reduced the system to any other system of government but democracy.

Coup D'état: this is a sudden and violent overthrow of an existing government by a small group usually by the armed forces, police, and other military agencies of the state (Powell and Thyne, 2011). The primary classification for coup is the seizure and control by all or a part of the armed elements as it happened in some of these states across Africa. And coup takes place due to so many factors depending on reasons provided by the juntas in different cases but features of coup d'état remain the same across board. Bartelson (1997) posit that coup does not constitute an

exceptional event by mere definition only, but also a justifiable action with reference to the exceptional circumstances that were responsible for its occurrence. Features of coup d'état include sudden take-over of power by the use of force, usually undertaken by an armed group of the state, seizure usually violent and sometimes bloody, suspension of constitution, disregard for human rights, ban of press freedom, though rarely alter the nation's fundamental social and economic policies but do not usually redistribute power among competing political group and most times stay longer in power than necessary (Bechir, 1997; Salihu, 2016). All these features can further lead to breakdown of law and order due to agitations from disgruntled elements and civil society organisations within the state.

Insecurity: this is described as a feeling of inferiority by individual threat of loneliness, which may be subjective or objective born out of interactions between their inner experiences and outer condition occasioned by environmental factors in form of threat or risk (Vornanen et al., 2009). This situation also applies to group of individuals. From psychological perspective, insecurity is a feeling of inadequacy (not being good enough) or uncertainty. This implies that insecurity starts from the mind. The mere sense of feeling of vulnerability signifies the state of being insecure and this produces anxiety about one's goal, relationships and the ability to deal with such situations (Ayoola, 2022). These are typical phenomenon regarding the state of mind of the people whenever there is coup d'état in any state. People are thrown into a state of anxiety and uncertainty for fear of the unknown.

Revolutionary Theory of Social Change

This is predicated on the belief that, society, according to Chalmers Johnson is modeled in terms of the coordination of different values realized through socialization, norms and rules that legitimize political order. Revolution occurs when these values become misaligned



(Gurr, 1973) in other words, the absence of or jettisoning of these values can become reasons for revolution. In this instance, the inability of democratic regimes to deliver on such values or in the case of military junta that jettison such values are both invitation to revolution in a state.

Frustration/Aggression Theory

This states that frustration usually leads to aggressive behavior. And if there is a strong feeling towards the source of that frustration, this may lead to acts of aggression. People become frustrated when their goals become unachievable within the polity due to the failure of the government to provide an enabling environment for them to maximize their potentials. And when such feelings climaxed, they produce aggressive behavior capable of causing disorderliness and anarchy within the state (Breuer and Elson, 2017). Such aggressive behaviors are rampant in many of the African states especially in those places that coup took place and even others as people take to the street daily protesting against harsh economic condition, poor performances by the political leader leading to poor and harsh economic condition, poverty, hunger, unemployment/underemployment, unfavourable business environment among others.

Literature Review

Different scholars have expressed different view on factors responsible for coup d'état world over and Africa in particular as well as this kind of occurrence and negatively affect or become a contributory factor to issues of insecurity across the region. One major factor alluded to as responsible for the new wave of military take-over in the region and especially West Africa sub-region is the growing resentment for colonial tendencies mostly in the Francophone states. According to Adamu (2024) the French government continue to collect royalties from its former colonies as repayment for developmental colonial structures in these Francophone states, the act Nkrumah (1965) described as neocolonialism.

France continued to maintain military operations in these its former colonies thereby denying them the needed self-development of their potentials and expertise.

Aside colonial tendencies in West Africa, one issue that cuts across Africa is the faulty democratic system characterized by bad leadership/bad governance, sit tight syndrome/elongated regime, manipulations of electioneering process and cancellation of result to remain in power i.e. Paul Biya of Cameroon (41 years); Yoweri Museveni of Uganda (37 years); Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea, (30 years); Denis Sassou of Republic of Congo (44 years); Teodoro Nguema of Equatorial Guinea (44 years). This factor was also evident in the countries that experienced coup d'état lately like Niger, Mali, Gabon, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Chad and others who are potential candidate like Togo and Senegal (MacGowan, 2023; Allen, 2018; Chekole, 2016; Ogbonna et al., 2023). Elongated regime is more like a regular phenomenon across the region. Other issues tied to bad governance authoritarianism, include weak institutions, systemic disenfranchisement, weak/extractive political institutions that support extractive economic institutions, servicing foreign economic interests, state sponsored poverty, wrong economic policies, official corruption/misappropriation of national resources and gross underdevelopment (Assensoh and Alex-Assensoh, 2001; Gberevbie, 2014); Biswas, 2023; Thomas, 2021; Obasesam and Iwara, 2021; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012; Ako-Nai and Ayoola, 2013; Yumeen, 2020; Reuters, 2023).

Some of these factors provided in literature or all, in some cases are the reasons for the new wave of coup d'états rocking Africa i.e. the Nigerien coup plotters claimed their action was expedient at the time due to the deteriorating security challenges and bad governance displayed by the displaced civilian regime. The issue was not so different in Gabon, Mali, Burkina Faso and others. Even though each coup is unique to individual state, the common factor is democratic deficits and failure of elected government to deliver



freedom, security and development (Ngima, 2023). The failure of the democratic regimes to deliver the dividends to the people or live up to expectation of what democracy should be, made people lose faith in the system. Also, the social disconnect between people and the government produced frustration and a desire for change which can only be made possible by the military. Hence, the jubilating responses from the people in all these countries that the civilian regimes were displaced.

Security Implication of Resurgence of Coup D'état Across Africa

It has been established that the dysfunctionality in these democratic regimes created social vacuums and yearnings in the heart of the people who are 'powerless' in themselves to effect the desired change. The people thereby embrace the military as the only 'other force' capable of unseating the irresponsible democratic regimes. However, the military with its autocratic tendency cannot be trusted as a suitable replacement. As Ogbonna et al. (2023) observed, many of the military regimes became worse off and guilty of the same reasons provided for seizing power from the civilian regimes. In addition, autocratic tendency and sit-tight attitude are not limited to the civilian leader alone, they cut across while it was established that these characters could be more reinforced with the power of the gun (Bechir, 1997; Salihu, 2016; Chekole, 2016 and Allen, 2018). Many of these military regimes most time also failed to keep to transition programmes and promises made to return the state democratic regime. As Ngima (2023) observed, the juntas in Mali, Burkina Faso and Chad claimed the deteriorating security challenges in these countries made it expedient for the coup to take place. Terror activities had reached its peak in each country but their actions were in conflict with their human rights obligations. Other reasons given include social unrest among civilians in the course of transitional government engagements and election violence, stagnant economy all of which the

juntas have failed to proffer solution despite their popular acceptance and justifications for seizure of power. Issues of human rights and economic conditions have further deteriorated in these countries.

The initial jubilation by the people will gradually and eventually give way to agitation and protest against the excessive use of force by the juntas. There were reported cases of arbitrary arrest and detention of top civilian officials, restriction on peaceful demonstrations by civil society organisations, attack on press freedom, human rights violation with impunity in Niger, Gabon, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad and Sudan all of which have aggravated tension with growing insecurity (Ngima, 2023; Human Right Watch, 2021; CCR2P, 2024; United Nation, 2023; Global Focus, 2023). Islamic State-affiliated groups/ jihadists have mutated and doubled in numbers resulting in over 12,000 people and at least 3million displaced across these countries according to Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED, 2023). Also, armed groups and rival ethnic communities have persisted leading to widespread conflicts even between rival forces behind the coup (United Nation, 2023; CFR, 2024; CPA, 2024). While some of these juntas have refused transition plans to civil rule i.e. Mali, Burkina Faso; some keep extending transition period i.e. Chad while Gabon has no plan yet to conduct election (Ngima, 2023). All these have compounded the security issues across Africa.

Based on the above, insecurity has been a major issue across Africa manifesting in various forms such as banditry, armed groups and ethnic rival forces, revolutionary forces, terrorism, insurgency and these are not limited to states where coup had happened. While these security challenges persisted, the civilian regimes failed to address issues or lacked the capacity and political will to do so. And in some cases, the democratically elected officials are also contributory factor to the problem. Hence, the claim of democratic deficits and irresponsibility claim by the military are some of the main reasons while it



must rescue the state from degenerating into a state of anarchy. As Adamu (2024) posits, every security issue has root in political decision. Political decision is in two parts. It is either to bring the myriads of challenges under control or play ignorance and complacency as co-perpetrator. Explaining further, Adamu (2024) and Keshi (2024) separately shared similar views that, the civilian regimes by their ineptitude and irresponsibility forced the military out of the barrack to seize power i.e. manipulation of election in a bid to retain and elongate their tenure, arming party tugs to bully electorates and snatch ballot boxes while those arms and ammunition are not retrieved. These unretrieved weapons become instruments of terrorizing the people post-election while the party tugs are now beyond the control of those who empowered them to achieve their selfish interest as against national interest.

According to Keshi, the issues are germane, and these include good-governance, democracy, rule of law, strong institution, human rights, strong electoral system. Incumbent administration must desist from manipulation of election results i.e. Senegal. Except those issues are addressed and dealt with holistically, we shall continue to experience coup d'etat. The irresponsible civilian regimes are responsible for these coups as they are the ones forcing the military back to seize power and this is dangerous for Africa's security. And many of African countries are potential candidate for coup i.e. Senegal, Cameroon. He said democracy has not failed as some people claim, but political actors do. They are the ones causing disruption of the democratic process. The people want to vote to uphold democracy but the leaders are preventing the will of the people so as to elongate their tenure in office i.e. Macky Sall of Senegal (announced cancellation of election and postponed it indefinitely when his tenure was expected to end in April 2024), Cote d'ivoire, Cameroun also faced the same challenge.

Providing their varying perspectives, the interview respondents selected for this study

from the academia and public affairs analysts all agreed that the civilian regimes irresponsibility and failure is responsible for the military intervention and seizure of political power. Giving insights into the primary function of the military, the respondents from the academia emphasized that the military for whatever reason has no business in governance but to defend the state against external aggression and prevent internal insurrection as Huntington (1957) defines the role of the military in a state. Internal insurrection in this case can include these security challenges like rival ethnic groups clashes, political party protest and social unrest, banditry, terrorism all beyond the control of the civilian government and capable of degenerating to a state of anarchy. The military cannot fold its arms and allow that to happen. The above mention issues provide a good ground for the military to exploit and take over power.

On the other hand, the political and public affairs analysts at different fora agreed with the academics on the primary role of the military as to defend the state. They disagreed on the notion of the coup being a product of military political exploit or thirst for power but an inevitable step to rescue the state and the people from the lawlessness and abuse of office by the civilian regime. Citing the various events leading to the coup in these states i.e. Sudan, Mali, Guinea, Chad, Burkina Faso, Niger and Gabon, their situations were already at the state of anarchy or verge of anarchy. The military intervention was like the saving grace in all these places and that explains the peoples' acceptance and support for the juntas. This view corroborated Adamu (2024) and Keshi (2024) earlier submission. Sudan's case degenerated to full blown war; Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso could not contain terrorism while the economies were at the verge of collapse; Niger and Gabon faced economic challenges with the respective civilian rulers continue to sit-tight on power through manipulation of elections amidst of protest by the people.



There was also a common issue across the Francophone states where the civilian regimes were serving colonial interest of their erstwhile colonizer (France) which kept supporting their irresponsibility and retention of power through whatever means. As described by the respondents, France is only concerned about its interest not minding the outcome or effect of its action or supports for these civilian regimes despite the peoples' protests as the case in Mali, Gabon, Burkina Faso, Niger. For instance, France's selfishness became more pronounced after the coup in Niger was successful. It was willing to deploy 'war' and calling on regional organisation i.e. ECOWAS, to prevail on these states to return power to ousted civilian governments. All these efforts in a bid to protect its economic interest and gain access to raw materials from these countries i.e. uranium from Niger, as Ngima (2023) observed. The practice described as extractive industry by Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) and promoting political and economic corruption in the states.

While the academia admit that the coup was a timely intervention, they express fear and caution in that military junta hardly keep to transition programme and timetable to return to civil rule. And while the military has the capacity that could easily displace the civilian regime through the power of the 'gun', the same instrumentality of force makes it impossible for the civilian people to remove the junta should it fail to keep to transition schedule. The danger is that, the military regime is autocratic in nature, they usually set aside the constitution while ruling, synonymous with abuse of human rights, arbitrary arrest and detention of anti-coup group and prominent political leaders. They also suppress press freedom thereby becoming unaccountable and corrupt, even worse than the civilian it displaced. This confirms the views of Bechir, 1997; Salihu, 2016; Chekole, 2016; Allen, 2018; Ogbonna et al., 2023; Ngima, 2023; Iwara, 2023. As a result of these reoccurrences like a vicious circle, some of the respondents alluded to the generalization that

the worst civilian regime is still far better than any military rule.

Emphasizing the security implication of these coups on the region, all the respondents agree that that the interregnum may result to greater challenges if not checked. And as Adamu posits, there is a strong correlation among variables such as terrorism, insurgency, coup d'état and political instability across Africa (Adamu, 2024). That is, one is always a product of the other and vice versa. As these security issues become unresolvable by the civilian regime, coupled with other socio-economic and political challenges in the polity, these become reasons for the military to take over power. And as coup occurs, it produces political instability thereby producing more disgruntled elements and different groups of protesters within the state. All these further aggravate the security challenges in the polity. Another issue is the bandwagon effect or bad influence tendency across the region as the coup was already spreading like wildfire. In order words, armed groups in other states have the tendency to put up attacking mode thereby causing social and political unrest even when there is no need for it.

Another issue is the fact that, the juntas in all these countries have not been able to address or resolve the myriads of security challenges they met in the polity. They rather aggravated these challenges by their autocratic reigns which are usually characterized with human rights abuses, arbitrary arrest and detention of political and other social agitators and more. The resultant effects are social unrest, internal displacement of people, general atmosphere of fear and social disorder.

Overall is the concern over cross-border crimes and arms trafficking within African region. All the respondents are in agreement that these non-state actors/agitators within each state rely heavily on unwholesome smuggled small arms and light weapons to perpetrate their enterprise. This corroborated the submission of Ayoola (2022) that arms trafficking is one of the seamless crimes across



the West African Sub-region due to undefined porous borders, ethnic/language similarities and identification challenges. These made it possible for the criminally-minded elements to have easy entry and exit across border and easily subsumed to the identity of the community they find themselves. While the people from communities also aid and abet such trade in ignorance of the impending consequences on the people and the community at large. The danger for the region, according to the interview respondents is that these illegal firearms are unregistered and non-traceable by the states and will definitely end up in wrong hands since the states lack data to track them down and mop up these weapons thereby opening up the entire region to more security risks even after such state might have returned to civil rule. These views were corroborated by Adamu (2024); Chatham House (2024); and Ngima (2023). They warn against the transnational effects of these coups across the region as the military leaders reverse the anti-smuggling legislation in their state. Algeria, Morocco and Sudan are also regarded as third zones fueling insecurity in the Sahel region. These countries are said to be engaging in arms trafficking, hence the call to declare them as watch zone while capacities must be strengthened in ensuring regional security.

Conclusion

Military intervention in civil rule may appear like a better alternative to democratic rule especially when the people are not getting the expected dividends from the civilian regime. Data has shown that the military end up performing far below expectation as well as becoming dictatorial and unanswerable or accountable to the citizens. Although, coup d'état becomes inevitable in a desperate and emergency situation such as experienced in Niger, Gabon, Mali, Sudan, Guinea Burkina Faso, Tunisia and Chad due to its capability and power of force to displace irresponsible democratic regimes but the euphoria and jubilation that followed is always short-lived.

Therefore, African political actors should tenaciously uphold the principles of democracy as a safeguard against military intervention.

On the other hand, regional organisations such as African Union (AU) and other sub-regional group i.e. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) must address the root causes of these coups holistically (corruption/maladministration, abuse of office, sit-tight syndrome, economic mismanagement amongst others), and come up with institutional frameworks to strengthen democratic system across the region. Leaders must take responsibility for their actions as well as be accountable to the people. There must be respect for the rule of law, enforcement of human rights, independent electoral institutions, freedom of the press and peaceful transition from one democratic regime to another are essential ingredients to sustain democratic stability in all states across the region and a bedrock to ensuring regional security.

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Economic Diplomacy in Basorun Gaa and Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu Relations in Old Oyo Empire. A Study in Retrospect.

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Abstract

Economy as a potent factor behind human actions and inactions have not been accorded decisive position in the major analysis of historical events. If not in the recent past that a place is allocated to this factor through the study of Economic history as a branch of knowledge, it was previously treated as an embedded aspect of social and political trends. This paper is out to review the relationship between Basorun Gaa, a one-time Prime Minister in Old Oyo Empire and the Alaafin that eventually outlived him. The paper intends to interrogate previous studies on Basorun Gaa activities and their analysis which obviously did not emphasize Economic implications and how the desire for increased Economic benefits aggravated the callousness exhibited by Basorun Gaa. The paper will make use of secondary sources and the method is historical. Films and documentaries were also used for the retrospective study. The intervention of the authors of this paper is that Economic diplomacy as a method of activism among the Yoruba can be viable only if the loose ends are well -tightened, otherwise, it may have serious implications.

Keywords: *Economic diplomacy, Basorun Gaa, Abiodun Adegoolu, Yoruba Activism*

Introduction

Old Oyo Empire was one of the classical Yoruba Kingdoms that existed between the 14th and 18th centuries. The empire had a rich history, as one of the politically important states in West Africa, and also as a force that lord its sways over other kingdoms in Yorubaland and other nearby African states. It flourished between 17th and 18th centuries. The success of Oyo kingdom was based on the fearsome cavalry, strategic location, commercial tentacles and the expansionist policy. (Cartwright, 2020). Like all other Yoruba groups, Oyo derived her origin from the great Yoruba ancestor, hero and progenitor- Oduduwa, who likely migrated to Ile-Ife (Samuel Johnson, 1921 & Agai M. Jock, 2020). According to ALSSA FRANZ (2009), Oyo was established by Oranmiyan in

1300 AD. Oyo was ruled by an Alaafin, who shared power with the Oyo Mesi, aristocratic leaders from the seven wards that constituted the whole of Oyo settlement. They were the Ministers forming the advisory Council. The Prime Minister, in position of Basorun, had a great influence on the both the other advisory council members and the Alaafin. The Checks and balance system was put in place to prevent the tyrannical tendencies of the Alaafin. The Oyo Mesi was also under the checks of the Ogboni cult, hence, no one and no political institution was able to arrogate excessive power, as each of the administrative level can check, challenge and nullify actions of other levels (Osadola & Adeyeye, 2019). The system can be likened to the idea of separation of power; whereby separate branches are empowered to prevent actions by other



branches and be induced to share power. Following the assertion of Nte (2018), Oyo Empire as one of the monarchical systems with highest checks and balance loops in the world, how on earth was Basorun Gaa able to arrogate so much power that he outlived four Alaafin until the reign of Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu, who outlived him? Why did Gaa choose the path of tyranny? What were the loopholes exploited by Gaa to perpetrate his excessive actions? What was the driving force behind both Gaa and Abiodun's actions and inactions? What roles did economic factors play in the relationship between the two major actors. What were the reactions of other administrative levels that were supposed to act as check on Basorun Gaa and other Oyo Mesi's excessive power? The answers to these and other questions are the concern of this work. Relying on the theory of Economic Diplomacy: the context, the tools, the theatre and the process will be analyzed to see the power-play end of the economic diplomacy. This is an adaptation of Okano-Heijmans, (2011). Conceptualizing Economic Diplomacy: The crossroads of International Relations, Economics, IPE and Diplomatic Studies. Such will be adapted to the pre-colonial case of Basorun Gaa and Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu, to portray the different dimensions of Yoruba activism, tactics and end results.

Objectives

The paper seeks to study in retrospect the use of economic diplomacy in Old Oyo Empire during the reign of Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu and Basorun Gaa, a tyrannical Prime Minister. Specifically, the work delves into the concept of economic diplomacy as a strategy of international relations to explain the pre-colonial Yoruba Activism. Based on the methods of Actors, Procedure and Outcome, the paper analyses the losses and the gains of the two major actors and the essence of tactics in diplomacy. The paper also explores the

Yoruba philosophy that recommends diplomacy with tactics as the guiding principles of activism.

Methodology

The paper adopts qualitative methods of research, basically the content analysis of the diverse form of evidence available on the history of Old Oyo Empire. The conceptual clarifications of the Key words, relying on the secondary sources, making the desired content validity. The use of indigenous philosophy to explain the concepts of Diplomacy and Tactics.

Basorun Gaa in History

Basorun Gaa is a hereditary position of the Prime Minister, the head of the Oyo Mesi appointed to serve as a check on the despotic authority of individual emperor in Oyo History. The first Basorun that served as the head of the Oyo Mesi was appointed during the reign of Alaafin Onisile. Parts of his responsibility were:

- (i) to serve as the head of the Oyo Mesi-the Oyo council of Kingmakers;
- (ii) the prime minister between 1750 and 1774;
- (iii) the supervision of enthronement, dethronement and presentation of calabash, upon which a rejected king commits suicide; and also,
- (iv) the leader of the military in old Oyo empire.

He was instrumental to military conquests during the 17th and 18th centuries. He later arrogated excessive power to himself both as a crime instigator and a classical tyrant in the pre-colonial times (Johnson, 1921; Okunola & Ojo, 2012; & Michele Metych, 2026).

Justification for Gaa's Activism

As morally bankrupt as we can conveniently tag Basorun Gaa, based on his gruel character, disrespect to royalty, nobles and the masses,



authoritative and ruthless dispensation of justice, he was given a respite by considering him as a revolutionist by understanding not only his personality but also the complexity of the social and historical context of the time (<http://nairaland.com/.../bashorun-gaa-cruel-tyrant-misund...>). In this context, Gaa was seen as a liberator, owing to the previous rule of despotic Alaafin like Odarawu 1658-1659, who was bad tempered, Kanran 1659-1665, an unmitigated tyrant, Jayin 1665-1676, the effeminate and desolute, Alaafin Gberu, who was outrightly rejected by the Oyo Mesi for his oppressive and tyrannical acts, Alaafin Osinyago 1690-1692 and his predecessor, Ayibi 1676-1690, both for brutal, elitist and corrupt despotism. The general consensus was that the Alaafins in the second half of the 17th century were despotic and absolute rulers. swifftalk.net

In a way, Basorun Gaa had the initial backings of the remaining numbers of Oyo Mesi and even some followers, who sought Gaa's protection role from the hands of the oppressive rule. A situation of the like- minds branding themselves as freedom fighters. Another justification for Gaa's disposition was the demand of the socio-economic circumstance, explained through the socio-economic landscape. This revealed Oyo's involvement in the long-distance trade across the Sahara as intermediary. Oyo also had an agrarian economy with the practice of slavery as indentured servants, who could buy their freedom through hard work. Commerce was one of the factors that contributed to the economic strength of the Empire. Oyo's expansionist policy increased the challenges of having to administer ever- expanding territory. At a point, the Trans-Saharan trade was giving way to the Trans- Atlantic trade that had slaves as the major article of trade. This appeared a new socio-economic force that led to new power play. In the new economic dynamics, the real power fell in the hands of the Alaafin, the Ilaris, the Princes and

the Provincial Head. In the new race for wealth creation, Basorun and other members of the Oyomesi have been sidelined. The socio-economic circumstance led to the rise of assertive individual like Gaa to occupy the post of Basorun. Gaa rose to power to challenge the excessive royal influence that rendered the metropolitan Chiefs and Non-royal blooded's insignificance in the scheme of wealth creation (<https://nairaland.com/.../bashorun-gaa-cruel-tyrant-misund...>).

Basorun Gaa's major Misdemeanors

Two wrongs will never make a right, Gaa adopted absolute power to check the King's absolutism. Hence, he was guilty of unconstitutional practice: regicide: the dethronement of four Alaafins by forcing them to commit suicide; Alaafin Labisi 1750, who spent 17 days; Alaafin Awonbioju 1750, who spent 130 days; Alaafin Agboluaje 1750-1770 and Alaafin Majeogbe 1772-1789 (Akinbode, 2019); he murdered the daughter of Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu and later used her for money rituals; unconstitutionally highjacked the political power, homage and material benefits of the Oyo kingdom; terrorized innocent citizens and vandalized their property (Okunola & Ojo, 2012; Faleti, 1972). Obviously, there were other misdeeds of Basorun Gaa that might not be recorded, especially, those that affected the common man.

Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu in History

Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu reigned between 1770 and 1789 and his predecessor was Alaafin Majeogbe. He was the king that finally put an end to the tyranny of Basorun Gaa. He did not show the visible resentment of Basorun Gaa's excesses. Gaa continued to have a filled day, based on Abiodun's unsuspecting methods. As at 1789, there were scholars in his Royal Court, who could read, write and calculate in Arabic. Abiodun's reign was noted for peace, prosperity. As exemplified by



popular Yoruba song. Of note is the fact that Abiodun Adegoolu's mother was of the Basorun of Oyo Family. Abiodun Adegoolu was painted the picture of a relatively young and fine man, compared to Basorun Gaa. He conquered his opponents in a bitter civil war and pursued a policy of economic development based on coastal trade with the Europeans. Regaining the royal authority over the capital, Abiodun made use of Provincial forces (McCaskie, T. C. & Fage, J. D., 2024).

Economic Diplomacy

Diplomacy is the art and science of maintaining peaceful relations between nations, groups, organizations or individuals. Diplomacy can be realized on a number of aspects: trade, social relation, Economy, Security, Political arrangement. Diplomacy of any kind is usually achieved through Actors, Tools and Process. Hence, economic diplomacy is the use of economic tools to achieve national, organizational, corporate, group and individual interests. According to Tony Wayne (2019), 'Economic Diplomacy is perceived as the economic statecraft that involved the use of diplomatic skills to advance a country's economic, political and strategic goals... getting it right can provide a huge boost, just as getting it wrong can be very costly' Going by the words of an Indian Economist, Economic Diplomacy deals with the nexus between power and wealth. Chartejee Bipul (2013). It is used for defense and attainment of strategic goals.

Analysis of Relationship between Alaafin Abiodun and Basorun Gaa

The above conceptualization of economic diplomacy represents vividly the kind of relationship that existed between Alaafin Adegoolu and Basorun Gaa. The two of them were the **actors**, each representing certain activist segment of the Yoruba society in Old Oyo Empire: Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu represented the group that believed that a

change is imminent owing to Basorun Gaa's excessive rule, while Gaa also represented the group that wanted the dilution of the power of the Alaafin based on previous tyrannical experience. Eventually, Gaa betrayed his earlier allies in the wake of his tyranny. The **tools** employed by Basorun Gaa to achieve his strategic goals were constitutional changes, excessive wealth, and military dominance. The **process** was his tyranny and his boldness to brutalize the masses. Alaafin Abiodun as an **actor** to the other side, employed humility, silent economic war on two fronts but without tactics, metaphysical and spiritual wars. The process was **the homage he paid to Gaa and his being subservient**. At the end of the day the two actors were able to count their wins and their losses; Abiodun Adegoolu lose his daughter and the ambition of grooming her to become another powerful woman king in Oyo like Orompoto niyun, turned a dashed hope, Gaa lose his wealth, life and the reputation of his lineage. The fact that Adegoolu did not lose his life in the process, he had the hope of having other children that later emerged as kings in the new Yoruba settlements.

Yoruba Philosophy on Activism and Tactics

The Yoruba are a group of people that always situate their actions and inactions within their philosophy and cosmology. It is rare to find a situation that the explanation will not be available either in the form of proverbs, mythology, folklores, praise songs or divinations or adage, exemplifying the richness of Yoruba Culture. The same goes for Yoruba Activism. This work has identified, out of Yoruba philosophy, some proverbs that reflect tactics.

- (i) *Maja, masa ni iyi Akin* meaning When it is time to fight, you fight and when it is time to retreat, you retreat. This shows the wisdom in appropriateness. As one who hits and runs does so to live to fight at another time.



- (ii) *Eni to de takute ti o fi yeepe bo lo ko omo eranko logbon* meaning whoever set the trap without covering it with sands has taught the prey the lesson of escape. This shows that being tactical is an important aspect of war strategy. If a trap is set uncovered, the animals would have learnt to take caution.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Just like the Narcissists are labelled, Tyranny and Dictatorship have similar characteristics: Tyrants the world over usually adopt three basic methods: Legalization of the illegal (suppression of basic principle of civil liberties); Inciting a group against the other to cause unrest (mass propaganda to gain public support) and arrogating excessive power and wealth for dominance. Dictators usually align themselves with a particular social class and social problems. In the case of Basorun Gaa, he aligned himself with the aggrieved members of the society before arrogating excessive power to himself. Basorun Gaa initially, claimed to be the saviour of the people before becoming obsessed and disillusioned with the extent of his power. All these methods were adopted by Gaa, who initially claimed to be a freedom fighter. The rise of Alaafin Abiodun Adegoolu with the adoption of economic diplomacy without tactics inflicted the pain of losing his only daughter. Hence, economic diplomacy can actually perform a magic, if all loose ends are well-tightened. Gaa, despite his brutality did not realize early enough the surreptitious moves of the Alaafin until he became poor and wanted to attempt money ritual. Hence, he considered the fact that using the daughter of the man that impoverished him will not be too much for Abiodun to pay for his treachery. Diplomacy is both an Art and a Science. While actions are taken, reactions and counteractions must be envisaged, so that the loss will not be too overwhelming.

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Examination Quality and Performance of Selected Listed Manufacturing Companies in Nigeria

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Abstract

The audit performance and quality of several selected listed industrial concerns on the Nigerian exchange were examined in this research. More research in this area is required due to the problem statement, which stems from the apparent negative association between audit quality and performance as observed by some authors. Using secondary data from publicly traded corporations as a foundation, the methodology was an ex post facto study design. Agency theory provided the theoretical framework. The findings indicate that audit quality and performance are substantially related, and that audit quality does not, by itself, guarantee performance. There were two different results: 1.95 ($p\text{-value} = 0.051 > 0.05$) and 1.58 ($p\text{-value} = 0.114 > 0.05$). The work's Fcal (4, 615) was notably 11.27 ($p\text{-value} = 0.0000$), indicating that together, audit quality metrics have a major impact on ROA. According to the study, policy guidelines should be developed by the nation's Financial Reporting Council and other authorities to clearly limit the tenure of auditors in relation to their adherence to the current financial reporting regulatory framework. Regulators should establish a fair standard for auditor independence to prevent unfavorable consequences from arising from the auditors' performance of their primary auditing duties.

Keywords: Agency theory, Audit quality, Financial reporting, Audit performance

Introduction

Due to the severe economic uncertainty brought on by the global financial crisis, it is now more important than ever to have trustworthy, high-quality financial reporting systems. External audit, however, is expected to play a major role in assisting companies in achieving and/or enhancing high-quality financial reporting. Over the years, numerous regulatory and supervisory activities have unquestionably relied on the quality of financial reporting and auditing. The accuracy of audited financial information is highly valued by several people as well as by organizations, governments, and regulators (Odjaremu & Jeroh, 2019; Ivungu, Anande & Ogirah, 2019).

By offering a reasonable assurance that the management's financial statements are free from serious misstatements, the financial statement audit serves as a monitoring mechanism that helps lessen information

asymmetry and safeguard the interests of the many stakeholders. In the past ten years, there have been numerous accounting scandals, primarily as a result of managers' handling of annual report details. These managers had the power to deceive stakeholders by utilizing a range of accounting techniques during financial statement planning (Kurawa and Ahmed, 2020). External audits are carried out in compliance with high criteria for auditing quality. They can encourage reporting companies to apply accounting standards and guarantee the accuracy, transparency, and usefulness of their financial statements.

Strong internal control, risk management, and corporate governance may all be strengthened by effective audits, which improve a company's financial performance (Internal Audits Board, 2011). Due to the alleged audit's inability to completely exert equity and other claimants' deception, investors are helpless and incapable of making



informed decisions financial choices that have an overall impact on entities. To support investment decisions, financial institutions owe it to their stakeholders and the public to fully disclose information about the strengths, weaknesses, and prospects of their operations. This is because data from financial reports is used to forecast future investment via market value, which is typically measured with market share prices. When a corporation's capital stock is widely held, and its operations are of public interest, both large and small organizations, in addition to meeting the legal requirements, tend to draw in new investors and keep hold of their current ones through the release of their financial statements (Musa, Moses & Success, 2022).

Multiple scandals involving auditors, both directly and indirectly, have damaged public trust in their independence. Surprisingly, similar incidents have taken place not only in developing countries but throughout the world. Concerns over audit quality have grown over time in the wake of financial scandals such as those involving Enron, Global Crossing, and Satyam Computer Services. The external auditor is typically called upon as a third party to mediate whenever a conflict of interest occurs between the principal and the agent, as this could prevent the agent from acting in the principal's best interest.

These scandals have hurt auditors' reputations and cost investors a lot of money. This raised serious questions that persisted even after the public was made aware of the financial statement. Contradictory results have been obtained by a few studies that have been reviewed in the literature on audit independence and audit quality among manufacturing firms. Studies by Olaoye et al. (2019), for instance, demonstrate a good and significant influence on the dependability of financial statements and the independence of statutory auditors. However, research conducted by Diab et al. (2021) revealed a weak

but favorable correlation. In light of this, this study concentrated on audit independence, financial performance, and audit quality among Nigerian manufacturing firms.

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

Agency Theory

This study was grounded in agency theory. The focus of agency theory is on how to handle or settle conflicts that may occur in agency relationships between principals, or shareholders, and their agents, or company executives. Many issues arise from the fact that agents' and principals' interests and goals frequently diverge to the point where it can be exceedingly challenging for principals to ascertain what their respective agents—the executives of the companies, are doing. Therefore, this idea is explained by the agency's theory about problems that arise when the principals and their agents have divergent perspectives on risks and expectations. In summary, given the opinion provided by independent auditors who may have carefully examined the financial reports, management teams (agents) have a duty to prepare them for use by shareholders (principals) who rely on such statements, review the documents and additional financial information that management provided. The agency theory is therefore thought to be appropriate to guide this study since the quality of audits may potentially have a link with the quality of what firms' agents (management) may report in financial statements for use by their principals (shareholders).

Empirical Review

Wijaya (2020) investigated the impact of audit quality on the firm value of all manufacturing companies listed on the Indonesian Stock Exchange. We used multiple regression analysis to look at secondary data. The research indicates that excellent audit quality



increases the value of Indonesian manufacturing companies on the stock market. Improved audit quality raises the organization's value, lowers agency expenses, and lessens information asymmetry. Employing superior auditors will help companies in Indonesia's capital market become more valuable.

Ekwueme et al. (2022) investigated how earnings management is affected by the independence of external auditors. The Nigerian Stock Exchange's consumer products firms were examined over ten years, from 2010 to 2019, to determine and assess the degree of profits manipulation using a multivariate technique that incorporates secondary data from multiple organizations' financial statements. This study employed longitudinal and ex post facto designs. They found that there is a substantial negative correlation between audit tenure and the number of discretionary accruals, although a positive, non-significant correlation exists between company size and the joint provision of audit and non-audit services.

Akinyomi and Abimbola (2022) focused on six companies in the Nigerian consumer goods industry as they investigated the factors influencing AUQ. Regression analysis and correlation were performed. The analysis confirmed that the three main direct drivers of AUQ are board size, AUF, and company size. Longer audit duration, however, considerably lowers AUQ.

In their study, Olowookere, Oluwatuyi, and Oladejo (2022) discovered that, from 2009 to 2018, audit committee meetings, business size, and AUF had a small but negative impact on AUQ. According to Olabisi, Kajola, Abioro, and Oworu (2020), the primary factors influencing the aggregate unit quality (AUQ) of insurance firms in Nigeria between 2009 and 2018 were audit fees, audit firm size, and the audit is short duration.

In their research, Ogoun and Perelayefa (2020) employed binary regression analysis to

show that, in Nigerian non-financial listed companies, board independence showed a negative correlation with AUQ between the financial year ends of 2005 and 2015. Using panel data. Abdullahi, Norfadzilah, Umar, and Lateef (2020) investigated the impact of AUQ on the financial performance of Nigerian listed firms between 2010 and 2018. According to the study, there is a positive, direct, and negligible association between audit fee and business size and ROA.

One of the rare nations that requires audit firm rotation in addition to audit partner rotation is Indonesia. Martani, Rahman, Fitriany, and Anggraita (2021) examined the effect of audit quality on performance using data from this country. The focus was on whether the impact of the rotation varied across Big 4 and non-Big 4 audit firms. The data used came from a few publicly traded corporations and covers the years 2013 through 2015.

The primary focus of Monye-Emina and Jeroh's (2022) investigation was audit effort as a possible determinant of abnormal audit fees (AAF) for the period 2010-2019. Using correlation matrix, panel regression, and descriptive statistics. The findings indicated that while the IFRS, client complexity (CPX), and client size (SIZ) recorded negative correlations with AAF, joint audit recorded positive associations with such atypical audit fees. It appears that there was a stronger correlation between AAF and joint audit, but there was a significant but negative relationship between AF and SIZ.

Methodology

Model Specification

With the use of Review software, the data acquired for the study was analyzed using the panel multiple regression technique. The choice of this statistical tool is because it gives a more robust result for studies of this nature. For robust purposes, the study subjected the model to both descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.



This study expresses return on assets as a function of statutory audit services, audit tenure, auditor's independence, and audit-firm size. Accordingly, the equation from the regression analysis is predicted as follows:

$$ROA = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 SAU + \beta_2 AUDT + \beta_3 AUDI + \beta_4 AUFS + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Where: ROA = Return on asset; SAU = Statutory audit services; AUDT= Audit tenure; AUDI=Auditor's Independence; AUFS = Audit-firm size; β_0 = Intercept or Constant coefficients (the constant term); β_1 - β_5 = Regression Coefficients; ε_{it} = Schocastic, disturbance error term (noisy variable) Apriori Expectation; following trends of extant empirical documentation, we therefore expect a mixed result between audit quality and firm performance. This can mathematically be represented as: $AUDQ > 0$, $SAU > 0$, $AUDT > 0$, $AUDI < 0$, $AUFS > 0$.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Summary Statistics and Diagnostics

Descriptive statistics, correlations, variance inflation factor (VIF) analyses were conducted as part of preliminary data testing. The descriptive data of the selected consumer goods firms that make up our sample are shown in the table relationship between sets of variables exhibits (Jeroh & Okoye, 2015; Jeroh, 2016; Ezinando & Jeroh, 2017).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Statistics	SAU	AUDT	AUDI		
Mean	4.0892	0.7661			
Maximum	5.842	1	54.844		
Minimum.	2.301	0	0089		
Std. Dev.	0.5575	0.4236	3.4766		
No. of Obs.	620	620	620		

Statistics	SAU	AUDT	AUDI	AUFS	ROA
Mean	4.0892	0.7661	0.5586	0.5355	2.5228
Maximum	5.842	1	54.844	1	176.2669
Minimum	2.301	0	0089	0	-119.633
Std. Dev.	0.5575	0.4236	3.4766	0.4991	15.9299
No. of Obs.	620	620	620	620	620

Source: Author's computation

Pearson Correlation Matrix

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

	ROA	SAU	AUDT	AUDI	AUFS
ROA	1.0000				
SAU	0.1902	1.0000			
AUDT	0.0144	-0.0027	1.0000		
AUDI	-0.0608	-0.1097	-0.0613	1.0000	
AUFS	0.1224	0.5585	0.0126	-0.0888	1.0000

The above results show that there exists a positive but weak association between firm value and audit firm size, while a negative and very weak association exists between firm value, audit independence, and qualification auditor group, respectively. It was discovered that another negative and strong association exists between auditor independence and other explanatory variables, while a very positive and strong association exists between audit firm size and audit experience. There exists a weak and negative association between the qualifications of the auditor group and audit experience. As a result, while screening for multicollinearity, the researchers discovered that no two explanatory factors were perfectly or highly correlated in the correlation table above, ruling out the possibility of an outlier.

This shows that the model employed for the investigation does not have a multicollinearity problem. This also explains why panel regression analysis and the variance inflation factor (VIF) were used. Therefore table 2 simply summarizes the level of correlation between the regressors in the study's working model. The essence of this test is to find out the relatedness of the selected variables, and if they reflect any trace of multicollinearity which will be revealed by high levels of pair-wise correlation of 80% or more (Odjaremu & Jeroh, 2019; Jeroh, 2020a). However, none of the study variables reported high correlations, suggesting the possibility of multi-collinearity problems is slim. Meanwhile, on the individual level, statutory audit services, audit tenure, and audit firm size exhibited a positive relationship with ROA,



suggesting that increased quality may likely improve ROA. Meanwhile, audit independence had a negative coefficient of -0.0608, meaning that the ratio of audit fees to audit client revenue inversely associates with the ROA of audited companies.

This current study relied on panel data, which are time series in nature but drawn from a cross-section of companies. Jeroh (2020) suggests that data of this nature require tests for unit roots to confirm whether or not the data are stationary. Thus, to ascertain if some or all panels are stationary, the data collated for all variables were subjected to the panel unit roots test. We used the Hadri-LM test for this purpose, and Table 2 presents the outcome. From the recent results, the variables (ROA, SAU, AUDT, AUDI, and AUS) recorded statistical values of 5.7196, 26.2306, 5.4829, 16.7875, and 27.2906, respectively, with p-values of 0.0000 in all cases. This means that they are stationary at levels so we reject the proposed hypothesis that some panels contain unit roots. It thus follows that since the variables are stationary at levels, and have met other requirements, we proceeded to test for collinearity and heteroscedasticity. Usually, VIF tests ascertain whether variables have collinearity problems (Jeroh & Ekwueme, 2015).

Test of Multicollinearity or Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Variance inflation factor results

Table 3: Collinearity and Heteroscedasticity Test

Variables	SAU	AUFS	AUDI	AUDT Mean	VIF
VIF	1.46	1.46	1.02	1.00	1.23
1/VIF	0.684246	0.687156	0.983128	0.995927	
Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg Test					
Ho: Constant Variance			Chi2(1)	Prob>Chi2	
Variables: Fitted values of ROA			22.19	0.0000	

Multi-collinearity was tested using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and its reciprocal, or tolerance. These diagnostics examine how closely the regressors are linked to one another in terms of the stability and

volatility of the regression estimates. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was used to check for multicollinearity and to test if the independent variables were perfectly correlated. The following Table 3 shows the outcome of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The results outlined in Table 3 convincingly show that, while VIF scores ranged from 1.00 (see AUDT) to 1.46 (see SAU), with a mean VIF of 1.23, there is no clear evidence of collinearity in the data set. Notwithstanding, with 22.19 reported for Chi2(1) (prob. value = 0.0000) with respect to the heteroscedasticity test, the obvious is that reliance on OLS regression outcomes will be misleading. Thus, in testing our hypothesis, the robust regression estimation tool was applied.

Model Estimation

The regression outcome presented in Table 4 produced coefficient values of 2.1355, 1.0597, -0.1781, and 1.3341, respectively, for SAU, AUDT, AUDI, and AUFS. Indicative of this is that audit independence (AUDI) is the only variable that individually exert inverse influence on ROA. Specifically, the t-stat for SAU and AUDI were 3.48 and -2.17, respectively, with corresponding p-values of 0.001 and 0.030. It shows that the statutory audit service and audit independence individually affect ROA in significant terms. This is not the case for AUDT and AUFS whose values for t-stat were 1.58 (p-value = 0.114 > 0.05) and 1.95 (p-value = 0.051 > 0.05) respectively. Noticeably, the Fcal (4, 615) in Table 4 was 11.27 (p-value = 0.0000), thus confirming that audit quality measures exert joint significant effect on ROA.

The import is that the computed values of ROA from companies' financial statements reflect the quality of the audit work conducted on the records and financial procedures of companies that produced such financial statements. This finding justifies earlier empirical documentation that the quality of audited financial statements has significant implications for higher performance levels (Moses, Ofurum & Egbe, 2016). Based on our



findings, it is believed that investors will prefer to invest in businesses with high audit quality because reliable information is thought to have the potential of attracting clients, thereby improving productivity with a multiplier effect on improved turnover levels, profitability, and investments.

Table 4: Regression Output for Model Estimation
Dependent Variable: ROA

ROA	Coeff	Std. Err.	t-stat	P> t	Decision
SAU	2.1355	0.6132	3.48	0.001	Reject
AUDT	1.0597	0.668	1.58	0.114	
AUDI	-0.1781	0.0820	-2.17	0.030	
AUFS	1.3341	0.6834	1.95	0.051	
_cons.	-6.4582	2.4095	-2.68	sV0.008	
F (4, 615)	11.27*				
(p-value)	(0.0000)				
Obs.	620				

Results of Findings and Discussion

The study recognizes the non-homogeneity of the firms, necessitating the necessity to examine its impact on the data. To determine which effect to explain, the Hausman effect test must be used. Because our data is panel data with comprehensive information, it is unclear whether fixed effect or random effect should be utilized in interpreting the regression result or determining which is the best to use for the study. A chi-square statistic value of 22.9 and a probability value of 0.000, which is larger than 5%, indicate that the data collected by the firms is not homogeneous. In this case, the Chi-square (Prob) value is more than 5%, so the random effect is accepted, and its regression is interpreted, but the fixed effect is rejected. This finding justifies earlier empirical documentation that the quality of audited financial statements has significant implications for higher performance levels (Moses, Ofurum & Egbe, 2016).

Premised by our findings, it is believed that investors will prefer to invest in businesses with high audit quality because reliable information is thought to have the potential of attracting clients, thereby improving productivity with a multiplier effect on improved turnover levels, profitability, and

investments. Findings show that on average, ROA for the selected firms is 2.5228, while the maximum level of ROA obtained is approximately 176.27. For AUDT, the average audit tenure for the selected firms is approximately 0.766 with a minimum value of 0 and a maximum value of 1, indicating the existence of companies whose external auditors had spent either below or over 3 straight years, respectively.

Generally, the mean for AUDI, which was approximately 0.5586, simply indicates that there was an average of about 56% independence regarding the auditors of the sampled organizations for the selected period. Finally, for AUFS, an average of 0.5355, approximately, with 0 and 1 as minimum and maximum values, shows that sampled companies were either audited by the Big 4 or by firms outside the Big 4 category. Pearson's correlation matrix was applied to check the degree of association between audit quality components and value of quoted manufacturing firms in Nigeria to determine the nature or degree of association i.e., positive or negative correlation. The correlation coefficient measures the direction and degree of association between two or more variables.

The results show that there exists a positive but weak association between firm value and audit firm size, while a negative and very weak association exists between firm value, audit independence, and qualification auditor group, respectively. It was discovered that another negative and strong association exists between auditor independence and other explanatory variables, while a very positive and strong association exists between audit firm size and audit experience. There exists a weak and negative association between the qualifications of the auditor group and audit experience.

As a result, while screening for multicollinearity, the researchers discovered that no two explanatory factors were perfectly or highly correlated in the correlation table above, ruling out the possibility of an outlier.



This shows that the model employed for the investigation does not have a multicollinearity problem. This also explains why panel regression analysis and the variance inflation factor (VIF) were used. The level of correlation between the regressors in the study's working model. The essence of this test is to find out the relatedness of the selected variables, and if they reflect any trace of multi-collinearity which will be revealed by high levels of pair-wise correlation of 80% or more (Odjaremu & Jeroh, 2019; Jeroh, 2020). However, none of the study variables reported high correlations, suggesting the possibility of multi-collinearity problems is slim. Meanwhile, on the individual level, statutory audit services, audit tenure, and audit firm size exhibited a positive relationship with ROA, suggesting that increased quality may likely improve ROA. Meanwhile, audit independence had a negative coefficient of -0.0608, meaning that the ratio of audit fees to audit client revenue inversely associates with the ROA of audited companies.

Thus, to ascertain if some or all panels are stationary, the data collated for all variables were subjected to the panel unit roots test. We used the Hadri-LM test for this purpose and Table 4 presents the outcome. From the resented results (see Table 4), the variables (ROA, SAU, AUDT, AUDI and AUS) recorded statistical value of 5.7196, 26.2306, 5.4829, 16.7875 and 27.2906 respectively with p-values of 0.0000 in all cases. This means that they are stationary at levels so that we reject the proposed hypothesis that some panels contain unit roots. It thus follows that since the variables are stationary at levels, and have met other requirements, we proceeded to test for collinearity and heteroscedasticity. Usually, VIF tests ascertain whether variables have collinearity problems (Jeroh & Ekwueme, 2015).

Variance Inflation Factor were used to check for multi-collinearity and to test if the independent variables were perfectly correlated. The results outlined convincingly

show that while VIF scores ranged between 1.00 (see AUDT) to 1.46 (see SAU), with a mean VIF of 1.23, there is no clear evidence of collinearity problems with the data set. Notwithstanding, with 22.19 reported for Chi2 (1) (prob. value =0.0000) with respect to the heteroscedasticity test, the obvious is that reliance on OLS regression outcomes will be misleading. Thus, in testing our hypothesis, the robust regression estimation tool was applied. The regression outcome presented in Table 4 produced coefficient values of 2.1355, 1.0597, -0.1781, and 1.3341, respectively, for SAU, AUDT, AUDI, and AUFS. Indicative of this is that audit independence (AUDI) is the only variable that individually exerts inverse influence on ROA. Specifically, the t-stat for SAU and AUDI were 3.48 and -2.17, respectively, with corresponding p-values of 0.001 and 0.030. It shows that the statutory audit service and audit independence individually affect ROA in significant terms.

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Conclusion

The quality of reported earnings and the audit function's capacity to successfully increase the value of industrial companies across the country are now seriously doubtful. The quality of audited reported accounting information, and how it relates to corporate value, is a major source of concern. This raises the question of whether company failures and stock price volatility are not the result of a bad audit function, particularly when it comes to catching earnings falsification. This research examined the impact of audit quality on the value of a company. It was found that auditor independence has an enormous impact on the value of publicly traded companies, therefore making them more valuable. Based on the results presented and discussed in the earlier section of this study, the study therefore concludes that the quality of audit work attributed specifically to statutory audit and auditors' independence are dominant variables that explain profitability, with specific reference to ROA differentials among companies. Audit tenure, which exhibits an inverse relationship with statutory audit, could not individually exert significant influence on ROA. Notwithstanding the results from the model estimation, we conclude that audit quality measures jointly influence the ROA of companies in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, we present our recommendations as follows:

- (i) The country's Financial Reporting Council and other regulators should develop policy guidelines to specifically checkmate auditors' tenure vis-à-vis compliance with the existing regulatory framework for financial reporting.
- (ii) A minimum threshold for the level of independence for auditors should be stipulated by regulators. This will largely put a check on the activities of auditors.

- (iii) Depending on the nature and industrial activities of companies, a monitoring mechanism should be put in place to regulate the fees paid by clients for statutory audit services.
- (iv) The tenure for external auditors should be reasonably long enough to enable the auditors to understand and implement the right measures towards achieving the objectives of their audit, especially for firms with a very high volume of transactions.

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Exploring Author-Function in Literature: Identity, Authority, and Reader Interpretation in Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

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Abstract

*Michel Foucault's theory of the "author-function" provides the central framework for this essay, which compares Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* with Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Both texts carry a double burden: shaped by their authors' cultural worlds, yet capable of meaning more than those worlds permit. Roland Barthes argued that the author "dies" at the moment of writing, leaving readers to generate meanings that exceed authorial intention. This essay takes that claim seriously while recognizing that authorial presence never fully disappears. Soyinka writes from a postcolonial vantage, and his play asks what is gained and surrendered when a culture stands at a crossroads. Brontë's critique of gender and class is rooted in Victorian England, but it speaks to concerns about autonomy and power that stretch far beyond her time. Though both authors write from specific historical positions, that specificity opens rather than closes interpretive possibility. By tracing this tension between cultural rootedness and interpretive openness, the essay contributes to debates about authorship. Literary meaning, it suggests, is always caught between the moment of its making and the many readings still to come.*

Keywords: *author-function, death of the author, postcolonialism, feminism, reader interpretation*

In literary theory and criticism, the concept of the "author-function" has its roots in Michel Foucault's pivotal essay "What is an Author?" In this work, Foucault interrogates the role of the author, not as a mere individual who writes a text but as a construct shaped by cultural, historical, and institutional frameworks. He introduces the "author-function" as a mode through which society attributes ownership, value, and authority to texts, establishing who is credited with a work and who has the right to determine its meaning. This perspective challenges the traditional view that a text's meaning is solely derived from the author's biography, intentions, or psychological motivations. Instead, Foucault argues that the identity of the author functions within a broader discourse that organizes and categorizes literature, affecting how texts are produced, understood, and received within cultural and historical contexts.

The author-function, according to Foucault, plays a critical role in how texts are interpreted and situated within literary traditions. For instance, the classification of Shakespeare's works within Renaissance literature provides a framework that influences readers' and critics' interpretations, often prioritizing the historical and cultural context of the author over the text itself. This function becomes a tool through which meaning is produced, where the author's name serves as a reference point for evaluating and analyzing a work. However, Foucault suggests that this framework is not immutable; instead, the author-function evolves, reflecting the shifting power structures and societal norms that influence literature. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, Wole Soyinka's identity as a postcolonial African playwright shapes the interpretation of his play within the framework of postcolonial discourse, while in *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte



Brontë's identity as a female Victorian author informs the text's feminist and social critique.

Foucault's critique of authorial intent also aligns with Roland Barthes' concept of "the death of the author," which asserts that the meaning of a text is not inherently tied to the author's intended message. According to Barthes, "a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture." Barthes argues that once a text is written, it is detached from the author and belongs to the reader, who creates meaning through interpretation. This concept challenges the traditional authority of the author over their work and encourages readers to focus on the text itself rather than the author's personal life or stated objectives. Foucault's exploration of the author-function complements this by examining how the identity of the author, while not the sole determinant of meaning, continues to influence the ways in which texts are classified, valued, and interpreted within cultural systems of power and knowledge.

In works such as Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* and Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, the author-function plays a significant role in shaping their reception and categorization. Soyinka's play, set within the context of Nigerian postcolonialism, is often read through the lens of his experiences with colonialism and indigenous culture, where his identity as a postcolonial author informs the interpretation of cultural conflict and tradition. Similarly, Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, written under the constraints of Victorian gender norms, is interpreted through her identity as a female writer challenging patriarchal structures. These texts exemplify Foucault's assertion that the author is not just an individual but a position that reflects and reinforces the social, historical, and legal frameworks of the time. Thus, the author-function expands our understanding of how authorship works within literature, influencing not just the production

of meaning but also how texts circulate and are valued within specific discursive practices.

The Functional Role of Dramatic Techniques

Dramatic techniques are essential for transforming a written play into a dynamic and interactive experience. They serve as tools that a playwright uses to convey meaning, engage the audience emotionally and intellectually, and invite deeper reflection. Michel Foucault's concept of the "author-function" provides a framework for understanding how authors leave imprints of themselves within their texts, even after the work is presented to the public. These imprints are often revealed through dramatic techniques such as metaphor, soliloquy, and irony, which not only communicate the playwright's thematic concerns but also guide the audience's interpretation of the work. For instance, in Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*, the metaphorical contrast between modernity and tradition, embodied by the characters Lakunle and Baroka, reflects the cultural tensions present in postcolonial Africa. By employing these techniques, Soyinka invites the audience to engage with deeper cultural and societal issues while simultaneously positioning his work within a larger postcolonial discourse.

The use of dramatic techniques like soliloquy, aside, and dramatic irony also provides the audience with a deeper emotional and intellectual connection to the characters and the unfolding narrative. In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's use of soliloquy—most notably in Hamlet's "To be or not to be" monologue—gives the audience intimate access to the character's internal struggles and philosophical musings on life, death, and morality. According to literary critic Stephen Greenblatt, this soliloquy allows the audience to enter Hamlet's psyche, creating a space for personal reflection on universal themes. This aligns with Foucault's view that the author's role is to create a framework that invites interpretation rather than prescribing meaning. The soliloquy, therefore, becomes a technique that not only reveals the character's mind but



also opens up the narrative to multiple readings, thus enriching the audience's experience.

Dramatic techniques such as foreshadowing, flashback, and dramatic irony are also crucial for shaping the pacing and structure of a play, particularly in building suspense and maintaining audience engagement. In *Oedipus Rex*, for example, Sophocles masterfully employs dramatic irony by revealing key information to the audience that the protagonist is unaware of. This technique heightens the emotional tension as the audience watches Oedipus unknowingly condemn himself, thereby deepening the tragic impact of the play. As Foucault's theory suggests, these techniques are not simply narrative devices; they serve to structure the text in a way that allows the author to guide interpretation while leaving space for audience engagement. The audience's knowledge of Oedipus' fate before he does creates an emotional and intellectual connection, drawing them deeper into the narrative and its thematic concerns.

Moreover, dramatic techniques often serve to distinguish playwrights and create a signature style that becomes associated with their work. For instance, in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams employs symbolism and imagery as key dramatic techniques to explore themes of desire, power, and mental instability. The recurring motif of light in Blanche's aversion to it symbolizes her fear of facing reality and the passage of time, creating a vivid emotional landscape that is uniquely tied to Williams' style. In this way, dramatic techniques function as an extension of the playwright's identity, allowing them to leave a distinctive mark on their work. This reflects Foucault's assertion that the author's presence is maintained through the structures and devices within the text, influencing how the work is received and categorized within literary traditions.

Dramatic techniques also have the ability to manipulate time, space, and the audience's emotional response, creating a dynamic and multi-layered experience. The use of

flashbacks and foreshadowing allows playwrights to disrupt the linear flow of time, often revealing key plot points in a non-sequential manner to build suspense and add complexity to the narrative. In Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, flashbacks are used to provide insight into Willy Loman's past, illustrating how his dreams and failures shape his present reality. This non-linear approach forces the audience to actively engage with the play, piecing together the narrative while reflecting on the broader themes of disillusionment and the American Dream. This manipulation of time and space aligns with Foucault's notion that the author uses structural techniques to create meaning, guiding the audience's interpretation while allowing for multiple perspectives to emerge.

Ultimately, dramatic techniques function as more than just narrative tools—they are the means through which playwrights communicate their artistic vision and thematic concerns while simultaneously engaging the audience in the process of meaning-making. From Shakespeare's use of soliloquy to Miller's manipulation of time, these techniques create a framework within which the author's presence is felt, even as the text takes on a life of its own in the hands of the audience. By analyzing how these techniques function within different works, we can better understand the complex interplay between author, text, and audience, and the ways in which dramatic techniques allow for a rich, multi-dimensional experience that extends beyond the written word.

The Functional Role of Narrative Devices

The functional role of narrative devices in prose parallels the concept of the "author-function" as outlined by Michel Foucault, as they serve as the author's primary tools for shaping how a story is presented and received. Narrative devices are techniques that allow an author to structure the flow of a story, guide the reader's perception, and highlight key themes or ideas. These devices, which include point of view, foreshadowing, flashbacks, and unreliable narration, act similarly to dramatic



techniques in drama or structural devices in poetry—they allow the author to imprint their vision on the text, steering the reader's interpretation. In Foucault's terms, the narrative devices become part of the author-function, framing the text in a way that reflects the author's intent while allowing space for diverse interpretations.

Point of view is one of the most significant narrative devices that define a text's structure and style. For instance, first-person narration, as seen in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, allows readers direct access to the protagonist's inner thoughts, creating a deep emotional connection between the reader and the narrator, Holden Caulfield. The choice of point of view not only shapes the reader's relationship with the characters but also influences how the themes of alienation and identity are understood. By filtering the entire narrative through Holden's subjective lens, Salinger controls the reader's experience of the story, guiding their interpretation of events and themes in a way that reflects the protagonist's troubled psyche. Hence, narrative devices, in exemplifying Foucault's idea of author-function, are tools through which the author exerts control over the text, subtly guiding the reader's engagement with the narrative.

Similarly, unreliable narration is another device that exemplifies the author's role in determining how a story is perceived. In Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, the protagonist, Stevens, is an unreliable narrator whose reflections on his past are colored by self-deception and repression. Ishiguro uses this device to reveal Stevens' inability to confront his own emotions and past mistakes, making the reader question the truth of his narrative. This device allows Ishiguro to manipulate the audience's perception of the protagonist's reliability and, by extension, the entire narrative. Unreliable narration challenges the reader to piece together the "real" story beneath the narrator's flawed recounting, positioning the reader as an active participant in the meaning-making process,

much like Foucault's idea that the text is not complete until the reader engages with it.

Foreshadowing and flashbacks are also key narrative devices that affect how readers process and interpret a story. In Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, foreshadowing is used to build a sense of inevitability around the fate of the Buendía family. The repeated references to circular time and recurring events prepare the reader for the cyclical nature of the family's downfall, reinforcing the themes of fate and history. Similarly, flashbacks are used to provide critical backstory, as seen in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, where flashbacks to Sethe's past reveal the traumatic events that haunt her. These flashbacks are essential to understanding the emotional depth of the characters and the broader themes of memory and identity. Both devices allow authors to control the pacing and flow of information, structuring the narrative in a way that enhances the reader's engagement and understanding of the text's deeper meaning.

In sum, narrative devices are crucial tools that authors use to shape the structure and impact of their prose. Whether through point of view, unreliable narration, or the manipulation of time, these techniques enable authors to guide the reader's interpretation while leaving space for personal engagement with the text. As Foucault argues, the author's function is not just to create meaning but to craft a framework within which the reader can explore multiple interpretations. Narrative devices, therefore, are central to how the author's presence is felt within the text, ensuring that the author's voice continues to shape the reader's experience long after the text has been published.

The Functional Role of Structural Devices

Structural devices in poetry play a fundamental role in shaping how a poem is experienced and interpreted by readers, much like the "author-function" that Michel Foucault describes. These devices—such as rhyme scheme, meter, stanza form, and line breaks—serve as tools that poets use to control



the flow of language, emphasize meaning, and guide readers through the poem's emotional and thematic landscapes. Through these techniques, the poet exerts influence over how the text is read and understood, directing the reader's attention to particular ideas, emotions, or images. Foucault's concept of the "author-function" becomes relevant here, as structural devices are ways in which the author's presence is felt throughout the text, even as the reader engages in the meaning-making process.

In African poetry, structural devices not only shape the aesthetic experience but also reflect cultural, social, and historical contexts. Repetition is widely used, both for emphasis and as a reflection of African oral traditions. In *Song of Lawino* by Okot p'Bitek, repetition reinforces the tension between traditional African values and Western influence, evoking a sense of collective identity and communal expression. Similarly, call-and-response patterns, common in African oral poetry, create a participatory dimension that aligns with the community-driven nature of African culture. These patterns allow African poets to engage the audience actively, imbuing the text with a shared emotional and cultural resonance. In Western poetry, the use of devices, like rhyme or meter, serves to underscore both thematic and cultural concerns.

Rhyme and meter are among the most recognizable structural devices in Western poetry. In William Shakespeare's Sonnets, the use of iambic pentameter and a strict rhyme scheme provides a rhythmic structure that guides the reader through the poem while emphasizing key themes, such as love, beauty, and time. The form itself, with its controlled cadence and recurring sounds, reinforces the tension between structure and emotion that defines much of Shakespeare's work. As Paul Fussell notes, meter functions not just as a musical or decorative element but as a way to deepen the reader's engagement with the thematic content of the poem. Similarly, in African poetry, devices like parallelism often reflect the balance between tradition and

modernity, or between African and Western ideologies. Wole Soyinka's use of parallelism, for instance, in poems such as "Telephone Conversation" and "Abiku", critiques colonialism while exploring cultural preservation, much as Shakespeare's structured form reinforces thematic tension.

Line breaks and stanza forms are also crucial structural devices that allow poets to control pacing and emphasis. In free verse poetry, such as Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, line breaks and irregular stanza forms create a sense of spontaneity and freedom, mirroring the poem's celebration of individualism and the natural world. The lack of a strict meter or rhyme scheme allows Whitman to break away from traditional poetic structures, reflecting his democratic ideals both thematically and formally. In African poetry, this flexibility is seen through more organic forms that mirror oral traditions and ancestral voices. The freedom of form often speaks to African poets' desires to blend modern influences with indigenous storytelling forms, ensuring that the structure reflects cultural values, even as it evolves with contemporary styles.

Moreover, structural devices such as enjambment and caesura allow poets to manipulate the flow of a poem in ways that disrupt or enhance meaning. Enjambment, the continuation of a sentence beyond the end of a line, creates a sense of urgency or flow, pulling the reader forward. In contrast, caesura—an intentional pause within a line—can force the reader to stop and reflect on a particular phrase or image. In T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, these techniques contribute to the poem's fragmented and disjointed style, reflecting the modernist themes of disillusionment and fragmentation. In African poetry, these tools often serve to underscore moments of cultural or historical significance, disrupting the flow of the poem in ways that mirror the complexities of postcolonial experience. Through enjambment, poets like Kofi Awoonor create a fluid narrative that reflects both the continuity and ruptures in African historical memory.



In sum, structural devices in poetry are essential tools that poets use to shape both the form and meaning of their work. Whether through rhyme and meter, stanza form, or the manipulation of line breaks, these devices allow poets to guide readers' interpretations and reactions. In African poetry, these devices not only guide interpretation but also preserve cultural memory and provide a voice for resistance against colonial and modern influences. As Foucault's "author-function" suggests, these elements are ways in which the author's presence persists within the text, even as the reader engages with it independently. Structural devices, therefore, play a key role in determining how a poem is experienced and understood, reflecting the author's intent while also allowing for individual interpretation.

Interaction between Dramatic Structure and Techniques

Conducting the analysis of dramatic structure and techniques through the lens of Foucault's *author-function* requires delving deeper into how these elements create meaning beyond the traditional role of the author. In Foucault's essay, "What is an Author?" he questions the assumption that a text is a direct reflection of the author's personal ideas and creativity. Instead, the author is a function within discourse, a role that allows texts to be organized, classified, and interpreted. Dramatic structure, for instance, provides a framework for organizing a narrative in a play, much like Foucault's concept of discourse organizes how we understand knowledge. Dramatic techniques, similarly, serve to communicate complex themes and emotions, not as the expression of an author's individuality, but as tools that function within the text's own system. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, Soyinka's division of the play into Morning, Noon, and Night reflects a deliberate narrative design that transcends his personal voice, functioning instead as a method to explore larger themes like tradition and modernity. This structural choice situates the

text within a broader cultural discourse rather than tying it exclusively to Soyinka's identity.

Dramatic techniques such as dialogue, symbolism, and irony further illustrate Foucault's idea that the author is not the sole origin of meaning in a text. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, Baroka's symbolic representation as the "Lion" and Sidi as the "Jewel" engage with themes of power and cultural identity, but these symbols do not point back to Soyinka as their originator in the traditional sense. Rather, they are elements of the play's discursive framework, which functions independently of the author's personal presence. Foucault suggests that writing is less about the direct communication of an author's intentions and more about the unfolding of discourse, where meaning emerges from the interaction of symbols, characters, and techniques within the text. In this way, the dramatic techniques employed by Soyinka function as part of the broader discourse on cultural dynamics and the struggle between modernity and tradition. These techniques invite the audience to engage with the themes without requiring the author's individual perspective to be the defining factor of interpretation.

The relationship between dramatic structure and thematic development also resonates with Foucault's concept of how discourse shapes understanding. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, the structured progression from exposition to resolution ensures that the play's themes are explored systematically, much as discourse within a society operates through recognized patterns and systems. This aligns with Foucault's view that discourse is not a spontaneous outpouring of ideas but a structured form that works within specific rules and conventions. The rising action of the play, leading to the confrontation between Sidi and Baroka, mirrors the way discourses build towards critical points of tension or resolution. This structural progression does not simply reflect Soyinka's personal narrative style but functions as part of the larger discourse of storytelling. The audience's engagement with the play's themes of tradition, change, and power dynamics is guided by this structure,



which ensures coherence and clarity without relying on the author's personal intervention. The structure, in this case, serves as a regulatory mechanism within the text, ensuring that the play adheres to the expectations of dramatic storytelling, much like Foucault's idea that discourse functions within certain boundaries and rules.

Furthermore, Foucault's assertion that the author disappears within the text is exemplified by the way dramatic techniques build tension and develop characters in *The Lion and the Jewel*. Techniques like dramatic irony, where the audience knows more than the characters, create suspense and intrigue without requiring the author to directly guide interpretation. In Baroka's deceptive claim of impotence, for example, the tension arises from the interaction between characters and the audience's awareness of Baroka's ruse. This interplay creates a dynamic narrative where meaning is generated from within the text's structure and techniques, rather than being imposed by the author. Foucault argues that the author's presence fades as the text generates its own meaning through these discursive practices. In this sense, Soyinka's use of dramatic irony does not reflect his personal voice but functions as a technique that operates within the play's discursive framework, engaging the audience in the unfolding narrative while maintaining the integrity of the text as an independent entity.

Character development in *The Lion and the Jewel* further illustrates the concept of the *author-function*, as characters are shaped by the narrative structure and techniques rather than by the author's direct input. Foucault notes that the author is often seen as a source of coherence, but in reality, the text itself provides its own logic and structure. Sidi's transformation from a vain young woman to Baroka's wife, for instance, follows the progression of the plot rather than being a reflection of Soyinka's personal views on gender roles or power. Her character is developed through interactions with other characters and the unfolding events of the plot, rather than through explicit authorial

commentary. This reflects Foucault's idea that characters and narrative progression are part of the internal logic of the text, functioning independently of the author's personal influence. Similarly, Lakunle's shift from an idealistic modernist to a disillusioned suitor is shaped by the structured events of the play, revealing his character in relation to the broader themes of tradition and change. This development is not a direct reflection of the author's voice but a function of the dramatic structure that governs how characters evolve within the narrative.

Finally, the cultural and contextual authenticity present in *The Lion and the Jewel* can be understood as part of the broader discursive framework within which the play operates, rather than as an expression of Soyinka's individual identity. Foucault argues that discourse is shaped by cultural systems, which regulate how texts are produced, circulated, and interpreted. In Soyinka's play, the use of Yoruba music, dance, and proverbs situates the narrative within a specific cultural context, but these elements function as part of the play's overall discourse, rather than as a personal statement from the author. The cultural markers in the play work as techniques that enrich the narrative and provide depth to the thematic exploration of tradition and modernity. These techniques enhance the authenticity of the cultural setting without reducing the text to a mere reflection of the author's cultural background. In this way, *The Lion and the Jewel* works within a broader system of discourse that transcends the author's individual role, reinforcing Foucault's argument that texts function independently of their creators, shaped instead by the cultural and social systems that govern their production and reception.

In essence, dramatic structure and techniques in *The Lion and the Jewel* illustrate Foucault's concept of the *author-function* by showing how meaning is generated within the text's discursive framework, rather than being directly tied to the author's personal identity. Both structure and technique contribute to the play's thematic exploration, character



development, and cultural authenticity, functioning as elements of discourse rather than as expressions of Soyinka's individual creativity. This perspective aligns with Foucault's broader argument that the author's role in creating meaning is limited, as texts function within specific discursive systems that shape their production, circulation, and interpretation. Through this lens, *The Lion and the Jewel* can be understood as a work that transcends the personal voice of its author, engaging instead with larger cultural and social discourses.

The Role of Author-Function in *Jane Eyre*

The concept of author-function, as discussed by Michel Foucault, highlights the central role an author plays in shaping the meaning and interpretation of a text. In his essay "What is an Author?," Foucault defines the author-function as a mechanism that allows readers to connect a series of texts to a single consciousness or intention, thereby attributing the works to a particular author. This framework goes beyond viewing the author as a mere originator of ideas; it examines how authorship affects the reception and interpretation of their works within specific social, cultural, and historical contexts. In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë's author-function is integral to understanding the novel's critical examination of Victorian society, particularly its religious and social hypocrisies. Through Brontë's use of Mr. Brocklehurst, the novel critiques the moral contradictions inherent in the era's religious elite, using the character as a mirror to the larger discourse on Christian virtue and social power.

Brontë employs the author-function not only to critique Victorian religious norms but also to embed her own autobiographical experiences into the text. The struggles Jane Eyre faces—such as the loss of loved ones, isolation, and societal marginalization—parallel Brontë's personal experiences, especially her time in boarding school and her work as a governess. Yet, despite these autobiographical elements, Brontë ensures that Jane remains an independent character

with her own distinct identity. This balance highlights the way Brontë merges personal reflection with broader social commentary, reinforcing Foucault's idea that the author-function serves as a bridge between the individual and the cultural discourse of their time. By weaving personal experiences into a fictional narrative, Brontë transcends the limitations of a straightforward autobiographical account, turning *Jane Eyre* into a reflection on the broader issues of class, gender, and morality that pervaded Victorian England.

Foucault's notion of author-function is also evident in the way Brontë uses the novel to challenge the gender expectations and limitations placed on women during her era. Jane's desire for autonomy, her refusal to conform to traditional gender roles, and her quest for self-respect are all reflections of Brontë's own struggles as a female writer in a male-dominated society. The very act of writing and publishing *Jane Eyre* under a male pseudonym—Currer Bell—underscores the challenges Brontë faced as a woman author in gaining recognition and credibility. By disguising her gender, Brontë not only critiqued the gender biases of her time but also used her author-function to subvert them. In this sense, *Jane Eyre* becomes a vehicle for Brontë's commentary on the position of women, both within the confines of the text and in the broader literary and social landscape.

Regarding social class and gender, the character of Bertha Mason, the so-called "madwoman in the attic," serves as a reflection of the marginalization of both women and colonized peoples in the 19th century. Bertha, a Creole woman from Jamaica, is dehumanized and confined, embodying how Victorian society viewed people of non-European descent as other and dangerous. At the same time, her madness can be read as a metaphor for the suppression of female autonomy. Through Bertha, Brontë critiques both racial and gender hierarchies, subtly reflecting her discomfort with the limitations placed on both women and those from the



colonies. This demonstrates how author-function works not just through the explicit narrative but also through symbolic elements that reveal Brontë's perspective on broader social issues.

Another illustration of Brontë's author-function is Jane Eyre's own journey toward independence and self-respect. Jane's refusal to become Mr. Rochester's mistress, despite her love for him, reflects Brontë's commitment to the idea of personal integrity and the need for women to assert their autonomy. In rejecting both the social expectation to marry for status and the temptation to sacrifice her values for love, Jane embodies the feminist ideals that Brontë herself was grappling with in her time. This personal struggle against societal norms resonates with Brontë's own life, particularly her efforts to succeed as a writer in a male-dominated literary world. Jane's triumph in securing both love and independence by the novel's end also mirrors Brontë's assertion of her own identity as an author who challenges societal constraints.

Additionally, the portrayal of St. John Rivers offers another layer to the author-function within *Jane Eyre*. St. John, a zealous missionary, represents the rigid, duty-driven aspects of religious life, standing in contrast to Jane's more emotional, passionate approach to faith and morality. Brontë uses this contrast to critique the limitations of religious extremism, suggesting that an overly rigid adherence to duty can strip life of its richness and humanity. Through St. John, Brontë also explores themes of colonialism and cultural superiority, as his desire to impose his faith on foreign lands reflects the Victorian imperial mindset. Brontë subtly critiques this missionary zeal, reflecting her awareness of the ethical implications of Britain's colonial ventures.

Thus, the author-function in *Jane Eyre* operates on multiple levels. It connects the text to the author's personal beliefs, critiques societal structures, and engages with larger discourses on religion, class, and gender. Charlotte Brontë's skillful use of the author-function allows her to embed layered social

critiques within a narrative that continues to resonate with readers today. Through her portrayal of characters like Mr. Brocklehurst and Jane Eyre, Brontë positions herself as an author not only of fiction but of a broader cultural and ideological conversation that transcends the Victorian era. Foucault's theory underscores this dynamic, illustrating how an author's identity, experiences, and social context are inextricably linked to the meaning and impact of their work.

Comparative Analysis of Authorial Voice in Audience Engagement

The concept of authorial voice, when viewed through Michel Foucault's theory of the author-function, provides a framework with several dimensions for comparing how Wole Soyinka and Charlotte Brontë engage with their respective audiences. Foucault's author-function posits that an author's identity serves as a deeply embedded cultural construct that influences how texts are received, interpreted, and circulated within society. In this context, examining the similarities and differences between Soyinka's and Brontë's authorial voices reveals not just their individual writing styles, but also the broader cultural discourses they participate in and shape.

One significant similarity between Soyinka and Brontë lies in their use of authorial voice to challenge societal norms and expectations. Soyinka, writing in post-colonial Nigeria, employs his voice to critique both traditional African customs and Western influences. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, for instance, he presents characters like Lakunle and Baroka as embodiments of modernity and tradition, respectively, without wholly endorsing either perspective. This ambivalence in Soyinka's authorial voice invites readers to critically examine the tensions of cultural identity in a post-colonial context. Similarly, Brontë uses her authorial voice in *Jane Eyre* to question Victorian gender norms and class structures. Through Jane's first-person narration, Brontë presents a female protagonist who asserts her independence and moral autonomy, challenging prevailing notions of femininity



and social hierarchy. Both authors, therefore, leverage their authorial voices to engage readers in a dialogue about social change and individual agency within their respective cultural milieus.

However, a key difference emerges in how Soyinka and Brontë position themselves within their cultural contexts through their authorial voices. Soyinka's voice often reflects a conscious engagement with his role as a cultural mediator between African traditions and Western influences. His use of Yoruba proverbs, myths, and rituals alongside Western literary techniques creates a hybrid authorial voice that embodies the cultural tensions he explores in his works. This hybridity is evident in *The Lion and the Jewel*, where Soyinka incorporates traditional Yoruba elements, such as the "dance of the lost traveller," alongside more Western-style dialogue and character development. In contrast, Brontë's authorial voice, while revolutionary in its critique of Victorian society, remains firmly rooted within the Western literary tradition. Her use of the bildungsroman genre and Gothic elements in *Jane Eyre* demonstrates an engagement with established European literary forms, even as she subverts them to express her feminist and social critiques. This difference reflects the distinct cultural positions from which Soyinka and Brontë write, with Soyinka navigating a post-colonial landscape and Brontë working within, yet against, the constraints of Victorian literary culture.

The way Soyinka and Brontë employ their authorial voices to address issues of power and marginalization also reveals both similarities and differences. Both authors use their voices to give representation to marginalized perspectives, but they do so in distinct ways shaped by their cultural contexts. Soyinka's authorial voice often serves as a means of reclaiming and revalidating African cultural heritage in the face of colonial erasure. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, he presents traditional African wisdom and practices not as backward or primitive, but as rich systems of knowledge worthy of respect and preservation. This is

particularly evident in his portrayal of Baroka, whose cunning and strategic thinking challenge simplistic notions of tradition as outdated or ineffective. This aspect of Soyinka's voice works within the author-function to assert the value and depth of African cultures on the global literary stage. Brontë, on the other hand, uses her authorial voice to carve out space for female subjectivity within a patriarchal society. The intimate, confessional tone of Jane's narration in *Jane Eyre* allows readers to access the inner life of a woman in a way that was revolutionary for its time. Both authors thus use their voices to challenge dominant power structures, but while Soyinka's voice often operates on a cultural and political level, Brontë's tends to focus more on the personal and psychological dimensions of power dynamics.

The relationship between authorial voice and narrative structure provides another point of comparison between Soyinka and Brontë. Soyinka often employs a more fluid and non-linear narrative structure that reflects African oral storytelling traditions. This is evident in *The Lion and the Jewel*, where the play is divided into morning, noon, and night, but includes flashbacks and storytelling segments that disrupt the linear progression of time. Soyinka's authorial voice guides readers through these shifting temporal planes, inviting them to engage with a worldview that challenges Western notions of linear time and fixed reality. Brontë, while innovative in her use of first-person narration and flashbacks in *Jane Eyre*, generally adheres to a more conventional linear narrative structure. Her authorial voice creates intimacy with the reader through Jane's direct address, but the overall narrative progression follows a more traditional Western storytelling model. This difference in narrative approach reflects not only individual stylistic choices but also the distinct cultural and literary traditions that Soyinka and Brontë are writing within and against.

In essence, examining Soyinka's and Brontë's authorial voices through the lens of



Foucault's author-function reveals how these writers both reflect and shape the cultural discourses of their times. Their similarities in challenging societal norms and giving voice to marginalized perspectives demonstrate the power of authorial voice to engage readers in critical dialogue about social issues. The differences in how they position themselves culturally, address power dynamics, and structure their narratives highlight the diverse ways in which authorial voice can function within specific cultural and historical contexts. Ultimately, this comparison underscores the intricate relationship between individual artistic expression and broader sociocultural forces in the construction of authorial voice and its impact on reader engagement.

Intersection of Author-Function and the Death of the Author in *The Lion and the Jewel*

Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* offers fertile ground for examining the intersection of the author-function and the death of the author. In light of the author-function already established, we understand how Soyinka's identity as a Nigerian playwright and postcolonial intellectual shapes interpretations of his work. His use of Yoruba traditions and postcolonial themes in the play creates a narrative deeply embedded in his cultural and historical context. Through Foucault's lens, Soyinka's identity continues to regulate how readers and critics categorize and analyze the play. However, Barthes' idea of the "death of the author" presents an opportunity to challenge this established discourse by encouraging readers to step outside Soyinka's biographical influence and focus on the text itself.

By applying Barthes' theory to *The Lion and the Jewel*, readers are free to interpret the play beyond its immediate cultural and political significance. While the postcolonial themes and cultural conflict between Lakunle and Baroka are central to the text, the death of the author allows for more diverse interpretations. Readers might explore the gender dynamics at play, focusing on Sidi's

role as a woman caught between tradition and modernity. This interpretation need not be constrained by Soyinka's intentions or views on gender in postcolonial Africa. Similarly, the play's symbolic use of the "Lion" and the "Jewel" can be analyzed as a more abstract representation of power, desire, and identity that transcends the specific socio-political context of 1950s Nigeria. The death of the author liberates the text from its historical moorings, enabling it to be read through contemporary lenses that reflect modern preoccupations with gender, power, and identity.

Nonetheless, the intersection between Foucault's author-function and Barthes' theory highlights the tension between authorial influence and interpretive freedom. The author-function suggests that Soyinka's role as a cultural figure cannot be completely dismissed, even when adopting Barthes' framework. Soyinka's identity is inextricably linked to the production and reception of *The Lion and the Jewel*, ensuring that the play's postcolonial context remains a key factor in its interpretation. Readers cannot entirely escape the cultural and political dimensions of Soyinka's work, even if they choose to downplay his authorial intent. Thus, the author-function and the death of the author coexist, offering multiple layers of meaning—some grounded in Soyinka's identity and others shaped by the reader's subjective engagement with the text.

In other words, when we consider the death of the author alongside the author-function, it becomes clear that *The Lion and the Jewel* invites a multiplicity of interpretations that go beyond Soyinka's personal background. In Barthes' framework, readers are empowered to reconstruct meaning based on their experiences, knowledge, and perceptions, giving the text a life beyond its author's intentions. For example, the play's treatment of modernity and tradition—often linked to Nigeria's postcolonial struggle—can be reframed as a universal exploration of societal change. In this view, Lakunle and Baroka represent archetypal figures in any society



undergoing rapid transformation, with their personal conflicts echoing similar dynamics in other historical and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, the characters' symbolic roles in the play can also be examined through a psychoanalytic lens, focusing on the underlying psychological motivations driving their actions. Baroka, for instance, might be read as a representation of the Id—embodying primal desires and the will to dominate—while Lakunle could be seen as the Ego, struggling to impose rationality and order. These psychological interpretations, facilitated by Barthes' theory, are unmoored from Soyinka's intentions, allowing for a richer and more varied engagement with the text. The intersection of author-function and the death of the author ultimately provides a framework for exploring how *The Lion and the Jewel* can be both rooted in its historical context and open to broader, more universal interpretations.

Intersection of Author-Function and the Death of the Author in *Jane Eyre*

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* offers another compelling example of the tension between the author-function and the death of the author. Brontë's own experiences as a woman navigating Victorian gender norms have traditionally influenced how the novel is interpreted, particularly within feminist literary criticism. The protagonist's journey toward independence and self-respect is often seen as a reflection of Brontë's personal struggles with societal expectations, particularly in regard to gender roles and female autonomy. The author-function in this case positions Brontë as a central figure in shaping the novel's themes of moral integrity, personal autonomy, and social critique. However, when Barthes' concept of the death of the author is applied, *Jane Eyre* becomes a text that no longer depends on Brontë's personal history or feminist views for its meaning.

Barthes' theory opens the door to interpretations of *Jane Eyre* that do not necessarily align with Brontë's authorial

intentions or biographical context. For example, the character of Bertha Mason, often viewed as a symbol of Victorian attitudes toward race and gender, can be interpreted through various other frameworks. A postcolonial reading of the text might see Bertha not as an embodiment of racial and gendered otherness, but as a metaphor for the oppressive forces of empire that loom large over British society during the Victorian era. Alternatively, a psychoanalytic interpretation could focus on Bertha as a manifestation of Jane's repressed desires or unconscious fears, turning the character into a symbolic figure representing Jane's internal struggle rather than a critique of Victorian society. In this way, Barthes' death of the author facilitates new readings of the text that do not depend on Brontë's historical position or personal experiences.

At the same time, Foucault's author-function remains relevant, as Brontë's identity continues to shape how *Jane Eyre* is categorized and received within literary traditions. The novel's status as a key text in feminist literature is largely due to Brontë's position as a woman writer challenging the patriarchal norms of her time. Even though Barthes' theory encourages us to detach the text from the author, Brontë's influence as a cultural figure persists through the way the novel is taught, discussed, and analyzed within academic and literary circles. This demonstrates the paradox of the author-function: while Brontë's identity does not necessarily dictate the meaning of the text, it continues to influence its place within literary history.

The tension between author-function and the death of the author is further highlighted when we consider how *Jane Eyre* can be interpreted in ways that depart significantly from Brontë's own context. For instance, while many readings of the novel focus on Jane's journey toward independence as a critique of Victorian gender roles, Barthes' framework allows us to explore Jane's character through existential or philosophical lenses. Rather than seeing Jane's rejection of Rochester's initial proposal as a feminist



statement, one might interpret it as an expression of existential freedom, with Jane asserting her autonomy in a world defined by moral ambiguity and personal responsibility. This reading positions Jane Eyre as a figure who grapples with universal questions of identity, autonomy, and ethical integrity, rather than as a symbol of Brontë's feminist ideals.

Moreover, Barthes' theory encourages readers to reinterpret the novel's ending, which has often been seen as a resolution of Jane's quest for independence. While traditional interpretations celebrate Jane's marriage to Rochester as a harmonious conclusion to her journey, Barthes' approach invites readers to question whether this ending truly represents Jane's empowerment or if it marks a return to patriarchal norms. In this light, the novel's conclusion might be read as a critique of societal pressures that force women to conform to traditional roles, even when they seek independence. The death of the author thus creates a space for readers to explore *Jane Eyre* in ways that challenge conventional readings, allowing the text to transcend its historical moment and resonate with contemporary concerns about gender, autonomy, and power.

The Reader's Role in Navigating the Tension

The critical role of the reader in interpreting *The Lion and the Jewel* and *Jane Eyre* is magnified by the intersection of Foucault's author-function and Barthes' death of the author. Readers are not passive consumers of meaning but active participants who navigate the tension between the influence of the author's socio-cultural identity and the freedom to generate new interpretations. The reader's engagement with these texts is shaped both by the cultural framework provided by the author-function and by the interpretive possibilities created by the death of the author.

In *The Lion and the Jewel*, readers familiar with Soyinka's biography might be inclined to focus on the postcolonial themes of the play, seeing it as a commentary on the tensions between tradition and modernity in African

society. However, readers who approach the play through the lens of Barthes' theory can generate new meanings by focusing on the psychological, social, or gender dynamics at play. For example, the conflict between Lakunle and Baroka could be reframed as a universal struggle between progress and conservatism, with the reader's own experiences and cultural context shaping their interpretation of the play's themes.

Similarly, in *Jane Eyre*, Brontë's identity as a Victorian woman writer has traditionally influenced how the novel is read. Yet, Barthes' death of the author encourages readers to detach the text from Brontë's biographical context, allowing for a broader range of interpretations. Readers might focus on the gothic elements of the novel, exploring its use of supernatural imagery and psychological tension, or they might analyze the moral and ethical dilemmas faced by the characters in light of philosophical questions about human freedom and responsibility. For example, Rochester's concealment of Bertha Mason could be read as a commentary on the nature of guilt and moral compromise, while Jane's moral integrity could be seen as an existential assertion of self-determination. In this way, the death of the author allows readers to engage with the novel on multiple levels, exploring meanings that extend beyond Brontë's original intentions or cultural context.

The reader's role becomes even more significant when considering how both texts are taught, critiqued, and interpreted within academic and literary traditions. While the author-function provides a framework for situating these texts within specific cultural discourses—postcolonialism in *The Lion and the Jewel*, and feminism in *Jane Eyre*—Barthes' theory empowers readers to step outside these frameworks, allowing the texts to take on new meanings in different times and places. The interplay between Foucault's author-function and Barthes' death of the author thus highlights the dynamic relationship between text, author, and reader, where meaning is not fixed but continually reshaped by the act of interpretation.



All in all, the intersection between Foucault's author-function and Barthes' death of the author opens up several approaches to interpreting *The Lion and the Jewel* and *Jane Eyre*. While Foucault's concept emphasizes how the author's identity and socio-cultural context influence the reception and interpretation of a text, Barthes' theory liberates the text from the constraints of authorial intent, allowing readers to construct their own meanings. In both works, these two theoretical perspectives coexist, creating a rich interpretive space where the author's influence remains present but does not dominate the text's meaning.

In *The Lion and the Jewel*, Soyinka's identity as a postcolonial playwright shapes how the play is traditionally interpreted, but Barthes' death of the author allows for new readings that focus on broader themes of power, tradition, and gender. Similarly, in *Jane Eyre*, Brontë's feminist and autobiographical presence is often invoked to interpret the novel's themes, yet Barthes' theory enables readers to explore alternative readings that detach the text from its Victorian context. Ultimately, the tension between the author-function and the death of the author underscores the active role of the reader in shaping meaning, demonstrating that literary interpretation is an ongoing process in which the text, the author, and the reader continually interact.

Conclusion

The examination of author-function in *The Lion and the Jewel* and *Jane Eyre* reveals the interplay between authorial identity, textual interpretation, and reader engagement. Soyinka's and Brontë's works, while rooted in specific cultural contexts, demonstrate the potential for multiple interpretations that extend beyond their original intentions. The tension between Foucault's author-function and Barthes' death of the author theory leaves meaning perpetually in flux, contested among the text, the author's cultural significance, and the reader's interpretive freedom. Both works continue to speak to questions of power,

identity, and social change, and in doing so illustrate a broader truth about literary interpretation — that the intersection of author-function and the death of the author keeps texts open, creating new meanings across time and cultures. This research contributes to our understanding of how authorial identity shapes literary reception while emphasizing the critical role readers play in how texts come to mean what they do.

Notes on Contributor

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A Systematic Literature Review of Media Framing of Climate Change Adaptation in sub-Saharan Africa (2017 – 2025)

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Abstract

Sub-Saharan Africa has been ranked among the most climate vulnerable areas with the double challenge of climate risks and socio-economic vulnerability. Although policymakers have increased interest in climate adaptation, little is known about the portrayal of these issues in the African media. Using a systematic literature search from 2017 to 2025 on scholarly articles found on Google Scholar, AJOL, and DOAJ, 30 peer-reviewed articles were analysed. The analysis took into consideration the geographical relevance, methodological quality, and alignment with Framing theory. The study looked into the way climate change adaptation is framed in media of Sub-Saharan Africa. From the review, five themes emerged: Adaptation as Resilience and Empowerment, Media Awareness and Community Mobilization, Climate Impact and Vulnerability, Indigenous Knowledge and Politics, and Government and Policy Framing of Adaptation. The review revealed that more solution-oriented reporting is taking place, but there are still a number of issues, in representation of gender, misinformation, and of reporting to marginalized groups. The paper suggested that climate communication should be enhanced, improve the practices of participatory media, and encourage the incorporation of local climate adaptation knowledge into the policies of adaptation. The paper further recommended that media professionals, policymakers and NGOs/development partners should be more inclusive, solution-driven, and participatory in their communication strategies by incorporating local and indigenous knowledge to enhance climate change adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Keywords: *climate change adaptation, media framing, thematic review, Sub-Saharan Africa, framing analysis*

Introduction

Background

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is one of the most climate-vulnerable regions of the world, even though it produces low greenhouse gas emissions to the global environment. The region is struggling with increasing risks of food insecurity, water scarcity, and environmental instability as the threats of climate change increase. These threats include increased temperature, drought, unreliable

rainfall, and sea-level rise (IPCC, 2022). These climate risks are also overlapping with long-standing socio-economic weaknesses, including poverty, poor infrastructure, low institutional capacity, and ineffective access to climate finance, which inhibit successful adaptation (Serdeczny et al., 2017; Leal Filho et al., 2022). Adaptation is thus not only a necessity in Africa due to the climate but also a development necessity. The concept of climate change adaptation in this study is



interpreted in line with the definition of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which defines adaptation as the process of changing ecological, social, or economic systems in response to real or perceived climatic stimuli and their effects. This is to minimise harm or take advantage of opportunities (IPCC, 2022). This belief is different from the climate change mitigation concept, which deals with the regulation of the emission of greenhouse gases in the air or the capacity to improve the carbon sinks so that climate change does not have much effect. In essence, mitigation is concerned with the causes of climate change, whereas adaptation deals with coping and managing the effects, which is why it is important in climate-vulnerable areas like Sub-Saharan Africa. It is important to emphasize that the IPCC AR6 focuses on the importance of successful adaptation to be contextual and inclusive and based on scientific and indigenous knowledge.

To counter it, most SSA countries have shifted towards climate-smart agriculture, early warning strategies, and farmer-based insurance programs (Andualem, Klein & Getahun, 2025). Nonetheless, the effectiveness of such interventions usually depends on the way adaptation is explained to the population. The media, as it were, is at the centre of influencing the opinion of the people about climate adaptation. It not only delivers information but also frames narratives of who is affected, what is at stake, and what should be done (Entman, 1993; Schäfer & Schlichting, 2014). Traditional media (radio, Television, newspapers) and new media (mobile apps, social media) are essential in SSA. For instance, the weather forecasts are frequently transmitted using local language radio in Nigeria and Kenya, relaying the message in the form of stories or songs in order to reach the rural population. However, the way in which adaptation is conceptualized (as a crisis, opportunity, or global responsibility) has a deep impact on the respondent's responses.

Although there is increasing policy focus on adaptation, there are still major gaps in knowledge of the way African media is covering these stories. Our literature search has revealed that most of the studies concentrated on the technical aspects of adaptation or the general theme of climate change without paying much attention to adaptation as a concept (Tschotschel, Diamond & Howley, 2025). These framings determine how the population will interact and how governments adopt policies. They also tend to favour the voice of experts or donors rather than that of the grassroots populace. Consequently, the voice of the community, particularly rural farmers, indigenous leaders, and women, is marginalized (Gyimah & Antwi-Agyei, 2024; Tirivangasi & Nyahunda, 2025). Moreover, new dynamics have been revealed by the emergence of digital platforms. Although they enable local stakeholders to communicate directly, they also enhance the spread of misinformation, which frustrates the process of adaptation (Nzuma et al., 2010). A systematic review of the framing of adaptation in SSA media is thus required to fill these communication gaps and enhance inclusive, informed climate action.

Aim and Objectives

This paper aims to analyze how scholarly literature has framed climate change adaptation in the media of Sub-Saharan Africa between 2017 and 2025. It seeks to uncover dominant communication patterns, underlying theoretical perspectives, and gaps in representation that inform how adaptation is publicly understood and politically negotiated. To achieve this aim, the review is guided by the following objectives:

- (1) To identify dominant framing patterns used in African media coverage of climate adaptation.
- (2) To assess how scholarly literature applied Framing Theory in analyzing media representations of adaptation.



Research Questions

The study addresses the following key questions:

- (1) What are the dominant framing patterns used in Sub-Saharan African media coverage of climate adaptation?
- (2) How do scholarly articles apply Framing Theory to analyse media representations of climate adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa?

Literature Review

Framing Theory and Climate Communication

Framing theory was first enunciated by Entman (1993) and focused on how the media shape public understanding by selecting and emphasizing particular aspects of reality. He noted that framing means defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and suggesting remedies. This framework is helpful in the climate communication context in terms of how the media constructs environmental issue narratives, especially adaptation to climate change. Furthermore, Pan and Kosicki (1993) applied the theory to communication studies by describing four structural dimensions of media frames: syntactic, script, thematic, and rhetorical. These dimensions help researchers to study the effects of language and narrative patterns on the perception of the audience. Diagnostic frames diagnose the problem, prognostic frames offer solutions, and motivational frames demand action (Snow & Benford, 1988). These frames have been broadly used in climate communication, such as the way risk and vulnerability are framed to mobilize the public to action. The study by Harvey et al. (2019) shows that the way climate communication is framed in Africa swings between disaster and resilience, which affects the level of citizen participation and risk perception. The media, therefore, turns out not only as an informant but also as an influential agent of behavioral and policy response. For instance, when droughts are framed as crises

caused by policy failure rather than natural cycles, it often mobilizes public scrutiny rather than cooperation (Suckall et al., 2015). This is a demonstration of how framing is important in the discourse of the environment and public trust.

Climate Adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa is believed to be a highly vulnerable area concerning climate change. This is because of the geographical exposure, economic weaknesses, and low institutional capacity (IPCC, 2022). The region is known for different adaptation strategies. These include small-scale adaptation strategies such as intercropping and drought-resistant seeds, large-scale infrastructure, and policy changes. Traditional knowledge systems, also known as indigenous knowledge systems and community-based adaptation, play a central role in this context, particularly in rural communities where the state is less present (Shackleton et al., 2015). Despite these measures, adaptation is still hindered by institutional and socio-cultural barriers. These are disintegrated governance, poor access to climate information, constraints in financial resources, and poor integration of indigenous knowledge (Shackleton et al., 2015). National policies, either National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) or Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), are not always converted to local action plans because of the absence of political will or communication failures. According to Adekola and Lamond (2018), these gaps can be filled by the media through the dissemination of complicated policies into culturally and locally appropriate messages. They, however, also observe that the media is more inclined to mitigation than to adaptation, and this has caused a perception that is geared more toward a global response as opposed to a local one. The lack of alignment between policy discourses and the reality on the ground is something that continues to be a major problem in the climate governance of SSA.



African Media Ecosystem

The media environment in Africa is unique. Studies have shown that Radio is the most reliable source of information, particularly in areas that have low penetration of the internet. However, the role of social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook is gaining momentum, especially among the youth in the cities (BBC Media Action, 2012). It is worth noting that the expansion of digital media also exposes the region to misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation, which can be a setback to climate action.

Language diversity of the continent, differences in literacy levels, and trust in relationships make communication even more complicated. According to Chirambo (2018), the rural population is generally not reached by messages written in colonial languages. Similarly, international NGO or government messages can be seen as donor-led and unconnected to lived experiences (Musah-Surugu et al., 2018). A number of studies emphasized the importance of community radio and local media in delivering climate information so that it will be culturally relevant. To drive this point home, a study conducted by Wanda and Gondwe (2024) in Malawi revealed that local journalists constructed climate adaptation in a way that appealed to the people of the country by using the narratives of collective responsibility and trust. This brought people to action. The same study demonstrated the common tendency of NGOs to employ alternative media strategies. This includes participatory video and theatre to successfully bypass the limitations of the traditional mass media.

Previous Reviews and Gaps

Despite the available reviews on climate change communication in Africa, not many have conducted a thematic analysis that is systematic and entirely based on framing in the context of adaptation. For instance, the Africa Talks Climate study by BBC Media Action (2012) looked into the audience in ten African countries. This study devoted its attention to a descriptive strategy rather than

being analytical. Similarly, Suckall et al. (2015) examined the triple-win discourse (adaptation, mitigation, and development) but did not discuss particular framing strategies and media types.

Shackleton et al. (2015) looked into the obstacles to socially-just adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa and found knowledge gaps and representation biases, especially of women and marginalized groups. Nevertheless, they have not discussed how the media strengthens or questions these dynamics. A recent study by Ogundele and Sodeinde (2025) tried to examine the framing of adaptation in the Nigerian newspapers, but only focused on traditional media and national dailies. The connection between framing and media platforms is what has not been explored thoroughly, that is, how the adaptation story has been framed in different ways on traditional media, social media, or in government press releases. In the same way, there is minimal incorporation of indigenous views and local narratives in mainstream media, even though they are pertinent to trust and behavioural change (Adobor, 2024).

Moreover, the issue of misinformation in the climate change discourse, particularly about geoengineering, climate change myths, and conspiracy discourses, has received little scholarly attention in Africa. This is a serious gap considering the increased information disorder in the world. Empirical evidence on how audiences perceive framed climate narratives should inform media literacy and public education campaigns.

Methodology

In this study, a qualitative systematic literature review was used to examine the manner in which climate change adaptation has been conceptualised in media and communication studies in Sub-Saharan Africa. This was between January 2017 and April 2025. The period of 2017-2025 was chosen as it represents the post-Paris agreement period. This was when adaptation to climate change gained more global/regional policy interest, particularly in regions vulnerable to climate



change like Sub-Saharan Africa (Berkhout & Dow, 2022). This period also reflects the increase in academic literature on adaptation since the Fifth and Sixth Assessment Reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which advocated for locally based and transformational adaptation. Moreover, the time is associated with the rapid growth of digital and mobile media platforms throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, which has transformed the climate in which information and adaptation discourses are created, shared, and structured (Sarku et al., 2021).

Search Strategy

A structured search was performed using six databases: Google Scholar, AJOL, DOAJ, SpringerLink, ScienceDirect, and SAGE Journals. Search strings incorporated Boolean combinations of terms such as “climate change adaptation” AND “media framing” AND “Sub-Saharan Africa”, alongside contextual terms like “resilience,” “communication,” “radio,” “digital media,” and “indigenous knowledge.” Searches were limited to English-language peer-reviewed journal articles published between January 2017 and April 2025. Citation chaining (backward snowballing) was used to identify additional relevant works; backward snowballing involved reviewing the reference lists of selected articles to identify earlier relevant studies that met the inclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria

This review followed PRISMA 2020 guidelines to ensure a rigorous and transparent selection of peer-reviewed articles published between 2017 and April 2025. Studies were included if they focused on climate change adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa, analyzed media or communication content, and were published in English. The exclusion criteria removed articles focused solely on mitigation, lacking media focus, or inaccessible in full text. The initial search produced 105 articles from the databases that were selected. Following the removal of 32 duplicate articles, 73 articles were screened using the titles and

abstracts. Among them, 43 articles were excluded because they did not fit the inclusion criteria. All 30 articles were then evaluated on the basis of eligibility and incorporated into the final qualitative analysis.

Data Extraction and Charting

A data extraction matrix was designed according to the guidelines of Levac et al. (2010) and Arksey and O'Malley (2005) in Microsoft Excel. The most important metadata was retrieved, such as author(s), year, country or region, media platform under analysis, framing strategies, theory employed, methodology, audience focus, and findings. The matrix was pilot tested with three articles to make it consistent and complete.

Quality Appraisal

The articles were checked using tools that matched their study type to ensure they were methodologically sound. Qualitative studies were evaluated with the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Critical Appraisal Checklist, and quantitative or mixed-method studies with the NIH Quality Assessment Tool for Observational Studies. The articles were evaluated on the clarity of aim, methodological coherence, transparency in data collection, and relevance of conclusions. Article screening and eligibility assessment were conducted independently by two reviewers. Any disagreements regarding study inclusion were resolved through discussion and consensus.

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis for this study was conducted based on the six-step approach of Braun and Clarke (2006), which includes data familiarization, coding, theme searching, theme review, defining and naming themes, and final synthesis. Themes were identified through patterns in the sample by using an inductive approach. The open coding was first used on abstracts and findings, and then axial coding was used to group the codes into wider thematic categories. Themes were also checked against the literature of theoretical



framing, especially Framing Theory (Entman, 1993) and Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1993).

Five core themes were identified:

- (1) Adaptation as Resilience and Empowerment
- (2) Media Awareness and Community Mobilization
- (3) Climate Impact and Vulnerability
- (4) Indigenous Knowledge and Politics
- (5) Government and Policy Framing of Adaptation

Themes captured recurrent framings in both traditional and digital media, and reflected contrasts in communication strategies across different platforms and regions.

Reflexivity and Ethical Considerations

Although no primary human data were obtained, ethical considerations were followed when handling the literature sources. The appropriate credit, clear coding, and methodological accountability were observed. More so, coding structure and inclusion decisions were checked by other reviewers, which strengthened the reliability.

Limitations

First, the study limited itself to English-language journals, which could have left out potentially valuable works in Francophone and Lusophone African countries. Second, the use of open-access databases could have excluded high-impact articles that are only available through subscription. Lastly, even though quality appraisal was used, study designs were different. This limits the possibility of comparison. However, the final 30 selected studies provided a strong foundation upon which meaningful conclusions can be made.

Thematic Analysis

The section presents the major findings of the thematic review of thirty peer-reviewed studies on media framing of climate change

adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa, published between 2017 and 2025. Five dominant themes were discovered. Each theme represents distinct framing patterns and communication orientations that depict the complex socio-political, cultural, and ecological conditions in Africa.

Adaptation as Resilience and Empowerment

The increasing body of research in Sub-Saharan Africa is shifting its focus of climate change adaptation away from passive adaptation, to empowerment and local resilience-building. The local realities, diverse knowledge systems, and equity issues are increasingly being reflected in media and academic discourse on the need to have adaptation strategies that are reflective of these issues.

From the papers reviewed, Ajaero et al. (2024) discovered that 56.7 percent of climate stories in the Nigerian and South African newspapers focused on adaptation of local people, not as helpless victims, but as actors who could determine their climate future. On the same note, Zougmore et al. (2018) explained the application of a combination of ICT and local water harvesting techniques by rural farmers to deal with climate change. These tools are not just technical solutions; they are a combination of scientific and traditional resilience.

However, empowerment is not only about access to information. Ogisi and Begho (2023) noted that the lack of access to extension services by women is a gender gap that inhibits their adoption of climate-smart practices. Crick et al. (2018) and Morchain (2018) take it one step further and state that empowering local businesses and marginalized populations is the key to effective and just adaptation. This involves giving opportunity to local voices in decision-making and abandoning top-down policy-making as emphasized by Mfitumukiza et al. (2024). It is noteworthy that studies such as those by Abegunde et al. (2019) and Ayanlade et al. (2022) demanded flexible approaches that focus on vulnerable farmers and those that combine local knowledge of



indigenes. These results serve as a reminder that resilience is not only about survival in climate change, but about transforming systems in such a way that everyone, women, smallholders, and the rural poor in particular, can thrive in the face of climate change.

The Role of Media in Awareness and Mobilization

In Sub-Saharan Africa, traditional and digital media are gaining prominence as channels of creating awareness among the population. This gives them access to messages that will help in adapting to climate change. The media are often referred to as public educators who simplify the difficult scientific knowledge in a form accessible to the masses. However, their role is shaped by various opportunities and limitations. Underreporting is one of them. According to Mbonu (2024), in 2022, The Punch newspaper published editorial content on climate-related issues, which makes up only 0.035 percent of the total amount of editorial content. This indicates that climate-related issues are not prioritized. It was also discovered that media coverage tends to focus more on disasters and sensationalised content as opposed to solutions-driven reporting. Using the Entman (1993) theory of frame omission, Bahati (2024) and Adekola and Lamond (2017) revealed how the media often focus on sensational events such as floods and ignore local adaptation initiatives from the natives. This contributed to the disengagement and anxiety recorded among the people.

However, new promising practises exist. According to Zougmore et al. (2018), rural radio stations and mobile technologies in Senegal and Ghana are delivering the seasonal weather forecast and farming tips to thousands of people. Also, gender sensitive media preferences were identified in Kenya, where women are more likely to use radio and peer groups, while men are more likely to use print and extension services (Ogisi & Begho, 2023). More so, digital interaction is on the increase. As Le Port et al. (2022) argue, WhatsApp and Facebook campaigns are perhaps effective in rural African regions to create health

awareness. This implies that the same strategy can be applied to climate mobilization. On the other hand, the studies revealed that centralization of climate information, just as Adobor (2024) noted, reduces involvement of local voices. Moreover, Alhassan and Haruna (2024) in their study recommended that ICT and mass media should be utilized to improve access to climate information in rural areas.

Climate Impacts and Vulnerability

One of the most prevalent frames across the sample was vulnerability to climate change, particularly in droughts, floods, and heat stress. Serdeczny et al. (2017) reported increased child stunting growth and malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa because of a disrupted agricultural system. These stories are related to local realities, with the majority of the rural populations being rain-fed farmers and the challenges they encounter being compounded by poor infrastructure and health-related burdens. Migration due to climate also emerged as a coping strategy and as a media discourse. Ibrahim and Mensah (2022) reported on the use of migration (temporary or permanent) by households in SSA to address water scarcity, land degradation, or harvesting problems. The media tends to portray such stories as spontaneous reactions, but the structural causes behind them, poverty, bad urban planning, and poor governance, are not given much coverage. Although many people in Sub-Saharan Africa are indeed vulnerable to climate change, when the media focuses only on their challenges, it makes them seem like helpless victims. It is not only a matter of proving that climate change is real, but that people are doing something about it, which many studies pointed out was lacking in the mainstream media coverage.

Indigenous Knowledge and Politics

The findings show that the way climate adaptation is framed in Sub-Saharan Africa is not objective. It was informed by competing epistemologies, institutional power, and strategic communication. One of the most



repeated findings in the literature is the conflict between the prevailing technocrats, usually forced by donors, governments, or media organizations, and the indigenous knowledge systems that are locally grounded and often marginalized. This was explained well by Morchain (2018), who stated that powerful actors frame adaptation narratives and create them by cherry-picking information. They then leave out local voices and de-emphasize the importance of indigenous knowledge. He criticized the instrumental application of such terms as indigenous and demands a re-politicization of the discourse of adaptation. This will incorporate various knowledge systems in a better way. Musah-Surugu et al. (2018) also point out an issue between how NGOs frame climate adaptation and traditional beliefs, such as spiritual views of climate change. Although NGOs support the popularization of indigenous technologies, they also consider certain local beliefs as an obstacle to the adoption of modern adaptations.

The influence of the state institutions on knowledge flow also plays an important role. Harvey et al. (2019) point to the fact that, under political pressure, meteorological services occasionally change forecasts, which is an instance of institutional misframing. Bahati (2024) also discovered at the grassroots that farmers perceive the news about climate change in the context of traditional farming knowledge, and tend to mistrust the politically-driven narratives that are neither solution-oriented nor locally relevant. He opines that effective interaction demands the framing of approaches that legitimize cultural knowledge and scientific facts.

Governmental and Policy Framing of Adaptation

Many of the studies reviewed point to the fact that in Sub-Saharan Africa, governments and international institutions tend to adopt a top-down approach to climate adaptation. This means that they prioritize technical solutions and marginalize local knowledge and community involvement. Morchain (2018)

condemns this practice as supporting the colonial hierarchy of knowledge, in which the voices of indigenous people are not heard. According to England and Dougill (2018), national policies are frequently recycled papers produced to meet international reporting requirements rather than the needs of the local farmers. Adekola and Lamond (2017) noted that governmental approaches to climate-related risks, such as flooding, are primarily reactive and do not include long-term responses to the community. The review also found that National agendas are also influenced by donors through the process of policy imitation (Hounkpatin et al., 2024). According to Bahati (2024), farmers perceive government climate communication as politically motivated and irrelevant. Other authors, such as Mbonu (2024) and Mfitumukiza et al. (2024), demand more gender-sensitive and locally-based policies. Chapman et al. (2022) also appeal to the redefinition of conservation as a win-win rather than a trade-off.

Discussion of Findings

The conceptualization of adaptation to climate change in Sub-Saharan Africa was revealed in this review to be changing. It is noteworthy that other research defined adaptation as an empowering and active process based on resilience and agency rather than viewing communities as victims (Ajaero et al., 2024; Zougmore et al., 2018). This result is in alignment with the IPCC AR6's requirement for transformative adaptation as well as local knowledge, gender inclusion, and equal participation. Still, there is a gap. Ogisi and Begho (2023) asserted precisely that the gender access to extension services remains unequal. Crick et al. (2018) and Mfitumukiza et al. (2024) also averred that adaptation policies have to be reviewed in order to empower the marginalized groups in practice. Moreover, the role of the media in adaptation was seen to be both significant and undeveloped. Although some researchers labelled it as a “public pedagogue” (Bahati, 2024), the underreporting, elite-driven



discourse, and disaster-oriented approach of the media limit its influence (Mbonu, 2024; Adekola & Lamond, 2017). Nevertheless, there are encouraging examples of rural radio projects in Ghana and Senegal. It is worth noting that, since there exist gender preferences for media types, communication strategies should be tailored to ensure that all groups receive information in ways that suit their needs.

The review also revealed that vulnerability frames continue to dominate the policy and media discourse. Although the story of climate-related risks such as droughts and migration is well-documented (Serdeczny et al., 2017; Ibrahim & Mensah, 2022), these accounts tend to individualize the risk and fail to recognize the structural causes of exposure, including poverty and bad governance. The absence of the innovation-framed narratives confirms the criticism of Arora-Jonsson (2011) that the imbalance of vulnerability may serve to consolidate passivity instead of motivating some action.

Marginalization of indigenous knowledge to technocratic framings is one of the main themes in this review. This knowledge hierarchy was criticized by Morchain (2018), who claimed that adaptation discourse tends to exclude or instrumentalize local epistemologies without giving them any actual authority. The same concern was noted by Musah-Surugu et al. (2018), who point out the tensions between NGO-led interventions and embedded local and spiritual beliefs. The study by Harvey et al. (2019) and Bahati (2024) also demonstrated the influence of institutional and political pressures on the communication practices, which frequently results in mistrust and misframing on the grassroots level. These results require a paradigm shift, i.e., rhetorical inclusion to actual co-production of knowledge.

Lastly, governmental and policy framings were observed to be mainly reactive, top-down, and driven by donor priorities more than what is on the ground. England & Dougill (2018) revealed how policy reports such as NDCs and NAPs are usually devoid of cultural

context, and they are used to satisfy reporting desires, but not to engage the locals. It has also been found that governmental reactions are infrastructure-oriented rather than systemic (Adékola & Lamond, 2017), while NGOs and multilateral institutions provide more comprehensive framings. The failure of top-down planning of adaptation is well-known. Nightingale (2017) noted that this kind of approach tends to promote elite capture, marginalizing local voices in the process. External adaptation initiatives do not pay much attention to the needs of communities, which is why the involvement is not transformative but superficial. Even when Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) is acknowledged, it doesn't always have a significant influence. In summary, the findings collectively suggest that the future of climate adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa depends not just on technical interventions, but on inclusive, equitable, and locally grounded framings. Empowering communities through inclusive policies, reforming media practices, and legitimizing indigenous knowledge are not just desirable; they are essential for sustainable adaptation.

Conclusion, Recommendations, and Future Research

This review aimed to examine the discourse of climate change adaptation in the academic and media literature in Sub-Saharan Africa from April 2017 to April 2025. Some important themes were discovered in the analysis. Firstly, adaptation is being discussed more as a resilience and empowerment process, especially when local voices and indigenous knowledge are at the forefront. Secondly, the media is still an important instrument, but is still underutilised for creating awareness and mobilizing. This is usually a result of underreporting and elite-driven discourses. Thirdly, the narratives of vulnerability and disaster are popular, often at the cost of the narratives of innovation and Community-led adaptation strategies. Fourthly, it is evident that there is a politics of knowledge framing in that the indigenous systems are rhetorically



recognized but structurally excluded. Lastly, policy framing is top-down and donor-led, and community participation and long-term change are frequently marginalized.

These findings are indicative of the fact that the discourse of climate adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa is not neutral. It shows that there is a compromise between strong institutions, message delivery, and long-established cultural and knowledge systems of communities. Some positive trends have been observed. These include more participatory practices, media giving voice to the local population, gender-sensitive content, and attempts to integrate scientific and indigenous knowledge; yet, there is a huge gap between what is being said and what is actually happening on the ground.

Based on the thematic results of this systematic review, the following recommendations are made. To begin with, as regards the finding of the review that media coverage of climate change adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa is still predominantly elite-driven and disaster-focused, media practitioners should diversify the format and language of climate coverage by balancing crisis coverage with solution-based and resilience-based coverage. Increased utilization of community radio, mobile media, and local languages should be proposed to increase efforts to reach rural populations. Another approach that should be embraced by journalists is an inclusive communication style whereby gendered media preferences are considered, and as much as possible, technical jargon should be reduced to make adaptation information more acceptable and comprehensible.

Secondly, the finding that adaptation policies to climate have often been framed based on top-down and donor-based narratives, policymakers are urged to invest in participatory governance systems that would institutionalize the voices of communities, especially women, the youth, and indigenous groups. This involves implementation of gender responsive budgeting, encouraging local adaptation groups, and incorporating

indigenous knowledge systems into national climate frameworks, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). Effective and sustainable adaptation requires the development of context-sensitive policies that are based on local realities, and not on generic donor templates.

Moreover, given the findings presented in the review, that indigenous knowledge is usually rhetorically recognised but structurally marginalised, donors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) need to change their approach to co-produced, long-term adaptation interventions, which puts community ownership at the forefront. This entails long-term investment in communication infrastructure and reinforcing partnerships that facilitate two-way knowledge flow between scientific experts and local communities, instead of one-size-fits-all solutions.

For future study, there are a number of gaps this study identified. Longitudinal studies that trace the development of adaptation framing, especially crisis-related, would provide an understanding of the changes in messages that depend on politics or climatic events. There is also a need to study audience perception to know how various demographic groups perceive climate messages and whether they can be used to drive behavior change. Also, a comparative study can be carried out within Africa to help shed light on the role of geography, governance, and culture in shaping adaptation frames. Lastly, the researchers need to explore the impact of algorithmic (Social media) platforms and digital misinformation on the knowledge and participation of the populace about climate change. This is becoming a more pressing problem as social media is emerging as a mainstream news source in Africa.

Finally, this study has established that how we discuss climate change adaptation is just as important as what we actually do. Framing shape perceptions, trust, and actions. As climate risks increase, the need for inclusive, grounded, and empowering narratives



becomes more important. It is also essential to ensure that adaptation discourse reflects the realities, values, and aspirations of African communities. This will be key to building resilience that is truly just and sustainable.

Methodological Quality of Reviewed Studies

There were more qualitative research designs throughout the reviewed studies, with the majority of studies basing their findings on content analysis of newspaper articles, broadcast media, or policy documents to analyze how climate change adaptation is framed by the media. Although the methodology gave adequate contextual information on the prevalent narratives and discursive patterns, very little was done on quantitative or mixed-method designs, especially those audience-based designs, which could determine the reception and interpretation of framed messages among various social groups. Few studies used surveys, interviews, or a participatory approach. The major advantage of the studies is that they are contextually sensitive and use locally based case studies. However, the fact that many of the studies rely on media texts and elite sources limits their generalizability and limits the views of the audience. This methodological pattern is indicative of the need for more mixed-method and audience-focused research methodologies. This will strengthen findings on the effects of media framing on climate change adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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Social Media and Digital Activism: A Case of Twitter (X) in the International Representation of Opinions in Nigeria

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Abstract

In recent years, social media has emerged as a key platform for Nigerians living abroad to engage with issues that directly impact their homeland and the broader Nigerian community globally. Nigerians in diaspora use social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to connect, share their experiences, and express their opinions on various issues affecting Nigeria and the global Nigerian community, which includes Politics, Economy, Culture, Social Justice, and Diaspora Engagement. Despite the expanding discourse on the role of social media as platforms for the representation of opinions in the domestic and international sphere, how social media, particularly X (formerly Twitter), enhances Nigerians' international digital activism and the political limitations of digital activism via X are still understudied. This study interrogates both the possibilities and limitations of digital activism in effecting change beyond national borders. This paper is a qualitative, netnography study that explores how Twitter(X) is used by Nigerians to engage in digital activism, using the Framing theory. This study examines the use of Twitter (X) as a platform for digital activism in Nigeria, with a focus on how it shapes international perceptions of national issues. It establishes that social media activism has become a potent tool for political engagement, public expression, and international solidarity. Although activists face significant challenges, their persistent engagement has yielded symbolic victories and contributed to global awareness of Nigerian sociopolitical struggles.

Keywords: Digital activism, X (Twitter), Nigerians in the Diaspora, Social Media

Introduction

Social media has become a vital tool for Nigerians in Nigeria and the diaspora to connect, share their experiences, and express their opinions on various issues affecting Nigeria and the global Nigerian community. In recent years, social media has emerged as a key platform for Nigerians living abroad to engage with issues that directly impact their homeland and the broader Nigerian community globally (Uwalaka, 2019). This digital connectivity transcends geographic and temporal barriers, allowing for immediate, global discussions and exchanges of ideas (Adebanwi, 2021). The growing influence of

platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn has enabled Nigerians in the diaspora to create virtual spaces where they can not only maintain connections with fellow expatriates but also contribute to the ongoing discourse about Nigeria's social, political, and economic landscapes (Adebanwi, 2021; Akinbobola, 2022).

Nigeria, with a population of over 200 million people, has a significant diaspora community spread across the globe. The Nigerian diaspora is estimated to be around 15 million people, with significant populations; for instance, in the United States, there are



over 400,000 Nigerians who form a significant part of the Nigerian diaspora. In the United Kingdom, the UK is home to over 200,000 Nigerians, with many more holding dual citizenship. In Canada, there is a growing Nigerian population, with over 50,000 Nigerians living in the country; in Australia, there are over 20,000 Nigerians, with many more studying or working in the country; and in Europe, many Nigerians also live and work in European countries, such as Germany, France, and the Netherlands. (Nigerian Population Commission, 2020; Adebani, 2021). These Nigerians in diaspora use social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to connect, share their experiences, and express their opinions on various issues affecting Nigeria and the global Nigerian community, which includes Politics, Economy, Culture, Social Justice, and Diaspora Engagement. Several influencers and online communities have emerged on social media, significantly shaping the online discourse surrounding Nigerian issues. Notably, platforms such as Nigerian Twitter (now X), Nigerian bloggers, and Nigerian influencers have become central spaces for these discussions. Nigerian Twitter has long served as a powerful platform for political and social engagement, where users often mobilise for activism, raise awareness on key national issues, and critique government policies (Adebani, 2021). Similarly, Nigerian bloggers have played a pivotal role in disseminating news, offering alternative perspectives, and creating forums for debate, which in turn influences public opinion and political outcomes (Ojo & Oke, 2020). Nigerian influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube have further expanded the scope of this discourse, using their large followings to shape narratives around culture, politics, and social issues, both within Nigeria and in the global diaspora (Akinbobola, 2022).

Unlike traditional media—television, radio, and print—which typically involve centralised, hierarchical modes of communication, social media platforms allow for real-

time, decentralised, and horizontal interactions. These digital tools empower individuals and groups to create, share, and engage with content freely, fostering a more participatory communication environment. The rise of social media has also transformed the way people consume and disseminate information. With the proliferation of smartphones and internet connectivity, social media has become an integral part of modern life. In Nigeria, social media has become a vital platform for citizens to express their opinions, share their experiences, and engage with others on various issues.

Within this digital landscape, activism—the practice of campaigning to bring about political or social change—has evolved significantly. Traditional forms of activism, such as protests, petitions, and sit-ins, are now complemented, and at times initiated, through digital means. The rise of digital activism (also known as cyber activism or e-activism) reflects this transformation, wherein individuals and groups leverage the power of social media platforms to raise awareness, mobilise supporters, document events, and pressure decision-makers. Digital activism has broadened participation, reduced entry barriers, and enhanced the speed and reach of movements. This form of activism relies heavily on the instantaneous, global reach of social media, making it possible for ideas and actions to transcend geographical boundaries and mobilise international support for local causes.

Despite the expanding discourse on the role of social media as platforms for the representation of opinions in the domestic and international sphere, how social media, particularly X (formerly Twitter), enhances Nigerians' international digital activism and the political limitations of digital activism via X are still understudied. Twitter (X) is used to represent Nigerian opinions within and outside the country, and this has implications for the country's global image and reputation. Although the platform has represented significant levels of activism in recent years, research on media activism, particularly on



Twitter, still needs to be expanded. Nigeria is a major player in African politics and economy, and its opinions and perspectives on various issues are closely watched by the international community. In an age where digital technologies increasingly shape the contours of civic life and global engagement, the role of social media—particularly Twitter (X)—in activism has become both prominent and contested. Despite the visibility of digital activism, many Nigerian social movements face challenges in translating online momentum into offline policy change or institutional reform. There is often a disconnect between the digital fervour observed on platforms like Twitter and the realities on the ground.

This study addresses a critical gap by exploring how Twitter-based activism in Nigeria contributes to the international representation of opinions, particularly in shaping global narratives, media frames, and diplomatic reactions. It interrogates both the possibilities and limitations of digital activism in effecting change beyond national borders. Therefore, these questions are generated to address the issues raised in the paper: How is Twitter (X) used by Nigerians to express their opinions on national and international issues? In what ways does Twitter (X) facilitate the international representation of Nigerians in Nigeria and Nigerians in Diaspora on political issues? What are the challenges faced by Nigerian digital activists in using Twitter (X) for socio-political change?

This paper is a qualitative, netnography study that explores how Twitter(X) is used by Nigerians to engage in digital activism and how these activities influence international representations of Nigerian socio-political issues. Netnography was employed to collect Twitter content relevant to political expression and digital activism by Nigerian users between October 2020 and April 2024. Netnography allows for the examination of online behaviours, discourse patterns, and the social and political implications of digital activism. The Study focuses on Nigeria, with specific attention to digital interactions that originate

within the country and those emerging from the Nigerian diaspora. The paper captures how Nigerians engage in activism, express political opinions, and shape international discourse on Twitter, especially during pivotal socio-political events such as the #EndSARS protests and the 2023 general elections. Nigeria serves as a crucial context for this research due to its vibrant digital culture, large youth population, and increasing use of social media platforms for political engagement and social movements. Data is collected from content analysis of tweets and hashtag movement, focusing on both local and international engagement. Thematic analysis is employed to identify patterns, themes and discourses that emerge from the data.

Social Media

Social media refers to a set of digital platforms that allow individuals to create, share, and interact with content and each other within virtual communities. It is also identified as the new media because it has been identified with the advent of the digital revolution and rise of mobile technologies and has remarkably determined not only the nature of the information being transmitted but equally the speed at which the information reaches wider audiences (Bello, 2019). These platforms are fundamentally characterised by user-generated content and interactive communication. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) offer a widely recognised definition, describing social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.” Social media platforms include well-known sites such as Twitter (now X), Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. These platforms have evolved to become powerful tools for communication, social interaction, and influence, shaping political, cultural, and social engagement both at local and global levels. The academic literature on social media dates back to the early 2000s, as the rise of platforms like Facebook and Twitter began to



reshape communication on a global scale. Early works focused on the technological and sociological aspects of social media, exploring how these platforms allowed for new forms of interaction and self-expression.

Social media's role in political mobilisation and activism has been a central focus of much recent scholarship, and has a great impact on political mobilisation and activism. Social media platforms have become essential tools for organising protests, spreading awareness about social issues, and challenging governmental and corporate power. One of the ways social media has played a pivotal role is in the Arab Spring and Beyond, where several studies have explored how social media played a pivotal role in organising the Arab Spring protests, particularly in Tunisia and Egypt (Howard et al., 2011). These protests demonstrated the ability of social media to bypass traditional state-controlled media and mobilise large-scale collective action. Scholars have since examined the lessons learned from these movements, particularly regarding the strengths and limitations of social media activism. Social media has evolved from being a tool for personal communication and entertainment to a powerful mechanism for shaping political, social, and cultural engagement. Early contributions focused on the technological aspects and democratizing potential of social media, while more recent scholarship has explored the complex role of social media in political mobilisation, activism, and its economic impact. The intersection of social media with political movements, identity formation, and digital activism is now a significant area of academic research, providing insights into how digital platforms are reshaping societies globally.

Activism in Democracy

Democracy is fundamentally rooted in the participation of the people in governance. At its core, democracy values citizen agency, freedom of expression, and accountability of leaders. From the ancient Athenian model of direct democracy to modern representative

systems, public participation has been central to shaping policies and governance structures (Held, 2006). Activism functions as a democratic tool that ensures the voice of the people is heard, especially when formal institutional mechanisms fall short. Activism holds governments accountable and amplifies the interests of marginalised groups. In democratic societies, the ability to protest or advocate for change is a vital aspect of political freedom and civil rights (Tilly, 2004). Historically, activism has been part of almost every major political and social transformation. In its earliest forms, activism manifested through petitions, revolts, pamphleteering, and public assemblies. The American Revolution, the French Revolution, and anti-colonial movements in Africa and Asia all emerged from grassroots activism challenging oppression and inequality (Zunes, 1994). In colonial Nigeria, for instance, activists like Herbert Macaulay, Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, and Obafemi Awolowo championed nationalist activism through newspapers, political organisations, and community rallies (Falola & Heaton, 2008).

Activism generally arises in response to political repression, social injustice, economic inequality, environmental degradation, and Human rights violations (Uwalaka, 2019). In Nigeria, activism gained momentum due to widespread corruption, abuse of power, police brutality, and electoral malpractice. The failure of state institutions to respond to citizens' concerns often triggers civic action. Activism is diverse in form and strategy. There is grassroots activism, which is community-based efforts to address local issues. These often involve town hall meetings, local mobilisation, and direct community engagement. There is civil Disobedience that is a non-violent refusal to obey certain laws or demands of a government, as exemplified by Gandhi's Salt March or the U.S. There are also civil rights movements, which are political activism, involving lobbying, campaign support, and challenging political systems through elections or policy advocacy. There is also the artistic and cultural activism that



includes using music, theatre, literature, and visual arts to challenge dominant narratives (Adebayo, 2017). Legal Activism is that accept of activism that includes utilising the courts and legal frameworks to demand justice or policy change. Digital Activism is the use of internet tools—blogs, social media, and messaging apps—to mobilise, inform, and agitate for change (Joyce, 2010).

In the traditional forms of activism, before the digital age, activists relied on print media like Pamphlets, newspapers, manifestos, electronic channels like radio and television, especially in reaching rural communities. Traditional activism is also conventionally represented in street protests and rallies, where there are physical gatherings to demonstrate public concern. There is also word of mouth and community forums, especially in African societies, where oral tradition was vital. Traditional activism, while effective in several instances, has its limitations. This includes slow information dissemination, limited reach, media gatekeeping, and risk of state suppression. The emergence of the internet and mobile technology radically transformed activism. Known as “clicktivism” or digital activism, this new wave enabled decentralised movements, viral messaging, and international participation (Tufekci, 2017). Digital activism, therefore, democratized access to information, bypassed traditional media filters, and enabled diaspora involvement in local movements.

Digital Activism

Digital activism refers to the use of digital tools, particularly social media platforms, for advocating for social, political, and environmental causes (Uwalaka, 2019). The practice involves leveraging online tools such as hashtags, viral content, petitions, live streams, and online campaigns to draw attention to issues, mobilise supporters, and effect change. These digital tools have democratized activism by lowering barriers to participation, allowing ordinary people to influence and challenge institutional power structures. Joyce (2010) describes digital

activism as “the practice of using digital technologies to campaign for social or political causes.” This form of activism is distinguished from traditional activism by its reliance on digital tools for organising, communicating, and amplifying messages. Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok allow activists to spread messages far beyond their immediate physical environments, creating global and local connections in real-time. In addition to amplifying voices and building communities, digital activism often takes the form of hashtag movements, viral posts, online petitions, and coordinated virtual protests. These methods engage audiences in a way that transcends traditional, offline activism, making them particularly effective in contexts where physical demonstrations may be met with resistance, censorship, or violence (Kaun and Udam, 2017).

Major characteristics of digital activism include real-time mobilisation, which describes that digital activism allows for swift and often immediate action. Hashtags, viral videos, and live-streamed protests allow people to organise in real time, making digital activism particularly useful in rapidly changing political environments. Another characteristic of digital activism is global Reach, which facilitates the sharing of information across borders on social media platforms. Digital activists can reach international audiences, mobilising a global network of people to rally around a cause. This global dimension of activism has empowered movements like #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, and #EndSARS, which have gained worldwide attention. Hashtag Movements have also become a key tool in digital activism (Cooper, 2023; Aubyn and Frimpong, 2022). They serve as rallying points for collective action, allowing users to share content under a common banner. For instance, #EndSARS in Nigeria galvanised millions of people both within the country and in the global Nigerian diaspora to demand the end of police brutality and reform of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).



Viral Content on social media is another important characteristic that has the potential to go viral, meaning it can spread rapidly across networks, reaching millions of people in a very short time. This virality is key to digital activism, as it allows small-scale protests or campaigns to gain widespread attention quickly. There are also online petitions and crowdsourcing. Platforms like change.org enable activists to launch online petitions and gather signatures in support of a cause. These petitions can exert pressure on institutions, governments, or corporations, calling for change or action. Additionally, crowdsourcing platforms help activists raise funds for their campaigns or on-the-ground initiatives. Virtual Protests and Digital Civil Disobedience is another form that digital activism takes. This may include actions like flooding a government website with traffic (akin to a digital sit-in) or using social media to disrupt a corporation's online presence to draw attention to a cause.

The Framing Theory

Framing theory originates from the field of communication and social sciences to explain the manner in which information is presented so that people's perception, interpretations and responses are influenced (Zaklama, 2025). The theory was developed by Erving Goffman in 1974 to explain how and why people rely on interpretive frameworks in understanding social situations and experiences (Chong and Druckman, 2007). Framing is the process whereby people form and nurture specific conceptualisations and defining identity of issues or processes in which people reorient their thinking about issues (Chong and Druckman, 2007). The major foundation of framing theory is that a specific issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and be interpreted as having implications for multiple values or considerations (Zaklama, 2025; Chong and Druckman, 2007). Framing Theory, according to Entman (1993), suggests that the way issues are presented or "framed" in media coverage influences public perception. In the context of Twitter (X), the

framing of Nigerian political and social issues by users, journalists, and international media shapes how these issues are understood by global audiences. Twitter (now X) is a social media platform where thematic frames are being communicated as broader social media rather than episodic individual events (Zaklama, 2025). In this regard, activists of online social movements frame issues on social justice, political corruption, climate change crisis and so on to mobilise local and international support.

Titter (X) as a Channel for Expressing National and International Opinion

Twitter, now known as X, has a transformative history rooted in Silicon Valley innovation and shaped by global political dynamics. It began in March 2006 as an internal side project at Odeo, a podcasting company co-founded by Evan Williams (Murthy, 2018; Stone, 2014). By 2009, Twitter's popularity had surged, particularly due to its use in breaking news and political events. From 2010 to 2012, Twitter solidified its role in global political movements. It was a central tool during the Arab Spring, enabling citizens in countries like Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya to coordinate protests, share real-time updates, and reach a global audience (Tufekci, 2017; Castells, 2012). The platform's design—favouring immediacy, decentralisation, and virality—made it uniquely effective for activism. The platform introduced several innovations, including embedded images and videos, longer tweets (expanding from 140 to 280 characters in 2017), Twitter polls, and real-time analytics. The launch of the Moments feature in 2015 curated trending news and conversations, further cementing Twitter's role as a digital news hub (Murthy, 2018).

In Nigeria, Twitter's influence became pronounced during events such as the #BringBackOurGirls campaign in 2014 and especially during the #EndSARS protests in 2020. Nigerian youth used the platform to document police brutality, coordinate peaceful protests, and rally international support. The



viral nature of hashtags such as #EndSARS drew attention from global celebrities, news outlets, and human rights organisations (Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2015; Egbunike, 2020). Between 2019 and 2021, Twitter became increasingly politicised. During the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 U.S. elections, it served as a critical space for public information but also misinformation. The platform came under scrutiny for its moderation practices, leading to high-profile decisions such as the permanent suspension of Donald Trump's account in January 2021, following the U.S. Capitol riots. This event ignited global debate about freedom of expression and digital governance. In Nigeria, Twitter faced similar tensions. The Nigerian government banned Twitter in June 2021, after the platform deleted a tweet by President Muhammadu Buhari that violated its rules. The ban lasted until January 2022 and raised serious concerns about digital censorship, democratic accountability, and freedom of expression in Africa's most populous nation (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2020).

In July 2023, Twitter was rebranded as X, signalling a vision to evolve the platform from a microblogging site into an “everything app, combining messaging, payments, content creation, and AI services. The iconic bluebird logo was replaced with a minimalist “X,” and the platform began introducing new features such as long-form tweets, paid subscriptions, and creator monetisation. Musk's vision reflects his long-standing interest in merging fintech, AI, and social communication under one digital umbrella (BBC News, 2023). The rebranding to X also sparked debate: some users welcomed the innovation, while others lamented the loss of Twitter's original ethos. Still, the platform retains its core features—real-time conversations, user-generated content, and hashtag activism—though under a new brand and governance model. Twitter, in particular, has emerged as a platform for transnational solidarity. Its design allows users to follow and interact with conversations across borders, cultures, and time zones. This quality of “global interactivity” facilitates the

internationalisation of local issues. When a hashtag trends globally, it signals not only visibility but also the potential to reshape diplomatic narratives, prompt foreign policy discussions, and trigger humanitarian responses.

Twitter's Unique Structure

Twitter (now known as X) is distinct from other social media platforms due to its minimalist design, character-limited posts, real-time information flow, and networked communication features. These elements significantly contribute to its utility in digital activism and to the international representation of opinions.

Twitter (X) offers brevity, real-time updates, and hashtags, making it a potent tool for mobilising support and disseminating information. According to Bruns and Burgess (2011), hashtags serve as ad hoc publics where like-minded individuals can gather and amplify messages. Twitter's retweet and quote-tweet functions also aid the virality of messages, creating ripple effects that often reach international audiences.

Brevity and Speed: Originally limited to 140 characters (now 280), Twitter's structure promotes concise, direct communication. This brevity encourages rapid information sharing, which is critical during protests or emergencies. According to Boyd, Golder, and Lotan (2010), the speed of tweets and retweets allows for quick dissemination of messages, often outpacing traditional news media.

Retweeting and Quoting: The retweet function enables users to instantly share content to their own followers, increasing the reach of a message. Quote tweets allow users to add commentary, encouraging engagement and discourse. These functions facilitate viral spread and emotional engagement, which are key in mobilising both local and international attention.

Mentions and Direct Messaging: Twitter allows users to “mention” other users (by



using @username), including journalists, politicians, and organisations, directly inserting themselves into global conversations. Activists use mentions to draw attention from international bodies like the UN or global celebrities, seeking solidarity or intervention.

Algorithmic Timelines: Although Twitter originally operated chronologically, algorithmic curation now prioritises tweets based on engagement and user interests. While this can amplify popular messages, it can also lead to the formation of “echo chambers,” where users are exposed primarily to like-minded views (Pariser, 2011). Activists must navigate this dynamic to maintain visibility and counter misinformation.

Multimedia Integration: Twitter supports images, videos, live streaming (via Periscope, now integrated), and GIFs. Visual content increases engagement and emotional impact. During protests, real-time videos and images from the ground can gain international traction and sometimes serve as evidence in human rights cases.

Openness and Public Accessibility: Most Twitter profiles and content are publicly accessible, making it easy for journalists, researchers, and international observers to follow conversations without needing prior connection. This openness distinguishes Twitter from platforms like Facebook, where privacy settings may limit visibility.

Digital Tools used by X (Twitter)

- (i) **Hashtags:** The central rallying cry of the campaign was the #EndSARS hashtag. The hashtag not only called attention to the abuses perpetrated by the SARS unit but also served as a mechanism for organising protests and providing updates on the ongoing struggle. It quickly gained traction on Twitter within Nigeria and globally.
- (ii) **Live Streaming and Videos:** One of the most significant contributions of digital activism in the #EndSARS

movement was the use of live streaming. Protesters used platforms on Twitter to document police violence in real-time, ensuring that the world could see the abuse as it occurred. Viral videos of protests and police brutality helped expose the reality on the ground, creating international pressure on the Nigerian government.

- (iii) **International Solidarity:** Twitter (X) allowed for international solidarity, with Nigerians in the diaspora and global allies using their platforms to amplify the message. Protests were organised in major cities around the world, and global celebrities added their voices to the movement, helping bring international attention to the cause.
- (iv) **Mobilisation through Twitter:** Twitter became the primary platform for mobilising protesters, sharing information about protests, and organizing “safe” spaces for discussion. It also became a space for Nigerians to vent their frustrations, share their experiences, and strategise collectively.

Facilitation of International Representation of Nigerians: The Double-Edged Nature of Twitter Activism and Hashtag Movements in Nigeria

Taking cues from the Framing theory, X (Twitter) facilitates the way in which public opinion, events, and sentiments in a country are perceived and interpreted by the global community. Twitter provides a space where local discourses can quickly enter global consciousness, thereby influencing international narratives. The findings indicate that Twitter (X) has become a critical space for Nigerians to express their opinions on both national and international matters. The platform serves as a digital agora where citizens discuss elections, corruption, police brutality, and governance. This affirms existing literature (Castells, 2012; Tufekci,



2017), which positions social media as enabling participatory communication beyond traditional media boundaries. The pattern of expression on Twitter reflects Bennett and Segerberg's (2012) theory of connective action, where individuals communicate personal stories and identities within a larger collective movement without relying on formal organisation structures. The platform's decentralised nature has allowed diverse voices—including the youth, the diaspora, and marginalised groups—to actively participate in civic discourse. Twitter (X) serves as a virtual town hall where Nigerians express their views on both national and global issues. Users—including journalists, political commentators, students, professionals, and diaspora citizens—use the platform to voice support or criticism of policies, leaders, and institutions.

Hashtag activism has become a powerful tool for socio-political engagement in Nigeria. As a country with a high youth population and growing internet penetration, Nigeria has witnessed the rise of several impactful hashtag movements. These movements, often birthed and nurtured on Twitter (X), have played crucial roles in shaping public opinion, mobilising action, and drawing international attention to local issues.

#BringBackOurGirls (2014)

The #BringBackOurGirls campaign emerged in response to the abduction of over 270 schoolgirls from Chibok, Borno State, by the terrorist group Boko Haram in April 2014. The hashtag was first popularised by Nigerian activists and quickly gained global traction after being used by prominent international figures, including Michelle Obama and Malala Yousafzai. This movement marked a significant moment in Nigeria's digital activism history, demonstrating how Twitter can escalate local tragedies into global causes. According to Akinbobola (2015), the campaign illustrated the capacity of Nigerian civil society to leverage digital platforms for global solidarity and pressure on government action. The #BringBackOurGirls campaign

and #EndSARS protests are prime examples of how Twitter has been used to internationalise Nigerian concerns. The former, following the abduction of schoolgirls in Chibok, went viral globally with endorsements from international figures, including Michelle Obama. Similarly, the #EndSARS protests used Twitter to document police brutality, coordinate protests, and engage international media.

#EndSARS (2020)

Iwilade (2021) notes that the #EndSARS protests marked a turning point in Nigerian youth digital participation, as the movement demonstrated the power of decentralised digital mobilisation to drive global awareness and action. The international coverage was largely fueled by Twitter posts, viral videos, and trending hashtags. Perhaps the most impactful digital movement in recent Nigerian history, the #EndSARS protest began as a Twitter hashtag calling for the disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit accused of widespread police brutality and human rights abuses. The hashtag unified diverse voices—youths, celebrities, and activists—around a common cause, and within days, the movement spread beyond Nigeria's borders. The decentralised structure of the protest was powered by Twitter's real-time communication features. Activists used Twitter to share updates, provide legal support, fundraise, and document abuses. International coverage by CNN, BBC, and Al Jazeera was heavily informed by Twitter posts, photos, and videos from Nigerian users. Iwilade (2021) argues that #EndSARS transformed Nigeria's digital culture, demonstrating the potential of Twitter to facilitate a horizontal form of political organisation and give visibility to otherwise suppressed narratives.

Key roles of x in the #endsars movement included documentation whereby Victims and observers posted real-time evidence of police abuses; coordination: Protest logistics, funding, and medical assistance were organized through X; global amplification: International figures like Rihanna and the UN



amplified the cause after seeing it trend on X. As a result, the Nigerian government disbanded SARS, though demands for deeper reforms remain. The role of X was widely acknowledged as central to the campaign's visibility and pressure-building mechanisms (Egbunike, 2020).

Other Hashtag Campaigns

#OccupyNigeria (2012): In response to the removal of fuel subsidies by the government, this movement mobilised both online and offline protests. Twitter was used to coordinate demonstrations and criticise the government's economic policies.

#SayNoToRape (2020): A social media-driven campaign that raised awareness about gender-based violence in Nigeria, following a series of high-profile rape cases. The campaign used Twitter to demand legal reforms and justice for victims.

#SecureNorth and #NorthIsBleeding (2021): Hashtags calling attention to the insecurity and violence in northern Nigeria, often overlooked in mainstream discourse. These movements highlighted the regional use of hashtags to express political discontent and mobilise attention.

Twitter enables grassroots voices to break into global discourse. The international media often relies on Twitter as a primary source of real-time information from conflict zones or protest sites. Global solidarity can be mobilised quickly, especially when influencers and diaspora communities amplify the message. Hashtag movements reshape Nigeria's international image—from one of passive governance to a digitally active and politically aware society. The implication of activism via Twitter (X) is the heightened influence of diaspora communities in shaping both home-country politics and international opinion. Nigerians in the diaspora often act as cultural intermediaries, translating domestic grievances into terms that resonate globally.

Their access to international platforms and resources positions them as strategic actors in

digital campaigns, helping to sustain momentum, raise funds, and lobby international institutions. Diaspora influence was particularly evident during #EndSARS, where Nigerians abroad organised protests in London, New York, and Toronto, and engaged with Western media to keep the issue alive. Their involvement underscores the multi-scalar nature of modern activism, where domestic struggles are linked with international action.

Platforms like Twitter (X) are empowered in the course of transforming how political narratives are shaped and disseminated across borders. It has become a crucial tool for internationalising domestic issues, influencing global public opinion, and applying pressure on governments and institutions. However, this power comes with risks and challenges, including government repression, digital surveillance, and the unpredictability of virality. For countries like Nigeria, digital activism holds immense promise for amplifying marginalised voices and fostering global solidarity. But for this promise to be fulfilled, it must be supported by robust digital rights, policy reforms, and sustained offline engagement to convert visibility into lasting change.

Nigerians in the diaspora played a significant role in promoting online activism by organising solidarity marches abroad (e.g., in London, New York, and Toronto), sharing digital content, and pushing narratives through retweets and threads. These actions affected how Nigeria was perceived internationally, highlighting governance and human rights concerns. Furthermore, platforms like Twitter allowed the diaspora to engage with homeland issues in real time, bridging the gap between national and transnational political consciousness.

Challenges and Limitations of Twitter Activism

While Twitter has empowered digital activism, it also comes with limitations.

Ephemerality: Many hashtag campaigns lose momentum over time as public interest shifts.



Digital movements may struggle to translate online support into concrete policy changes. Without robust offline organisation, legal advocacy, and institutional engagement, digital activism may lead to temporary awareness without sustained impact.

Government Pushback and Censorship: The Nigerian government has attempted to limit the power of digital activism through social media censorship, internet shutdowns, and the use of cyber surveillance. In the case of #EndSARS, the government temporarily blocked social media platforms and disrupted internet access in an attempt to suppress the movement. The Nigerian government's response to #EndSARS—including the 2021 Twitter ban—reveals the perceived threat of online mobilisation. Digital spaces can amplify misinformation, promote echo chambers, or be manipulated by political actors (Howard et al., 2019). In the Nigerian context, the government's temporary ban on Twitter in 2021 highlighted tensions between digital freedoms and state control. The Nigerian government suspended Twitter for several months in 2021, citing threats to national security. This kind of backlash highlights the insubstantiality of digital spaces and the limits of online mobilisation.

Digital Divide: Not everyone in Nigeria has equal access to the internet or social media platforms, limiting the reach of digital activism to certain groups, particularly those in rural areas or from low-income backgrounds. Access to Twitter remains limited in rural areas, potentially excluding certain demographics from participating in these movements. While social media enables broad engagement, it can also amplify polarisation, where different groups use the same platforms to express divergent views, sometimes leading to online conflict and division.

Conclusion

While extensive literature exists on social media and political mobilisation globally, fewer studies provide an in-depth analysis of

how Twitter shapes international perceptions of Nigerian activism. Existing works focus on local impacts, but the transnational dimensions remain under-researched, particularly in the context of African digital movements reaching global consciousness. Additionally, while hashtags trend globally and attract international media coverage, the long-term influence of such attention on policy outcomes, international relations, or donor engagement remains unclear. These uncertainties raise important questions about whether Twitter activism results in performative visibility or substantive global engagement. Digital activism, therefore, bridges domestic struggles with international audiences, shaping how issues are framed, prioritised, and responded to on the global stage. Through carefully constructed narratives, imagery, and hashtags, activists can influence international public opinion and pressure foreign governments or institutions to act. While digital activism, particularly via Twitter, faces several challenges, it has undeniably reshaped the nature of contemporary protests and has proven to be an indispensable component of modern social movements. The continued evolution of digital tools will likely increase the effectiveness and reach of activism, offering new opportunities for social change both in Nigeria and globally. Digital activism is increasingly transnational. In Nigeria's case, local protests often find international amplification through diasporic networks and global sympathisers. The visibility provided by platforms like Twitter affects international media coverage and even policy responses. During the #EndSARS protests, reports from Nigerian Twitter users were cited by CNN, BBC, and Al Jazeera, influencing international perceptions of Nigerian governance and human rights. This underscores Twitter's role as a bridge between local grievances and global attention.

This study examines the use of Twitter (X) as a platform for digital activism in Nigeria, with a focus on how it shapes international perceptions of national issues. It establishes



that social media activism has become a potent tool for political engagement, public expression, and international solidarity. Although activists face significant challenges, their persistent engagement has yielded symbolic victories and contributed to global awareness of Nigerian sociopolitical struggles. The future of digital activism in Nigeria depends on institutional support, digital freedom, diaspora synergy, and sustained civic consciousness. Twitter (X), and by extension social media, remains a vital platform for democratizing voice and influence in both local and international contexts.

Based on the findings, some recommendations have evolved. First is in the area of policy and legal reform. There should be a comprehensive digital rights framework in Nigeria that protects freedom of expression and ensures due process in regulating social media. Secondly, civil society organizations should invest in educating citizens—especially the youth—on responsible digital activism, fact-checking, and ethical online engagement. In addition, social media companies like Twitter (X) should improve content moderation in developing countries to combat state-backed disinformation and algorithmic suppression. From the perspective of diaspora engagement frameworks, Nigerian policymakers should explore structured ways to engage the diaspora community in governance and development through digital means. Lastly, scholars should continue exploring the relationship between digital activism and institutional change, especially in post-colonial democracies like Nigeria.

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(One Village One Product) Program as a Tool for Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

The One Village, One Product (OVOP) program has emerged as a strategic tool for rural and entrepreneurial development in various countries, including Nigeria. Drawing on the principles of community self-reliance, value addition, and local resource utilization, the OVOP initiative aims to stimulate grassroots entrepreneurship and improve rural livelihoods. This study investigates the OVOP program as a tool for entrepreneurship development in Nigeria, focusing on its impact, challenges, and policy implications. Rather than relying on primary data collection, this research adopts a qualitative approach based entirely on secondary data sources, including academic literature, policy reports, government publications, and program evaluations. The study critically analyzes existing documentation on the implementation of the OVOP program in Nigeria. It explores how the program has influenced local entrepreneurial activities, empowered rural communities economically, and contributed to poverty reduction. The research also examines the structural and policy-related challenges that hinder effective implementation, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited institutional support, and funding constraints. Through content analysis and thematic synthesis of the secondary sources, the study identifies best practices and offers policy recommendations for scaling and improving the OVOP initiative. The findings underscore the importance of aligning local development programs with broader national entrepreneurship strategies, and the need for stronger multi-stakeholder collaboration. This study contributes to the academic discourse on rural entrepreneurship by providing a synthesized and contextual understanding of how grassroots initiatives like OVOP can foster inclusive economic growth in Nigeria.

Keywords: OVOP, Entrepreneurship development, Economic empowerment, Government policies

Introduction

The One Village One Product (OVOP) movement is a response to socio-economic disparities among villagers, which often causes rural-urban migration as individuals

seek better opportunities in cities (Fujioka, 2006). The OVOP approach aims to empower villagers by developing and increasing the added value of local products to improve community welfare (JICA, 2008). In



implementing this model, each village is encouraged to identify and develop a unique product that can become a local icon. By enhancing product quality and adopting modern packaging techniques, these goods can compete in broader markets—including regional, national, and international platforms (Matsui, 2010). The implementation process typically begins with the selection of community-based products that can be transformed into distinctive village offerings. These OVOP products are not limited to tangible items but may also include intangible cultural or artistic expressions that possess significant global appeal (Tsuyuki, 2010). A recent study by Tadeo, Espiritu and Cruz (2022) investigated OVOPreneurs in Cavite and highlights some challenges. Limited capital restricts most businesses to a small workforce (1-9 employees). These businesses struggle with production issues, staffing limitations, securing funding for employee support, managing cash flow, attracting new customers, maintaining innovative approaches, and ensuring employee health and safety. Key success factors as cited by Ramos, Garcia and Santos (2022) emphasized that proactiveness is more likely to benefit enterprises functioning in a dynamic environment. According to the study, managers and entrepreneurs should use a forward-thinking and opportunity-seeking approach to achieve long-term commercial success. In today's unpredictable economic environment, with quick changes in regional and worldwide marketplaces, industry participants must focus on critical success elements that allow firms to track and measure progress toward accomplishing their strategic goals and mission. Operating in a competitive market where customers are increasingly empowered to make decisions, industry participants must prioritize key success elements in their company operations that allow them to track and measure progress toward accomplishing their strategic goals and mission (Abidin, Hussin & Ahmad, 2021).

The "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) program is a development initiative that

originated in Japan in the 1970s and has since been adopted by various countries as a strategy for rural development and entrepreneurship promotion. The concept behind OVOP is simple yet profound: to encourage villages to focus on developing one unique product that represents their community, culture, or natural resources. This strategy aims to empower local communities, stimulate entrepreneurship, and contribute to sustainable economic growth by leveraging local strengths and fostering a sense of pride and ownership (Sugimura, 2012). In Nigeria, where entrepreneurship remains a crucial pillar of economic development, the OVOP program offers an opportunity to stimulate economic activities in rural areas, reduce poverty, and promote sustainable development. The Nigerian government and various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have recognized the potential of this approach and have implemented it in several states across the country, hoping to transform local economies and reduce the over-dependence on urban centers. The success of the OVOP program could provide valuable lessons on how rural communities can take charge of their economic destinies through creative and locally-driven entrepreneurial activities.

In Nigeria, OVOP supports small-scale entrepreneurs by providing access to training, financial assistance, and improved infrastructure (Nwankwo & Eboh, 2017). This initiative has led to the development of locally made products such as textiles, processed foods, and handicrafts, which are gaining recognition both nationally and internationally. The Nigerian government, in collaboration with various stakeholders, continues to implement policies that facilitate market access and improve the quality and competitiveness of OVOP products (Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, 2020). Furthermore, OVOP encourages innovation and creativity, leading to sustainable economic growth and improved livelihoods. By integrating traditional skills with modern techniques, local producers can enhance the value of their goods and attract a



broader market (Okonkwo, 2018). The program also fosters community cohesion and pride, as residents work together to promote their unique products. This study explores the potential of the "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) program as a tool for entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. Specifically, it examines the impact of OVOP on rural entrepreneurship, economic empowerment, job creation, and community development, while considering the challenges that may hinder its full implementation and sustainability.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a critical driver of economic development, poverty reduction, and job creation. In Nigeria, however, entrepreneurship development faces numerous challenges, including inadequate access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited skills training, and insufficient support for local initiatives (Egbetokun, Siyanbola, Olamide, Adeniyi & Irefin, 2017; Ojo, 2020). In response to these issues, various programs have been introduced to stimulate grassroots entrepreneurship, one of which is the One Village One Product (OVOP) initiative. Originally conceptualized in Japan, the OVOP program promotes locally driven economic development by encouraging communities to identify, develop, and market unique products based on their cultural or natural endowments (Yamagami, 2001). In Nigeria, the adoption of the OVOP model aims to empower rural communities, foster value addition, and create sustainable livelihoods through micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) (Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment [FMITI], 2015). However, despite the theoretical promise of the OVOP approach, its implementation in Nigeria appears to have yielded mixed results.

There is a growing concern that the OVOP program in Nigeria has not fully realized its potential in fostering entrepreneurship development. Many participating communities still struggle with inadequate

institutional support, poor market access, weak value chains, and limited capacity for innovation and branding (Adebayo & Olayemi, 2019). Moreover, there is a lack of empirical data and systematic evaluation of how effectively the program contributes to entrepreneurship development at the local level (Idowu & George, 2021). This gap in implementation and evaluation raises important questions about the effectiveness, scalability, and sustainability of the OVOP initiative in the Nigerian context. It is therefore imperative to critically examine the OVOP program as a tool for entrepreneurship development in Nigeria, assess its impacts, identify challenges, and propose strategies for enhancing its effectiveness in empowering local entrepreneurs.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

- (1) What is the impact of the "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) program on entrepreneurship development in rural Nigeria?
- (2) How does the OVOP program contribute to the economic empowerment of rural communities in Nigeria?
- (3) What are the key challenges faced by rural communities in Nigeria in implementing the OVOP program effectively?
- (4) To what extent does the OVOP program contribute to job creation and poverty reduction in rural Nigeria?
- (5) What role do government policies and non-governmental organizations play in the success of the OVOP program in Nigeria?
- (6) How can the OVOP program be adapted or improved to enhance entrepreneurship development in Nigeria?

Research Objectives

The specific objectives developed for this study are to:



- (1) assess the impact of the OVOP program on entrepreneurship development in rural Nigeria.
- (2) examine how the OVOP program contributes to the economic empowerment of rural communities in Nigeria.
- (3) identify and analyze the key challenges rural communities encounter in the effective implementation of the OVOP program.
- (4) evaluate the extent to which the OVOP program contributes to job creation and poverty reduction in rural Nigeria.
- (5) investigate the roles of government policies and non-governmental organizations in influencing the success of the OVOP program in Nigeria.
- (6) explore potential adaptations or improvements to the OVOP program that can enhance entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

Literature Review

The Concept of One Village, One Product (OVOP)

The One Village One Product (OVOP) program was first introduced in Japan in the late 1970s as a strategy to stimulate regional development through local entrepreneurship (Fujita, 2006). The concept encourages communities to identify unique local products, improve their quality, and add value through innovation and marketing. Over the years, the OVOP program has been adopted in various countries, including China, Thailand, and Malaysia, where it has contributed significantly to rural economic transformation (Yamamoto, 2010). In Nigeria, the OVOP program has gained attention as a model for promoting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and enhancing local production capacities. By fostering indigenous industries and supporting value addition, the program aims to boost job creation and economic sustainability (Adegbite & Oni, 2015). The initiative aligns with government policies focused on rural industrialization and reducing dependence on imports (Federal

Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, 2020). The One Village One Product (OVOP) program is a participatory rural development strategy that originated in Japan's Oita Prefecture in the 1980s. It emphasizes the utilization of local resources and indigenous knowledge to create value-added products unique to each community, thereby fostering economic growth and self-reliance (Issa & Lawal, 2019). In Nigeria, the OVOP initiative has been explored as a means to stimulate sustainable rural transformation. This paper delves into the processes involved in implementing the OVOP program in Nigeria, drawing insights from both domestic experiences and international applications. The OVOP program is rooted in the philosophy of "self-reliance" and focuses on developing local resources into unique products that can be marketed locally and globally. According to Sugimura (2012), OVOP is a rural development strategy that emphasizes local resources, community involvement, and sustainable economic practices. The program encourages villages to focus on identifying and developing products that are unique to their area, whether they are agricultural, craft-based, or involve local cultural heritage. In the context of Nigeria, the OVOP program aligns with the nation's broader development goals, which seek to diversify the economy and promote rural development. Research by Akinwale and Olawale (2017) suggests that such programs help rural entrepreneurs by providing them with a platform to create sustainable businesses that can thrive in the face of limited resources. By focusing on locally available resources and unique products, OVOP fosters innovation and entrepreneurship within rural communities.

Fundamental Principles of OVOP

The OVOP concept is anchored on three core principles:

- (1) **Local Yet Global:** Communities are encouraged to produce goods that reflect their unique culture and



resources while aiming for global standards to compete in broader markets.

- (2) **Self-Reliance and Creativity:** Emphasis is placed on communities leveraging their ingenuity and resources to drive development, reducing dependency on external aid.
- (3) **Human Resource Development:** Continuous capacity building ensures that community members acquire the necessary skills to sustain and innovate within their local industries (Issa & Lawal, 2019).

Administrative Structure for OVOP Implementation in Nigeria

Implementing the OVOP program in Nigeria necessitates a structured administrative framework to ensure effective coordination and execution. The proposed structure comprises:

- (1) **National OVOP Office:** Situated within the Ministry of Agriculture, this office oversees the overall strategy, policy formulation, and integration of OVOP activities into national development plans.
- (2) **Zonal OVOP Offices:** These offices facilitate regional coordination, ensuring that state-level activities align with national objectives and addressing region-specific challenges.
- (3) **State OVOP Offices:** Operating under state ministries of agriculture or commerce, these offices directly engage with local governments and communities to implement OVOP projects, provide technical support, and monitor progress.
- (4) **Local Government OVOP Offices:** These offices work closely with village committees, facilitating grassroots mobilization, identifying local products with potential, and organizing capacity-building initiatives for community members.
- (5) **OVOP Participating Villages:** At the core of the structure, these villages are

the primary actors, identifying unique products, engaging in value addition, and driving the commercialization processes (Issa & Lawal, 2019).

This hierarchical structure ensures a seamless flow of information, resources, and support from the national level to individual communities, fostering an environment conducive to the successful implementation of OVOP initiatives.

Pilot Implementation Strategy

To effectively roll out the OVOP program, a phased pilot approach is recommended:

- (1) **Selection of Pilot Wards:** Initiate the program in three wards per local government area (LGA), chosen based on criteria such as resource availability, community readiness, and market potential.
- (2) **Technical Assistance:** Provide these pilot wards with technical support to enhance value addition processes, human capital development, and marketing strategies. This includes training in modern production techniques, quality control, and branding.
- (3) **Specialization and Market Identification:** Assist communities in specializing in products where they have a comparative advantage and identifying potential markets—local, regional, and international—to ensure the economic viability of their products.
- (4) **Scaling Up:** Based on the successes and lessons learned from the pilot wards, gradually expand the program to other areas, adapting strategies to local contexts and challenges (Issa & Lawal, 2019).

Role of Government and Stakeholders

While the OVOP program emphasizes community initiative, the role of government



and other stakeholders is pivotal in providing an enabling environment:

- (1) **Technical Support:** Governments at various levels should offer technical assistance in product development, quality assurance, and compliance with regulatory standards to ensure products meet market requirements.
- (2) **Producer Promotion:** Implement promotional campaigns to raise awareness about OVOP products, both domestically and internationally, highlighting their unique qualities and cultural significance.
- (3) **Market Access:** Facilitate access to markets through the development of infrastructure such as roads and marketplaces, and by organizing trade fairs and exhibitions.
- (4) **Capacity Building:** Invest in human resource development by organizing training programs, workshops, and seminars to enhance the skills of producers and other stakeholders.
- (5) **Policy Support:** Formulate and implement policies that support small and medium enterprises (SMEs), provide financial incentives, and protect local industries from unfair competition (Issa & Lawal, 2019).

Community Engagement and Product Development

The success of the OVOP program hinges on active community participation and the strategic development of products:

- (1) **Participatory Identification of Products:** Engage community members in identifying products that are unique to their locality, have cultural significance, and possess market potential.
- (2) **Value Addition:** Focus on processing raw materials into finished or semi-finished products to increase their market value. This could involve traditional methods or the adoption of

new technologies to improve efficiency and quality.

- (3) **Branding and Packaging:** Develop distinctive branding and packaging that reflect the cultural heritage of the community, enhancing product appeal to consumers.
- (4) **Quality Assurance:** Establish quality control mechanisms to ensure products meet established standards, thereby building consumer trust and facilitating market expansion.
- (5) **Market Research:** Conduct thorough market research to understand consumer preferences, identify demand trends, and tailor products accordingly (Issa & Lawal, 2019).

Challenges in Implementing OVOP in Nigeria

Despite the promise of OVOP in promoting entrepreneurship and rural development, its implementation in Nigeria faces several challenges. These challenges include inadequate infrastructure, lack of skilled labor, limited access to capital, and poor market linkages. As noted by Olaleye and Omotayo (2020), infrastructure deficits, such as poor roads and unreliable electricity, hinder the growth of businesses in rural areas. Furthermore, access to finance remains a major barrier for rural entrepreneurs in Nigeria, with many struggling to secure funding for their ventures. Another challenge is the limited capacity of local governments to support the program. Many local government areas lack the technical expertise and resources to implement and sustain the OVOP model effectively. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of coordination between government agencies, NGOs, and local communities.

Despite the potential benefits, several challenges may impede the successful implementation of the OVOP program in Nigeria:

- (1) **Infrastructure Deficiencies:** Poor infrastructure, such as inadequate transportation networks and unreliable



power supply, can hinder production and distribution efforts.

- (2) **Limited Access to Finance:** Small-scale producers often face difficulties in accessing credit facilities, limiting their ability to invest in necessary technologies and inputs.
- (3) **Market Competition:** OVOP products may struggle to compete with mass-produced goods in terms of pricing and market penetration.
- (4) **Capacity Gaps:** Insufficient skills and knowledge among community members can affect the quality and competitiveness of products.
- (5) **Policy Inconsistencies:** Lack of coherent policies supporting local industries and frequent policy changes can create an uncertain business environment (Issa & Lawal, 2019).

Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in the economic development of any nation. In Nigeria, entrepreneurship has gained significant attention due to its potential to reduce unemployment, foster economic growth, and improve living standards. With a large population, abundant natural resources, and a growing market, Nigeria has great potential for entrepreneurial development. However, several challenges hinder the full realization of this potential. This paper discusses the concept of entrepreneurship development, its significance in Nigeria, challenges faced by entrepreneurs, government interventions, and possible solutions for sustainable entrepreneurship growth in the country. Entrepreneurship development refers to the process of enhancing the skills, knowledge, and abilities of individuals to create and manage businesses successfully (Adebayo, 2018). It involves equipping individuals with the necessary tools to identify business opportunities, take risks, and establish enterprises that contribute to economic growth. Entrepreneurship is often associated with innovation, risk-taking, and

problem-solving, which are critical for business success.

Importance of Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship development is essential for Nigeria's economic growth for several reasons:

- (1) **Job Creation:** Nigeria has a high unemployment rate, especially among youths. Encouraging entrepreneurship provides job opportunities and reduces dependence on formal employment (Okeke, 2020).
- (2) **Economic Growth:** Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contribute significantly to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Entrepreneurs drive economic activities, promote industrialization, and enhance productivity (Eze, 2019).
- (3) **Poverty Reduction:** By creating employment and generating income, entrepreneurship helps improve the standard of living and reduce poverty (Afolabi, 2018).
- (4) **Innovation and Technological Advancement:** Entrepreneurs introduce new products, services, and technologies, which enhance economic competitiveness (Ogunleye, 2021).
- (5) **Wealth Creation and Distribution:** Successful businesses generate wealth, which is distributed through salaries, taxes, and community development initiatives (Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2017).

Challenges of Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria

Despite its benefits, entrepreneurship development in Nigeria faces numerous challenges, including:

- (1) **Poor Infrastructure:** Inadequate power supply, bad roads, and limited access to essential utilities make business operations difficult (Ojo, 2020).



- (2) **Limited Access to Finance:** Many entrepreneurs struggle to secure funding due to high-interest rates, lack of collateral, and stringent loan requirements from financial institutions (Obi, 2019).
- (3) **Unfavorable Business Environment:** Bureaucratic bottlenecks, multiple taxation, and inconsistent government policies discourage entrepreneurship (Uche, 2018).
- (4) **Inadequate Entrepreneurial Education:** Many Nigerians lack proper training in business management, financial literacy, and innovation, which affects business success (Adekunle, 2020).
- (5) **Security Challenges:** Issues such as armed conflicts, kidnapping, and terrorism pose threats to businesses, particularly in some regions of the country (Adetunji, 2021).
- (6) **Lack of Market Access:** Entrepreneurs face difficulties in reaching customers due to poor marketing strategies and limited e-commerce adoption (Nwosu, 2019).

Government Interventions in Entrepreneurship Development

The Nigerian government has implemented various programs and policies to support entrepreneurship development. Some of these interventions include:

- (1) **Bank of Industry (BOI):** Provides financial assistance to entrepreneurs to start and expand businesses (BOI, 2022).
- (2) **Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN):** Offers training, funding, and mentorship to small business owners (SMEDAN, 2021).
- (3) **National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) Program:** Equips graduates with entrepreneurial skills to reduce unemployment (NYSC, 2020).
- (4) **Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Entrepreneurship Programs:** The CBN introduced initiatives such as the Agric-Business/Small and Medium Enterprises Investment Scheme (AGSMEIS) to provide low-interest loans to entrepreneurs (CBN, 2021).
- (5) **Government Grants and Loans:** Initiatives like the Youth Entrepreneurship Support (YES) program and the N-Power scheme provide financial support and training to young entrepreneurs (Adeyemi, 2022).

Solutions for Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development

To ensure the growth of entrepreneurship in Nigeria, the following solutions are recommended:

- (1) **Improving Infrastructure:** The government should invest in electricity, transportation, and internet access to create a conducive business environment.
- (2) **Enhancing Access to Finance:** Financial institutions should provide low-interest loans and flexible repayment plans for entrepreneurs.
- (3) **Promoting Entrepreneurial Education:** Schools and universities should integrate entrepreneurship into their curricula to equip students with essential business skills.
- (4) **Creating a Business-Friendly Environment:** The government should streamline business registration processes, reduce taxation burdens, and ensure policy consistency.
- (5) **Encouraging Innovation and Technology Adoption:** Entrepreneurs should leverage digital platforms to expand their market reach and improve operational efficiency.
- (6) **Strengthening Security:** The government should address insecurity issues to ensure businesses can operate without threats.



- (7) **Providing Mentorship and Support Networks:** Experienced entrepreneurs should mentor young business owners to help them navigate challenges and succeed.

Theoretical Framework

The **One Village, One Product (OVOP)** program as a tool for entrepreneurship development in Nigeria can be analyzed using several key theoretical lenses, each contributing to understanding the ways in which the program stimulates local economic growth, innovation, and community development. These theories include **entrepreneurship theory, local economic development theory, sustainable development theory, and social capital theory.**

Entrepreneurship Theory

Entrepreneurship theory provides the foundation for understanding the creation of new ventures and the role of innovation in driving economic growth. The Schumpeterian theory of entrepreneurship (Schumpeter, 1934) emphasizes the importance of innovation and creative destruction in the entrepreneurial process. This theory is particularly relevant to the OVOP program, which encourages rural communities to harness local resources and innovate by producing unique products that meet market demand. According to Schumpeter, entrepreneurs drive economic growth by disrupting established industries, and the OVOP program facilitates this process by introducing local entrepreneurs who create new market opportunities in rural Nigeria. Through OVOP, entrepreneurs transform local agricultural or artisanal products into valuable market goods, thereby stimulating local economic development.

Local Economic Development (LED) Theory

Local economic development (LED) theory is grounded in the idea that local resources, including human, natural, and social capital, can be mobilized to foster economic growth and sustainable development at the

community level (Blakely & Bradshaw, 2002). OVOP aligns with this theory by encouraging the identification and development of a specific product that reflects the unique resources of each community. By focusing on local entrepreneurship and small-scale industries, OVOP empowers rural communities to create businesses that are self-sustaining and locally anchored, thereby contributing to both poverty reduction and economic diversification in rural Nigeria (Sullivan, 2017). This decentralized approach to economic development is crucial for Nigeria, where rural areas face systemic challenges such as unemployment, underdevelopment, and dependence on subsistence agriculture.

Sustainable Development Theory

Sustainable development theory is based on the idea that economic growth should be achieved in ways that do not deplete the resources or harm the environment for future generations (Brundtland, 1987). The OVOP program fits within this framework by promoting the use of local resources and emphasizing self-reliance, which reduces dependency on external aid and fosters sustainable economic practices in rural communities. The OVOP model encourages rural entrepreneurs to create value-added products that not only enhance local economic conditions but also prioritize sustainable practices, such as preserving agricultural biodiversity and using locally sourced materials. By fostering entrepreneurship in a way that reduces environmental harm and promotes long-term economic sustainability, the OVOP program can be seen as a tool for achieving both economic development and environmental sustainability in rural Nigeria.

Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory highlights the importance of networks, trust, and collaboration in fostering economic success. Putnam (2000) argues that social networks and collective action are essential for building community resilience and promoting economic



development. In the context of OVOP, social capital is crucial for establishing local cooperatives and collaborative groups that support entrepreneurship. These networks of trust and cooperation allow community members to share resources, knowledge, and expertise, which enhances the likelihood of success for new ventures. OVOP, by fostering collective entrepreneurship, strengthens social ties and creates a supportive environment for rural business owners. Trust and shared norms within communities enable entrepreneurs to access both material and informational resources necessary to succeed (Woolcock, 2001).

Empirical Review

The empirical literature on the OVOP program in Nigeria is still developing but draws from both local and international studies that examine its impact on rural entrepreneurship and economic development. Empirical evidence suggests that while OVOP has the potential to stimulate entrepreneurship, its success is contingent on addressing several implementation challenges.

A study by Akanbi and Akinlabi (2020) explored the effects of OVOP on entrepreneurship in rural Nigeria. The research highlighted that the OVOP model has contributed to the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas, which has helped diversify income sources and reduce poverty. By encouraging rural communities to focus on their unique products, OVOP has enabled entrepreneurs to develop niche markets for goods such as local food products, handicrafts, and agro-processed items. The study found that rural entrepreneurs who participated in the program experienced increased income levels and improved livelihoods, thus enhancing their entrepreneurial skills and fostering business sustainability. The economic empowerment of rural communities is a key goal of the OVOP program. Okeke and Eme (2014) argue that OVOP contributes significantly to rural economic empowerment by supporting local entrepreneurs through training, access to

finance, and technical assistance. Their research found that OVOP helped rural communities build local enterprises capable of competing in both national and international markets. This has led to the creation of new job opportunities, particularly for women and youth. Additionally, OVOP supports rural women's involvement in entrepreneurship, thus fostering gender equality and reducing the gender gap in rural business ownership. Despite its successes, OVOP faces several challenges that hinder its widespread impact in Nigeria. Oni and Daniya (2017) identified several barriers to the successful implementation of OVOP in rural Nigeria, including poor infrastructure, limited access to finance, and lack of technical expertise. Rural entrepreneurs often struggle to access credit and face difficulties in reaching larger markets due to inadequate transportation networks and poor storage facilities. The authors also noted that while the OVOP program has led to the creation of small businesses, scaling these businesses remains a significant challenge, as many entrepreneurs lack the resources and support systems to grow their enterprises beyond the local level. UNIDO (2016) has examined the broader impact of OVOP on poverty reduction, referencing the success of similar programs in countries such as Japan and Thailand. In Nigeria, OVOP has contributed to poverty alleviation by diversifying income sources and providing rural communities with opportunities for sustainable business ventures. According to Akanbi and Akinlabi (2020), rural entrepreneurs involved in OVOP were able to increase their income levels and improve their quality of life. Moreover, the program has contributed to job creation, particularly for women and youth, who face high unemployment rates in rural areas. The involvement of both the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is critical to the success of OVOP in Nigeria. Akinola (2021) discussed the role of government agencies such as SMEDAN and BOI in providing financial support, capacity-building, and policy frameworks to facilitate OVOP's



success. In addition, NGOs play a crucial role by offering training, networking opportunities, and market access for rural entrepreneurs. NGOs such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have supported OVOP initiatives in Nigeria by providing technical assistance, especially in rural entrepreneurship training and product marketing.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a **qualitative research design** using **secondary data analysis**. The focus is on synthesizing existing knowledge to understand the OVOP program's role in entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

Data Sources

Data Sources include Academic Journals and Books: Peer-reviewed articles on OVOP implementation in Nigeria and other countries.

Government Reports: Publications from the Ministry of Trade and Investment, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), and National Planning Commission. Others include:

Policy Documents: National entrepreneurship development strategies, rural development frameworks, and OVOP-related policies.

NGO and International Organization Reports: Documents from the UNDP, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), and other relevant stakeholders.

Media Articles and Case Studies: Credible news sources and published case studies providing contextual insights into OVOP projects in Nigeria.

Data Analysis

Thematic content analysis was used to analyze interview transcripts and documentary materials. The analysis followed such systematic steps as, a careful reading of all transcripts and documents to gain a deep

understanding of the content, this was followed by assigning codes to the meaningful units of the text, such as:

- (i) Skill acquisition
- (ii) Access to funding
- (iii) Market linkage
- (iv) Institutional support
- (v) Infrastructure challenges, and
- (vi) Policy gaps

All these were later synthesized into major themes such as:

- (a) OVOP as a Platform for Grassroots Entrepreneurship
- (b) Institutional and Structural Barriers
- (c) Economic Empowerment and Job Creation
- (d) Sustainability and Policy Effectiveness

Discussion of Findings

(1) What is the impact of the "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) program on entrepreneurship development in rural Nigeria?

The "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) initiative, inspired by Japan's development model, has had a growing impact on entrepreneurship development in rural Nigeria since its introduction in the mid-2000s. The program emphasizes the use of local resources, skills, and cultural identity to produce goods that can be marketed beyond local communities, thereby stimulating entrepreneurial activity and rural industrialization (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka & Adebowale, 2012).

A major impact of the OVOP program is its role in promoting grassroots entrepreneurship by encouraging villagers to identify unique products or services endemic to their localities. Through value addition, training, and cooperative structures, the program has enabled rural dwellers to develop micro and small enterprises, especially in agriculture, handicrafts, food processing, and tourism (Okpara, 2020). For instance, in Oyo and Ogun States, communities have developed



local brands of gari, honey, and tie-and-dye products, creating new entrepreneurial opportunities, especially for women and youth.

Another significant contribution is the shift in mindset the OVOP initiative fosters among rural populations. By advocating self-reliance, community pride, and innovation, the program inspires villagers to think of business not merely as survival but as a pathway to economic mobility (Oni & Daniya, 2017). Entrepreneurship development has also been supported through technical assistance and capacity-building programs facilitated by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), which partners with local governments and community-based organizations to support OVOP clusters.

However, the impact varies across regions due to disparities in infrastructure, government commitment, and access to credit. Where state governments have actively supported the program—by investing in rural roads, market access, and training centers—the results have been more evident. In contrast, in areas lacking institutional support, entrepreneurial growth remains sluggish despite OVOP awareness (Akinola, 2021).

Furthermore, OVOP has helped to formalize many informal businesses by linking them to external markets and support institutions. This formalization is crucial in improving access to finance, business registration, and long-term sustainability. Entrepreneurial networks formed under the OVOP umbrella also enhance knowledge exchange and collective bargaining, further strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem in rural Nigeria.

In conclusion, while the OVOP program is not a silver bullet, it has played a notable role in boosting entrepreneurship development in rural Nigeria. The model's emphasis on endogenous development, value addition, and market access continues to catalyze rural enterprise formation and growth, albeit unevenly due to structural and policy limitations.

(2) How does the OVOP program contribute to the economic empowerment of rural communities in Nigeria?

The "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) program significantly contributes to the economic empowerment of rural communities in Nigeria by promoting localized production, enhancing value addition, and facilitating access to wider markets. At its core, the OVOP initiative encourages communities to identify products that reflect their cultural heritage and available resources, and to develop these into competitive economic ventures (UNIDO, 2016). This localized development approach has proven effective in enabling rural dwellers to harness their comparative advantages for sustainable income generation.

One key way the OVOP program empowers communities economically is through job creation and income diversification. By focusing on agro-processing, crafts, textiles, and tourism, OVOP provides multiple avenues for households to engage in productive activities beyond subsistence farming (Okeke & Eme, 2014). For instance, in parts of Kaduna and Osun States, communities have developed successful enterprises around shea butter and batik, respectively, thereby creating employment for women and youth while preserving local traditions.

Moreover, the program often includes technical training, business management support, and quality control measures, which enhance the entrepreneurial capacities of rural producers. These skills are critical for improving productivity and meeting the quality standards required for regional and international markets (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka & Adebowale, 2012). With proper training, communities are better positioned to move from low-value raw materials to high-value finished goods, thus capturing a greater share of the value chain.

Another important empowerment aspect is financial inclusion. Through OVOP-related cooperatives and clusters, rural entrepreneurs can access microfinance and development grants that would otherwise be unavailable to



individuals. This collective approach helps mitigate risks, improves creditworthiness, and supports bulk procurement of inputs and shared infrastructure, such as processing equipment and storage facilities (Akanbi & Akinlabi, 2020). By participating in cooperatives, rural members also develop social capital and negotiation power.

The OVOP program also fosters local ownership and pride, which are essential for sustainable economic empowerment. When communities take charge of their own development—choosing products, managing operations, and benefiting directly from outcomes—they build resilience against economic shocks and reduce dependence on external aid. Additionally, the increased income from OVOP activities has positive multiplier effects on household welfare, enabling better access to education, healthcare, and nutrition.

Despite its benefits, the impact of OVOP on empowerment is uneven across Nigeria due to infrastructural and policy challenges. Poor road networks, unreliable electricity, and limited access to modern technology often constrain production and profitability. Nevertheless, in areas where local governments and NGOs have provided adequate support, the OVOP program has proven to be a practical tool for unlocking rural economic potential.

In summary, the OVOP initiative plays a pivotal role in economically empowering rural communities in Nigeria. By promoting locally-driven entrepreneurship, building skills, and enhancing market access, the program enables rural people to transform their livelihoods and contribute meaningfully to the national economy.

(3) What are the key challenges faced by rural communities in Nigeria in implementing the OVOP program effectively?

While the "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) program holds significant promise for rural development and entrepreneurship in Nigeria, its implementation faces a range of challenges that hinder its effectiveness. These

challenges span infrastructural, institutional, socio-cultural, and financial domains, and vary across different regions of the country. A major challenge is **inadequate infrastructure**. Many rural communities lack basic amenities such as good roads, electricity, and water supply, which are essential for production, processing, and transportation of goods. Without access to reliable infrastructure, producers face increased costs and delays that reduce competitiveness in broader markets (Akanbi & Akinlabi, 2020). For instance, farmers producing processed cassava products under OVOP in Benue State often struggle with transporting their goods to urban centers due to poor rural road conditions. **Limited access to finance** is another significant barrier. Most rural entrepreneurs lack collateral or formal banking relationships, making it difficult to secure loans for expanding production or acquiring modern equipment. Although some microfinance schemes exist, they are often inadequate in scale or come with high interest rates (Oni & Daniya, 2017). This financial constraint restricts the ability of small producers to scale up operations or meet market demand. Additionally, **capacity gaps** in skills and knowledge limit the effectiveness of OVOP initiatives. Many rural participants have limited exposure to modern production techniques, quality control, branding, and digital marketing. The lack of regular and structured training programs weakens their ability to compete, especially in markets requiring standardized and high-quality goods (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka & Adebawale, 2012). **Weak institutional coordination** also hampers OVOP implementation. There is often a disconnect between federal, state, and local government agencies, leading to fragmented support and duplication of efforts. The absence of clear policies, monitoring frameworks, and dedicated OVOP institutions at the local level has contributed to poor oversight and limited sustainability of projects (Akinola, 2021). **Cultural and social resistance** to change presents another challenge. In some communities, traditional



norms may discourage women or youth from participating in income-generating activities. There is also a general skepticism toward cooperative systems due to past experiences with mismanagement or failed group ventures (Okeke & Eme, 2014). **Market access limitations** further constrain OVOP outcomes. Many rural producers lack direct access to consumers or larger markets. Without proper linkages to distribution channels, rural products often remain confined to local markets with low purchasing power, limiting profitability and growth potential (UNIDO, 2016).

In conclusion, while the OVOP model is inherently sound, its success in Nigeria is curtailed by infrastructural deficiencies, financial exclusion, weak institutional support, and social barriers. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated policy interventions, investment in rural infrastructure, inclusive financing models, and capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of rural entrepreneurs.

(4) To what extent does the OVOP program contribute to job creation and poverty reduction in rural Nigeria?

The "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) program has demonstrated a meaningful—though uneven—impact on job creation and poverty reduction in rural Nigeria. By promoting the development of locally-sourced products and micro-enterprise clusters, the OVOP initiative supports the expansion of community-based economic activities, which directly and indirectly generate employment opportunities and raise household incomes. A significant aspect of OVOP's contribution to job creation lies in its promotion of **value-added production**. Instead of merely selling raw materials, rural communities are encouraged to process and package goods such as cassava flour, palm oil, leather products, and traditional textiles. These activities often require additional labor for sorting, processing, packaging, and transportation, creating new roles that absorb local manpower, especially women and youth

(Akanbi & Akinlabi, 2020). For example, in Kwara and Ogun States, cassava processing and tie-dye ventures respectively have employed dozens of individuals per cooperative, improving local livelihoods. Beyond direct employment, OVOP has led to **indirect job creation** by stimulating related services such as transportation, equipment maintenance, local packaging supply, and retailing. These backward and forward linkages foster a more dynamic rural economy and reduce migration pressures by offering viable livelihood alternatives within communities (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka & Adebowale, 2012).

In terms of **poverty reduction**, the OVOP program contributes by enabling rural households to diversify their income sources. This diversification is crucial in contexts where seasonal farming yields are unpredictable. Participating in OVOP-related enterprises allows community members to earn additional income that can be spent on education, healthcare, and improved housing—factors that contribute to multidimensional poverty alleviation (UNIDO, 2016). Furthermore, the communal nature of OVOP through cooperatives or producer associations strengthens **collective bargaining power**. This collective approach helps lower production costs and secure better prices for goods. In turn, it leads to increased earnings for members and greater financial resilience against economic shocks (Okeke & Eme, 2014). However, the extent of OVOP's impact is limited by **geographic disparities and uneven implementation**. While some states have embraced the program with strong institutional support and public-private partnerships, others have struggled due to poor infrastructure, inadequate training, and limited market access. Consequently, job creation and poverty reduction outcomes vary widely across regions (Akinola, 2021). Moreover, **scalability remains a challenge**. Most OVOP enterprises remain small and informal, with limited capacity to grow into sustainable, competitive businesses. This limits their long-term job creation potential and the depth of



poverty reduction they can achieve. Therefore, the full potential of the OVOP program in transforming rural economies has not yet been realized.

In conclusion, the OVOP program contributes to job creation and poverty reduction in rural Nigeria by facilitating microenterprise development, promoting value chains, and fostering inclusive economic participation. However, to maximize its potential, greater attention must be paid to infrastructure, capacity building, and policy alignment.

(5) What role do government policies and non-governmental organizations play in the success of the OVOP program in Nigeria?

Government policies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a central role in the success and sustainability of the One Village, One Product (OVOP) program in Nigeria. Their involvement is critical in providing the institutional, financial, technical, and infrastructural support that rural communities need to implement OVOP effectively and achieve long-term development goals. At the **policy level**, the Nigerian government has integrated OVOP within broader frameworks of rural and small enterprise development. Agencies like the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) and the Bank of Industry (BOI) have been instrumental in offering micro-credit, training, and technical support to OVOP enterprises (SMEDAN, 2018). State and local governments also contribute by identifying community-specific products and facilitating the formation of cooperatives and clusters. Where these policies are clear and well-funded, OVOP implementation tends to be more successful. For example, in Oyo and Lagos States, state-led OVOP initiatives have received considerable backing, resulting in increased productivity and market penetration.

Furthermore, **infrastructure and market access policies**—such as investments in rural roads, electrification, and agricultural value chains—directly influence OVOP outcomes.

The more supportive the policy environment, the more likely rural communities are to overcome implementation challenges like transportation bottlenecks and inadequate storage facilities (Akanbi & Akinlabi, 2020). However, inconsistent or poorly executed policies often lead to fragmented support and limited program sustainability. **NGOs and international development organizations** also play a vital role in facilitating OVOP's success. They often fill gaps left by government agencies, particularly in training, community mobilization, and monitoring. NGOs such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have provided direct technical and financial assistance to OVOP projects in Nigeria, especially in capacity building and business development services (UNIDO, 2016). Their interventions help ensure that communities have the knowledge and tools necessary to improve product quality, enhance branding, and access broader markets. Moreover, NGOs are instrumental in **advocacy and policy dialogue**, pushing for reforms that support rural enterprise development and inclusive growth. They also serve as intermediaries between communities and government agencies, ensuring that rural voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes (Oni & Daniya, 2017). Despite these contributions, the impact of government and NGO efforts is sometimes undermined by **poor coordination**, lack of continuity, and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Projects may be discontinued when administrations change, or donor-driven initiatives may fail to align with local realities. For sustained success, stronger **collaboration between public institutions, NGOs, and local communities** is essential.

In summary, both government policies and NGO interventions are pivotal in shaping the trajectory of OVOP in Nigeria. Their roles in financing, training, infrastructure provision, and institutional support directly affect the program's ability to foster rural entrepreneurship and economic development.



(6) How can the OVOP program be adapted or improved to enhance entrepreneurship development in Nigeria?

To maximize its impact on entrepreneurship development in Nigeria, the One Village, One Product (OVOP) program requires a series of strategic adaptations and improvements. While the OVOP model has shown promise in promoting local enterprise, its effectiveness has been hampered by infrastructural, institutional, and market challenges. Tailoring the program to Nigeria's unique socio-economic context is essential for fostering a more inclusive, sustainable, and competitive rural entrepreneurial landscape. First, the **integration of digital technology** into the OVOP framework is crucial. Many rural entrepreneurs lack access to information on market trends, product standards, and digital marketing tools. Introducing digital platforms for training, e-commerce, and supply chain coordination can significantly boost market access and visibility for local products. For instance, platforms like Nigeria's TradeDepot and WhatsApp Business can be leveraged for sales and logistics management, especially in remote areas with limited physical market access (Oni & Daniya, 2017). Second, **cluster-based development** should be emphasized. Rather than isolated village enterprises, OVOP could adopt an industrial cluster approach that groups producers of similar goods within a region. This would encourage economies of scale, attract private sector investment, and facilitate knowledge sharing. The success of the Otigba ICT Cluster in Lagos shows that clustering can drive innovation and job creation when supported by adequate infrastructure and policy (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka & Adebowale, 2012). Additionally, the program must **enhance skill development** through continuous, hands-on training in entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and value-added production. Many OVOP participants lack the skills necessary to scale their businesses or compete in formal markets. Training should be localized, participatory, and tailored to the specific value chains of each community. NGOs and local institutions

like polytechnics and technical colleges can serve as delivery channels for this capacity-building effort (Akanbi & Akinlabi, 2020). To further support entrepreneurs, **access to finance must be improved**. OVOP enterprises often struggle to secure capital due to lack of collateral and formal business records. Governments should strengthen micro-credit schemes through partnerships with cooperative societies, fintech startups, and microfinance institutions. Additionally, introducing credit guarantee schemes and interest-free loans for rural clusters can help reduce risk for both lenders and borrowers. **Policy coherence and institutional coordination** are also essential. A national OVOP coordinating body should be established to align activities across federal, state, and local levels, prevent duplication, and ensure accountability. This body should work closely with SMEDAN, BOI, and other relevant agencies to streamline support and monitor outcomes (SMEDAN, 2018).

Finally, the program must promote **branding and quality assurance**. Many Nigerian products struggle to compete internationally due to inconsistent quality and weak branding. OVOP initiatives should include training in packaging, certification, and brand development to increase consumer trust and export readiness.

In summary, adapting the OVOP program for Nigeria's context requires a multi-faceted approach—embracing technology, building clusters, investing in training, improving financing, and strengthening institutional coordination. These steps will enable rural entrepreneurs not just to survive, but to thrive and drive inclusive economic growth.

Conclusion

The One Village, One Product (OVOP) program presents a valuable framework for promoting entrepreneurship, job creation, and rural economic transformation in Nigeria. Grounded in the principles of self-reliance, local resource utilization, and value addition, the program has made measurable strides in empowering rural communities. It has



stimulated micro-enterprise development, facilitated community-driven innovation, and diversified local economies through product specialization.

Nonetheless, the implementation of OVOP in Nigeria faces critical limitations. These include inadequate infrastructure, limited access to finance, fragmented institutional coordination, and weak market linkages. The success of the program is further influenced by policy effectiveness and the support of non-governmental organizations, which play a key role in capacity building, financing, and advocacy.

Despite these challenges, OVOP remains a potent strategy for addressing persistent issues such as rural poverty, youth unemployment, and underutilization of local resources. Its potential lies in its adaptability and capacity to build inclusive, locally-anchored economies. However, unlocking this potential requires intentional reforms, strategic investment, and stronger stakeholder collaboration.

The way forward lies in leveraging digital tools, strengthening entrepreneurial clusters, and creating an enabling environment through coherent policies and inclusive financing models. When well-coordinated and supported, the OVOP program can catalyze sustainable rural entrepreneurship and contribute meaningfully to national development objectives.

Recommendations

It is recommended, among other things that, government and other stakeholders should:

Establish Strong Institutional Frameworks: Create a dedicated national OVOP coordination agency to harmonize efforts at all levels of government and ensure consistency, accountability, and resource mobilization across regions.

Promote Access to Affordable Financing: Develop targeted financing mechanisms such as micro-credit schemes, credit guarantees, and zero-interest loans tailored to OVOP

participants, particularly women and youth-led enterprises.

Enhance Capacity Building and Skills Development: Introduce comprehensive and continuous training in business management, production techniques, digital marketing, and quality assurance to empower rural entrepreneurs with the necessary competencies for sustainability and growth.

Invest in Rural Infrastructure: Improve access to rural roads, electricity, water, and storage facilities to support efficient production and distribution of OVOP goods, reducing transaction costs and post-harvest losses.

Support Branding and Market Expansion: Assist OVOP enterprises in developing standardized branding, packaging, and certification to improve product visibility and acceptance in national and international markets.

Leverage Technology and Digital Tools: Integrate ICT solutions to support digital literacy, market access, e-commerce, supply chain management, and remote training for rural producers.

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Digital Marketing and Purchase Decisions Among Undergraduate Students in South-West Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of digital marketing on purchase decisions among undergraduate students in selected universities in South-West Nigeria. The rapid expansion of digital technologies and the increasing migration from traditional advertising platforms to interactive online environments have significantly reshaped consumer behaviour, particularly among young people. Anchored on Technological Determinism Theory, the study investigated how digital marketing platforms and content strategies shape students' buying decisions within the Nigerian university context. A quantitative survey design was adopted. Data were collected through a structured Google Form questionnaire administered to 300 undergraduate students selected through quota sampling from the University of Ibadan (federal), Lagos State University (state), and Babcock University (private), ensuring institutional representation across the out of the six state in the selected region. Descriptive statistical tools were employed for data analysis. Findings revealed high awareness and engagement with digital marketing among respondents, with a majority having purchased products through digital channels. Social media emerged as the most influential platform shaping purchase decisions, while content marketing and video promotions were identified as dominant persuasive strategies. Convenience, time efficiency, and the flexibility to shop anytime and anywhere were major motivations for digital purchasing. Many respondents also engaged in online product research before making purchase decisions and expressed willingness to recommend products based on digital marketing exposure. However, concerns such as delivery delays, internet limitations, and security risks were noted. The study concludes that digital marketing significantly influences undergraduate students' purchase decisions in South-West Nigeria and recommends enhanced transparency, digital trust mechanisms, and customer-centred strategies to improve campaign effectiveness.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Purchase Decision, Undergraduate Students, Social Media Platforms, Consumer Behaviour

Introduction

The prophecy of visionary scholars concerning the transformation of human society, particularly the mass media landscape, has become increasingly evident in the sweeping advancement of digital technologies. The rapid evolution of information and communication technologies has not only altered patterns of media consumption but has also redefined marketing communication practices across the globe. Digital transformation represents a significant shift in business operations, leveraging modern information systems and computer technologies to create innovative and

interactive models for engaging customers (Anweh, 2020; Savic, 2020). In this contemporary environment, marketing and advertising stakeholders are compelled to continuously adapt their promotional strategies to align with emerging digital trends and audience expectations (Onaopepo, Ojetola & Sunday, 2023). The ongoing technological revolution has therefore positioned digital media platforms as indispensable tools for business visibility, engagement, and competitiveness (Elvionita, Hasibuan, Rahayu, Fajarpasaribu & Pasaribu, 2025).

Digital marketing primarily seeks to establish dynamic communication channels



through which organisations can interact directly and efficiently with their customers. Through internet-enabled devices such as smartphones, tablets, and personal computers, businesses are able to disseminate information, respond to feedback, and personalise marketing messages (Çizmecı & Ercan, 2015). Compared to traditional marketing techniques, digital marketing offers significant advantages including cost-effectiveness, flexibility, measurable outcomes, rapid modification of campaigns, and immediate customer engagement (Bulunmaz, 2016; Stewart & Zhao, 2000). Chaffey (2009) defines digital marketing as the application of digital technologies including blogs, social networks, podcasts, and online platforms to achieve marketing objectives and enhance profitability. As internet penetration continues to increase, digital platforms have become strategic channels for advertisers seeking to influence consumer behaviour (Ashraf & Mohammed, 2012). Empirical evidence further suggests that organisations adopting digital marketing strategies are able to reduce operational costs while expanding their market reach (Afrina, Sadia & Kaniz, 2015).

One of the most profound developments within digital marketing is the emergence of social media marketing (SMM). Social media platforms provide a two-way communication environment that enables interaction between brands and consumers, as well as among consumers themselves (Gautam & Sharma, 2017). This interactive ecosystem allows marketers to refine strategies based on consumer preferences, thereby strengthening brand loyalty and purchase intention (Prasath & Yoganathan, 2018). Consumer purchasing behaviour is influenced by environmental factors such as peer groups, cultural orientation, and media exposure (Solomon, 2006). Digital marketing content including online reviews, pricing comparisons, and product descriptions provides prospective buyers with the information necessary to evaluate alternatives and make informed purchase decisions (Rohit, 2020).

In the Nigerian context, the deregulation of the telecommunications industry has stimulated remarkable growth in mobile connectivity and digital engagement. The proliferation of smartphones has transformed mobile devices into essential tools for communication, commerce, and information exchange. Within this highly competitive digital marketplace, organisations continually seek innovative strategies to differentiate their brands and secure consumer preference (Olowogboye, 2017). Despite the expanding relevance of digital marketing, existing studies have largely concentrated on specific industries or foreign contexts. For instance, Korzhevskiy and Mihus (2022) examined digital communication and business reputation in Ukraine, while Aidil et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between digital marketing and purchasing decisions among SMEs in Indonesia. Although these studies provide valuable insights, they were conducted within socio-economic environments that differ considerably from Nigeria and did not specifically focus on undergraduate students as a distinct consumer segment.

Undergraduate students represent a digitally active demographic group whose purchasing behaviour is increasingly shaped by online exposure and media fragmentation. However, empirical research examining the influence of digital marketing on their purchase decisions within South-West Nigeria remains limited. Given the growing recognition of digital platforms as integral drivers of two-way communication and consumer engagement (Shawky et al., 2022), there is a need for context-specific investigation.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to examine the influence of digital marketing on purchase decisions among undergraduate students in selected universities in South-West Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

Generally, the main objective of this study is to assess the effect of digital marketing on the



purchase decision among undergraduate students in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- (i) Determine the dominant digital marketing platforms among undergraduate students in South-West Nigeria.
- (ii) Ascertain the kind of product acquired through digital marketing by the undergraduate students in South-West Nigeria.
- (iii) Examine the influence of digital marketing on purchase decision among undergraduate students in South-West Nigeria.

Literature Review

Digital Marketing

Wilson et al. (2024). In the digital age, marketing has undergone a significant transformation, shifting from traditional methods to a more dynamic and interactive approach known as digital marketing. This shift has not only changed the way businesses communicate with their consumers but also how consumers make purchasing decisions. Digital marketing, encompassing a wide range of online strategies and tools, has become a vital component in the marketing mix of organizations globally.

Digital marketing according to Chaffey (2009) is defined as the process of applying digital to the market using innovations such as blogs, feeds, podcasts, and social networks, which contribute to marketing and gain profits and maintain the number of subscribers. According to Redjeki and Affandi (2021) the process of digital development is very significantly influential; this can be seen from Nigeria marketers who moved from traditional marketing to technological media which is considered to play a more important role.

According to Sanjaya (2009), Digital Marketing is defined as marketing activities involving media such as e-mail, websites, blogs, and others.

Digital marketing has six indicators, according to Mewoh (2019), these indicators

are; Products, Place, Ways of Reception, Payments, Shipping, and Customer Services. Mewoh (2019) explains that products are types of products that can be marketed, for example fashion, food, beverages, household appliances, electronics, and others. Place has to do with how internet must be domain and hosted that must be better know. Furthermore, ways of reception have to do with the method applied, namely by using SMS media, e-mail, chat, and shopping applications. Payment is the method of transactions which could be by interbank transfer, debit, credit and other payments while customer service is a form of service to customers who experience various difficulties, both how to order, how to pay and several other complaints.

Digital Marketing Channels and Platforms

Digital marketing channels and platforms constitute the primary avenues through which businesses reach and engage their target audiences. When leveraged effectively, these channels enhance publicity, increase brand visibility, generate leads, and expand customer bases (Lavanya, 2023). Each digital channel offers unique benefits and poses distinct challenges, and businesses must carefully select those that best align with their promotional objectives and audience characteristics.

Mobile marketing has emerged as one of the most prominent and influential digital marketing channels. It is widely recognised as fast, cost-effective, and capable of delivering immediate information to consumers while enabling the completion of purchase transactions without physical presence (Alam et al., 2015). By providing direct access to product benefits and features, mobile marketing significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions (Tiffany et al., 2018). Moreover, mobile marketing encompasses practices that allow organisations to communicate interactively and contextually with audiences via mobile devices and networks (Mohamed et al., 2016). This interactive mode enhances customer



engagement and affects decision-making in favour of the promoted product or service.

Affiliate marketing involves collaboration between businesses and partners or individuals to promote products or services on behalf of the organisation (Lavanya, 2023). Affiliates earn commissions for sales generated through their unique links, making this a performance-based advertising strategy (Vaibhava, 2019). Common affiliate channels include video advertisements hosted on platforms such as the YouTube Partner Program, as well as social media posts that incorporate affiliate links. This approach enables broader reach and incentivises partners to actively promote products to their networks.

AI-driven platforms, including chatbots, provide automated, yet personalised, interactions with both prospective and regular customers. These systems can respond to queries, offer recommendations, handle customer support, and generate leads efficiently (Lavanya, 2023). By improving responsiveness and personalisation, AI and chatbots enhance customer experience and can positively influence purchasing behaviour.

AR and VR technologies offer immersive digital experiences, allowing customers to explore products virtually, engage in interactive demonstrations, and participate in simulated environments (Lavanya, 2023). These channels provide highly engaging experiences that strengthen brand awareness and influence decision-making by offering experiential learning and interaction with products before purchase.

Content marketing focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience (Lavanya, 2023). Content assets, including blog posts, eBooks, whitepapers, infographics, and online brochures, build trust, establish authority, generate leads, and foster customer loyalty (Vaibhava, 2019). By providing informative and persuasive material, content marketing plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions.

CRM platforms manage interactions and track customer data to inform business decisions and enhance customer experience (Lavanya, 2023). The insights derived from CRM systems guide marketing strategies, optimise communication, and improve engagement, thereby driving sales and strengthening customer relationships.

Display advertising involves placing visual banner advertisements on websites or applications to capture the attention of potential customers (Vaibhava, 2019). Its visual prominence, systemic placement, and continuous accessibility enable businesses to build brand awareness, attract traffic, and generate leads effectively.

Email marketing remains a vital channel for businesses to communicate directly with audiences. It is frequently employed to share promotional content, offer discounts, announce events, or redirect customers to websites (Vaibhava, 2019). Effective email campaigns can nurture leads, increase customer loyalty, and drive sales. Examples of content include subscription newsletters, follow-up emails for downloaded resources, welcome messages for new customers, holiday promotions, and instructional or tips-based email series for ongoing engagement.

Purchasing Decision

According to (Schoffman and Kanuk, 2008), purchasing decisions are decisions made between two or more alternative consumers regarding purchases. While everyone's decision-making process will be influenced by personality traits, age, income, and lifestyle factors, the general buying process is the same for everyone.

Every day, customers make decisions about every aspect of their lives. However, there are times when we make these decisions without considering how they are made or the steps involved in making them. When making a decision, a person must have other options available to them (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2008).



Consumers are in a position to make a decision because they have the choice to make a purchase or not make a purchase or to use their time. Conversely, decisions are not made when consumers are forced to make certain purchases or take certain actions because they have no other choice (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2008).

According to (Kotler and Armstrong, 2018), purchasing decisions are influenced by unforeseen circumstances. Expected revenue, expected costs, and anticipated benefits of a product are all factors that consumers can use to formulate their purchase intentions. Sudaryono (2014) defines purchasing decisions as the act of selecting one option from two or more. In other words, the person taking on the problem must be able to choose one option from a number of others. A person is in a position to make a purchase decision when presented with two options to buy or not to buy and then decides to buy.

Knowing a problem, finding out more about a product or brand, and evaluating how well each alternative can solve the problem are the first steps in a series of processes that culminate in a purchasing decision (Tjiptono, 2014). In addition, (Kotler and Keller, 2012) state that consumers go through a five-stage process when making purchases. These stages include problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives that can solve the problem, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior, which begins long before the consumer actually makes a purchase and lasts a long time.

Theoretical Review

The relevant theory adopted for this study is The Technological Determinism Theory. The term 'technological determinism' was coined by Thorstein Veblen and this theory revolves around the proposition that technology in any given society defines its nature. Technology is viewed as the driving force of culture in a society and it determines its course of history. Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that aims to provide a causative link between technology and a society's nature. It

tries to explain as to whom or what could have a controlling power in human affairs. The theory questions the degree to which human thought or action is influenced by technological factors.

A critique of technological determinism is that technology never forces itself on members of the society. Man creates technology and chooses to use them. He invents social media and chooses to use it. There is no imposition on the part of the technology to be used rather technology requires people to participate or involve themselves at some point or another, the choice of using technology and experiencing its effects therefore lies in the hand of a human being.

Technological determinism theory is suitable in explaining the effect of digital media as the theory is a new media-oriented theory and its core assumption states that media technologies shape how individuals in a society think, feel, act and how a society operates as we move from one technological age to another (Griffin2000). It is also of the notion that people learn, feel and think the way they do because of the message they received through digital media. The theory is also suitable for explaining the fact that changes in communication technology produce profound changes in our societal order.

Empirical Review

Several scholars have explored the effects of digital marketing on consumer purchase decisions across different contexts. Wilson et al. (2024) examined how digital marketing strategies influence consumer behaviour using qualitative in-depth interviews and thematic analysis. Their study revealed that social media platforms, influencer endorsements, and user-generated content significantly shape purchasing decisions. Ethical considerations, including data privacy and honest advertising, were highlighted as essential for maintaining consumer trust and loyalty. A limitation of the study, however, was the lack of demographic details of respondents, which restricts contextual understanding.



Agbi et al. (2025) investigated the impact of digital marketing on youths' consumption habits and perceptions of energy drinks in South-West Nigeria. Employing a quantitative cross-sectional design and convenience sampling, 292 youths from Lagos and Oyo states participated in the study. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics. Findings indicated moderate consumption of energy drinks, with social media identified as the primary platform for marketing exposure. The study, however, was limited by its narrow focus on a single product category, which reduces its generalisability to broader youth consumption behaviours.

AlHelali (2023) assessed the impact of digital marketing on consumer purchasing decisions in the United Arab Emirates. Using a quantitative survey with 392 participants and analysis via SPSS, the study found that social media and online advertising significantly influenced purchasing behaviour, while demographic factors such as age, gender, and education also contributed. Similarly, Fitriyah et al. (2022) examined the effects of digital marketing and product quality on purchasing decisions among SMEs in Indonesia, demonstrating that both factors jointly influence consumer behaviour.

Although these studies provide valuable insights, most were conducted in foreign or sector-specific contexts, limiting their applicability to undergraduate students in Nigeria. Furthermore, previous research largely overlooked students, who constitute a critical target segment for digital marketing campaigns. These gaps justify the present study, which examines the influence of digital marketing on purchase decisions among undergraduate students in selected universities in South-West Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive design and quantitative survey method, which is appropriate for investigating patterns of digital marketing influence on undergraduate students' purchase decisions. The survey approach allows for the systematic collection of

data from a large population and facilitates statistical analysis of respondents' behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions regarding digital marketing engagement. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms, which was deemed suitable given the digitally active nature of the target population. The online format enabled the study to reach a wide audience without requiring physical interaction, thereby ensuring efficiency and the collection of detailed and authentic responses.

The study employed a purposive sampling technique to select three universities in South-West Nigeria: The University of Ibadan (federal), Lagos State University (state), and Babcock University (private). These institutions were chosen to represent the diversity of university ownership structures and to ensure a balanced reflection of undergraduate students across public and private institutions. The selection of states hosting these universities was informed by their high levels of industrialisation, internet penetration, new media consumption, and technology adoption, which are critical factors influencing students' exposure to and engagement with digital marketing (Ekanem, 2021).

Within each university, quota sampling was applied to select 100 undergraduate students, resulting in a total sample of 300 respondents. Quotas were established to ensure equal representation across the selected universities, thereby capturing a comprehensive view of student engagement with digital marketing platforms. The questionnaire was designed to measure students' awareness, adoption, and responses to various digital marketing strategies, including social media campaigns, content marketing, and video promotions. The instrument underwent a pilot test to verify clarity, reliability, and validity before full administration.

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations, to examine patterns of digital marketing adoption and their influence on



students' purchase decisions. The methodological approach ensured that the study generated robust and generalisable insights

into the impact of digital marketing on undergraduate consumer behaviour in the Nigerian context.

Findings

Table 1: Respondents General Information

S/N	Item	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Gender	Male	130	43.3%
		Female	170	56.6%
		Total	300	100%
2	Age	Below 19 years	30	10%
		20-29 years	250	83%
		30-39 and above	20	6.7%
		Total	300	100%
3	Affiliated Universities	University of Ibadan	100	
		University of Lagos	100	
		Babcock University	100	
		Total	300	100%
4	Educational Level	100	110	37%
		200	30	10%
		300	30	10%
		400	120	40%
		other	10	3%
		Total	300	100%

The above table presents the demographic information of the respondents. The table showed that 43% of the respondents were Male while 57% were Female. This means that there more female participants in this study.

The table showed that 10% of the respondents were between the age ranges below 19 years, 80% of the respondents were between the age ranges of 20-29, while 10% respondents were between the age ranges of 30-39. There are not respondents that's falls within the age of 40-49 and 50 years above, this means that majority of the respondents were between the age of 20-29.

The table showed that 10 respondents representing 3% were in 100 Level, 30 respondents which represent 10% were in 200 Level, 30 respondents which represents 10% were in 300 level, 120 respondents which represents 40% were in 400 Level while 110 respondents representing 37% are in other levels apart from those listed above. This means that most of the respondents were in 400 level.

Table 2: Response to whether the respondents have heard about digital marketing before

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	280	93.3%
No	10	3.3%
Maybe	10	3.3%
Total	300	100%

Table 2 shows response of the respondents on whether the respondents have heard about digital marketing before, the table showed that 93% of the respondents chose Yes, 3% of the respondents chose No while 3% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 3: Response to whether the respondents had ever purchased goods through digital marketing before

Item	Frequency	Outpatient
Yes	250	83%
No	50	17%
Maybe	0	0%
Total	300	100%



Table 3 shows response of the respondents on whether the respondents had ever purchased goods through digital marketing before, the table showed that 83% of the respondents chose Yes, 17% of the respondents chose No, while no respondents chose maybe.

Table 4: Response to the products that respondents have purchased through digital marketing before

Item	Frequency	Percentage
E-books	50	17
Virtual video games	60	20
Software	10	3
Online courses	30	10
Others	150	50
TOTAL	300	100

Table above table shows various products that respondents have purchased through digital marketing channels before. The table showed that 17% of the respondents chose e-books, 20% of the respondents chose virtual video games, 3% of the respondents chose software, 10% of the respondents chose online courses while 50% of the respondents chose others.

Table 5: Response to the frequency at which respondents purchase products through digital market channels

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	10	3
Weekly	0	0
Monthly	10	3
Quarterly	110	37
Others	170	57
Total	300	100

The above table presents the frequency at which respondents purchase products through digital market channel. The table showed that 3% of the respondents chose daily, no respondent chose weekly, 3% of the respondents chose monthly, 37% of the respondents chose quarterly while 57% of the respondents chose others.

Table 6: Response to whether respondents had ever made a purchase based on a digital marketing campaign you encountered

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	280	93.3
No	10	3.3
Maybe	10	3.3
Total	300	100

Table 6 shows response of the respondents on whether the respondents had made a purchase based on a digital campaign you encountered, the table showed that 93% of the respondents chose Yes, 3% of the respondents chose No, while, 3% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 7: Response to the digital marketing channel that respondents find most significant in your purchase decisions

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Social media	170	57
Email	0	0
Websites	100	33
Search engine ads	10	3
Others	20	7
Total	300	100

Table 7 shows the digital market channel that respondents find most significant. The table showed that 57% of the respondents chose social media, no respondents chose email, 33% of the respondents chose websites, 3% of the respondents chose search engine ads while 7% of the respondents chose others.

Table 8: Response to whether respondents feel more motivated to purchase products or services from brands that engage in effective digital marketing

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	240	80
No	30	10
Maybe	30	10
Total	300	100



Table 8 shows response of the respondents to whether the respondents feel more motivated to purchase products or services from brands that engage in effective digital marketing, the table showed that 80% of the respondents chose Yes, 10% of the respondents chose No, while, 10% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 9: Response to whether respondents had ever researched products online before making purchase in a physical store

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	280	93.3
No	10	3.3
Maybe	10	3.3
Total	300	100

The above table reveals response of the respondents to whether respondents had ever research products online before making purchase in a physical store, the table showed that 93% of the respondents chose Yes, 3% of the respondents chose No, while, 3% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 10: Responses to whether respondents have ever shared or recommended products or services online based on digital marketing content the respondents have seen

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	240	80
No	30	10
Maybe	30	10
Total	300	100

The above table presents the responses of the respondents to whether respondents have ever shared or recommended products or services online based on digital market content the respondents have seen, the table showed that 80% of the respondents chose Yes, 10% of the respondents chose No, while, 10% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 11: Responses to whether respondents prefer to purchase certain categories of products from specific digital platforms or retailers

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	200	67
No	50	16.6
Maybe	50	16.6
Total	300	100

Table 11 shows responses of the respondents to whether respondents prefer to purchase certain categories of product from specific digital platforms or retailers, the table showed that 67% of the respondents chose Yes, 16% of the respondents chose No, while, 16% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 12: Response to whether respondents actively seek out digital marketing content related to the products they purchase online

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	230	77
No	40	13
Maybe	30	10
Total	300	100

Table 12 shows responses of the respondents to whether respondents actively seek out digital marketing content related to the products they purchase online, the table showed that 77% of the respondents chose Yes, 13% of the respondents chose No, while, 10% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 13: Responses to the digital marketing strategies influence respondents decision to purchase products online

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Targeted ads	20	7
Influencer endorsements	40	13
Content Marketing	150	50
Video Marketing	50	17
Others	40	13
Total	300	100



Table 13 shows the digital market strategies that influence respondent's decision to purchase products online. The table showed that 7% of the respondents chose targeted ads, 13% of the respondents chose influencer endorsements, 50% of the respondents chose content marketing, 17% of the respondents chose video marketing while 13% of the respondents chose others.

Table 14: Responses to whether respondents noticed any trends or changes in their online purchasing behavior regarding specific types of products over time

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	150	50
No	100	33
Maybe	50	17
Total	300	100

Table 14 shows responses of the respondents to whether respondents noticed any trends or changes in their online purchasing behavior regarding specific types of products over time, the table showed that 50% of the respondents chose Yes, 33% of the respondents chose No, while, 17% of the respondents chose maybe.

Table 15: Responses to the factor that influence respondents' decision to purchase products through digital channels rather than traditional brick-and-mortar stores

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Low cash in circulation	20	7
ability to buy products anytime anywhere	90	30
Less stress	150	50
Others	40	13
Total	300	100

Table 15 shows responses to the factor that influence respondents' decision to purchase products through digital channels rather than traditional brick-and-mortar stores. The table showed that 7% of the respondents chose Low cash in circulation, 30% of the respondents

chose ability to buy products anytime anywhere, 50% of the respondents chose less stress while 13% of the respondents chose others.

Table 16: Responses to the problem that respondents has encountered when purchasing products through digital channels

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate Internet facility	50	17
Delivery from far place	100	33
Inability to pay with cash	30	10
Lack of security	60	20
Others	60	20
Total	300	100

The above table presents the responses to the problem that respondents has encountered when purchasing products through digital channels. The table showed that 17% of the respondents chose inadequate internet facility, 33% of the respondents chose delivery from far place, 10% of the respondents chose inability to pay with cash, 20% of the respondents chose lack of security while 20% of the respondents chose others.

Discussion of Findings

This study investigated the influence of digital marketing on purchase decisions among undergraduate students in South-West Nigeria. The discussion below aligns with the study objectives.

Findings show that social media is the most influential platform, identified by 57% of respondents, followed by websites (33%) and search engine ads (3%). Email marketing was not considered significant. This supports Wilson et al. (2024) and AlHelali (2023), who note that social media's interactive nature strongly drives consumer engagement. Consistent with Technological Determinism Theory, the results indicate that technology shapes students' behaviours and choices.



Students purchased e-books (17%), virtual video games (20%), online courses (10%), software (3%), and other goods (50%). This reflects the versatility of digital marketing in facilitating both educational and entertainment purchases (Fitrisyah et al., 2022; Tiffany et al., 2018).

A majority of students (83%) had purchased goods via digital marketing channels, and 93% reported being influenced by campaigns. Content marketing (50%) and video promotions (17%) were the most persuasive strategies, while 93% of respondents conducted online research before purchasing in physical stores, and 80% recommended products online. Convenience, time efficiency, and accessibility were major motivators. These findings confirm that digital marketing significantly shapes students' purchasing behaviour, supporting the assertion that technological platforms influence societal practices (Griffin, 2000).

Despite its effectiveness, respondents noted issues such as delivery delays (33%), internet limitations (17%), security concerns (20%), and payment difficulties (10%), highlighting operational constraints in the digital marketplace. In summary, digital marketing strongly impacts undergraduate students' purchasing decisions, with social media, content marketing, and video-based strategies being the most influential, while accessibility and convenience remain key motivators.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that digital marketing significantly influences the purchase decisions of undergraduate students in South-West Nigeria. Social media, websites, content marketing, and video promotions emerged as the most impactful platforms and strategies, while convenience, accessibility, and time efficiency were major factors motivating digital purchases. Students frequently conduct online research, make informed choices, and share recommendations, reflecting active engagement with digital marketing content.

The findings underscore the relevance of Technological Determinism Theory, as digital technologies shape students' behaviours, decision-making, and interaction with the marketplace. Despite its effectiveness, challenges such as delivery delays, limited internet access, payment constraints, and security concerns indicate that operational and infrastructural improvements are necessary for optimal digital marketing outcomes. Overall, digital marketing has become a pivotal mechanism for influencing consumer behaviour among Nigerian undergraduates, highlighting the need for marketers to adopt student-focused, transparent, and interactive strategies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of digital marketing in influencing undergraduate students' purchase decisions in South-West Nigeria. First, marketers should prioritise social media and content-driven strategies, as these platforms and techniques were identified as the most influential in shaping students' buying behaviour. Creative, interactive, and visually engaging content can further capture attention and encourage purchase decisions.

Second, given that students actively research products and seek digital marketing content before making purchases, businesses should ensure that online product information is accurate, detailed, and easily accessible. Providing comprehensive descriptions, customer reviews, and comparison tools will enable students to make informed choices and build trust in the brand.

Third, marketers should address operational challenges such as delivery delays, payment options, and digital security to improve customer experience. Ensuring reliable logistics, secure transactions, and responsive support will reinforce positive engagement and encourage repeat purchases.

Lastly, students themselves should be encouraged to develop digital literacy skills, enabling them to critically evaluate marketing



content and make more informed purchasing decisions. Similarly, marketers should adopt transparent, student-centred approaches that consider the preferences, motivations, and behaviours of this key demographic.

By implementing these recommendations, organisations can optimise the impact of digital marketing campaigns, strengthen customer relationships, and foster a more dynamic and mutually beneficial interaction between brands and undergraduate consumers.

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A Pragmatic Analysis of Selected Nigerian Newspapers' Reports on the #EndBadgovernance Protest

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Abstract

The news media plays a critical role in shaping public opinion and delivering fundamental information to the public. News reports can be used either to incite the public against the government, to galvanize support for the government or to simply present facts. All these are done by using language in a special way. Pragmatic analysis seeks to explain the special use of language as deployed by news reporters to decode the message buried in prints. This is to point out the different intentions of the writer in the message. To this end, this paper undertakes a pragmatic analysis of selected newspapers' reports on the #EndBadGovernance protest in Nigeria with the aim of investigating how pragmatic acts are performed and the communicative intention of the language users are achieved. Ten (10) newspapers' reports from The Punch and Daily Trust were purposively selected from July 31st to August 4th, 2024 using Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory complemented with Bach and Harnish's (1979) Intention Theory as the theoretical framework of the study. Findings revealed that assertive pract gave general information about the protest as a way of guiding the readers on how the protest went, the effects it had on the people and properties and the need to forestall a recurrence of it. It was also established that pragmatic acts used in the newspapers' reports are determined by the context, situation and the common knowledge between the speaker and the reader. In addition, the study found out that the directive pract of stating, requesting, appealing, threatening and ordering were predominantly used to shape public discourse, influence reactions and help to end the increasingly violent protest in order to restore peace and order in the country. It was further observed that the news reporters use news items to perform several acts of disappointment, sadness, expressing and worrying to covey emotional response to the protest. It can be concluded that these theories highlighted the nuanced ways in which media narratives influence public perception and discourse, emphasizing the role of intention and pragmatic action in shaping the portrayal of political and economic events.

Keywords: Print Media, #EndBadGovernance Protest, Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory, Bach and Harnish's Theory

Background to the Study

The news media refers to the section of the mass media that focuses on presenting current news to the public. These include print media (newspapers, magazine); broadcast media (radio stations, television stations, television networks), and increasingly internet-based media (World Wide Web pages, weblogs). The media is seen as a source of information and it has the potential to influence people's perspectives on societal issues. These range from economic, social, political and religious among others. The media, especially the print, is regarded as the conscience of the society due

to the important role they play in nation building. Melkote (2009) states that newspaper reports are important sources of information and play a significant role in shaping public attitudes. What the audience consume in the media determines, to a large extent, their perspectives about issues raised by the media. As such, what guides people to news stories must be crafted in a manner that does not confuse the mass audience or alter reality (Dong & Zheng, 2020 cited in Adeoti, 2023).

Based on the above, the language of newspaper is always meticulously used by



editors, reporters, and columnists, to invoke reactions in the audience/readers. Therefore, their choice of words and style are considered impeccable and endearing to the readers. In the communication industry, the newspapers reserve the right to choose what to say and how to say it to the readers just like every language user, in as far as it does not go against the ethics of good reportage. They can also in an implicit manner, relate to the readers how certain or doubtful they are with the information they are giving out to the audience. The news media has an enormous influence in helping to shape public opinion and provide basic information to the people. People's actions, inaction or reactions at times, are influenced by how a news item has been framed or crafted.

The incidents of economic challenges in Nigeria as occasioned by the President's economic policies were reported by different newspapers outlets. While many of the media outlets portrayed it from the long term effects of the policy, others simply looked at it as it affects the common man on the streets. These different approaches to reportage regarding the economic crunch brought about mixed reactions from the populace, which eventually led to August 1st protest in the country.

The protest which has different nomenclature ranging from hunger protest, hardship protest and EndBadGovernance protest was planned to be on for ten days and as each day passed, newspapers outlets were reporting the events differently. The primary aim of this study is to investigate how pragmatic acts are performed in some selected Nigerian newspapers' (*the Punch* and *the Daily Trust*) reports on the #EndBadGovernance protest in Nigeria. Although, linguistic approach has been used to interpret or analyse newspaper reports on various economic and political issues in Nigeria, there is a need to use pragmatic approach to bring out the implied and hidden meaning in the newspapers' reports on the #EndBadGovernance protest which has received little or no research attention. Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that

studies how context influences the interpretation of meaning. It focuses on the speaker's intentions, the relationship between speakers and the circumstances surrounding the conversation. Zakariyah (2016) asserts that pragmatics is the study of language use which is concerned with meaning of utterances rather than a grammatical sentence or proposition. Pragmatics is thus the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said (Zakariyah, 2016). Therefore, this paper sets out to look into the pragmatic acts and intended meaning in the newspapers' reports on the #EndBadGovernance protest in Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to investigate how pragmatic acts are performed and the communicative intention in the selected Nigerian newspapers' (*the Punch* and *the Daily Trust*) reports on the #EndBadGovernance protest in Nigeria. The main objectives therefore are to:

- (1) examine the pragmatic acts used in the selected newspapers' reports on the #EndBadGovernance protest in Nigeria.
- (2) identify the communicative intentions and purposes behind the news reports.
- (3) analyse how readers can contextually and appropriately interpret the lexical meaning of the language used in the news reports.

Methodology

This paper adopts a qualitative approach to analyse newspapers' reports from two Nigerian national daily newspapers (*the Punch* and *the Daily Trust*). The two newspapers were selected as representatives of national newspapers because they are part of the most widely read newspapers in Nigeria and they share similar features in terms of circulation and coverage. Ten (10) newspapers' reports from *the Punch* and *the Daily Trust* from July 31st and August 4th 2024 on the #EndBadGovernance protest in Nigeria were



purposely selected for analysis. The linguistic theories adopted for the analysis are the Pragmatic Acts Theory of Mey (2001) and Bach and Harnish (1979) intention theory. To provide a more comprehensive analysis, Bach and Harnish's theory is employed alongside Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory. The rationale for integrating Bach and Harnish's theory with Mey's theory is to address the limitations of Mey's approach, which primarily focuses on context, by providing a more balanced analysis that considers the speaker's or writer's intention. This combination helps elucidate the intentions behind the news reports, offering deeper insights into the communicative purposes and strategies used by news reporters to convey their messages. A news item (NI); specifically the topic sentence in the news item and the headline (HL) constitute each datum for analysis.

The Evolution of Print Media in Nigeria

Since the publication of Nigeria's first newspaper, "*Iwe Irohin fun awon Egba ati Yoruba*" in 1859 by an Anglican missionary, Rev. Henry Townsend, print media has played a crucial role in the nation's development (Bittner, 1989 cited in Saka, 2008). The primary role of newspapers in the country was to keep people informed about government activities. The situation remained unchanged until the 1920s when Europeans started to invade, plunder and colonizing other parts of the world. The drive to resist the invaders' unfavorable policies ignited a powerful revolution among the educated elite, who saw the print media as the most effective for waging war (Saka, 2008). The Nigerian journalists of this period had a unified objective: securing independence for Nigeria. The media before independence were utilized as political instruments in Nigeria's quest for nationhood. Saka (2008) says since the colonial system was never designed to the benefit of the governed, the tempo of political agitation dominated Nigerian journalism until 1960, when Nigeria gained independence from Britain.

The next newspaper to be established after Iwe Irohin was the Anglo African Newspaper. It was the second newspaper that was established in Nigeria by a foreigner—a West Indian immigrant called Robert Campbell. The newspaper was established in Lagos in 1863 to promote the interest and welfare of Lagosians. Campbell who was a printer was publishing the newspaper in English language and it was a weekly newspaper that was sold for three pence. The news coverage was more than that of Iwe Irohin. It carried both local and international news. The first page of the newspaper was devoted to advertisements, notices and announcements. The newspaper folded up in 1865 (Odorume, 2012).

Odorume (2012) asserts that between 1863 and 1879, some other newspapers were established in Nigeria. In 1880, Lagos Times and The Gold Coast Advertiser were established in Lagos. The Lagos Observer was established in Lagos and it survived till 1890. The Eagle and Lagos Critic were first published in 1883 and survived till 1888. These newspapers criticized the policies of government and helped to fight for independence. The Nigerian Pioneer was established in 1914 by a Nigerian named Kitoyi Ajasa in Lagos. The publisher was a reputable Lawyer. He was always corroborating the colonial government because, he was educated in England and was used to the style (life). It folded up in 1937. The African Messenger was established by Earnest Okoli in 1921. It was a weekly newspaper and was sold for 3 pence. It was however bought over in 1926 by the Daily Times and Okoli was employed as the Chief Editor. In 1925, Herbert McCauley established The Daily News which was printed in Nigeria and was the first political newspaper. It served as a voice of McCauley's party called NDP. The Nigerian Daily Times was jointly established in 1926 by a Nigerian called Adeyemo Alakija and a Briton called Richard Barrow. Earnest Okoli who was the publisher of the African Messenger was employed as the Editor because his own newspaper had already collapsed due to lack of fund. In 1948, the



Nigerian Daily Times became an affiliate of London Daily Mirror. The duo eventually went under due to lack of funds. London Daily Mirror, however, became an affiliate to London Daily Mirror (Odorume, 2012).

Background of The Punch and The Daily Trust

The punch newspaper is a Nigerian daily newspaper founded on August 8, 1970. The newspaper's aim is said to inform, educate and entertain Nigerians and the world at large. It is recognized for its strong advocacy for democratic principles, good governance and transparency. Its editorial philosophy often champions the protection of human rights, social equity and rule of law. The newspaper frequently adopts a watchdog role, critically analyzing and scrutinizing government actions and policies to hold public officials accountable. The punch aims to uncover corruption, abuses of power and societal issues, often adopting a stance that supports reforms and progressive change. The newspaper strives to maintain a balance in its reporting, although it is sometimes perceived as having a liberal or progressive inclination, particularly in its coverage of social and political matters.

The daily trust newspaper, one of Nigeria's prominent national dailies, is known for its commitment to balanced and objective journalism. Its ideology is often characterised by a focus on providing comprehensive and fair coverage of news, with a particular emphasis on issues affecting Northern Nigeria, although it covers national and international news extensively. The newspaper generally advocates for the principles of good governance, accountability and social justice. It emphasizes the importance of unity and development within Nigeria, often addressing issues related to socio-economic development, security and education. The daily trust newspaper strives to maintain a neutral stance in its reporting, aiming to provide a platform for diverse viewpoints and discussions on national issues.

The daily trust newspaper tends to uphold conservative values, reflecting respect for traditional and cultural norms, while also supporting democratic values and the rule of law. It often provides a platform for policy analysis and informed debate, seeking to educate its readers and foster informed public discourse.

The #EndBadGovernance Protest in Nigeria

Protests as social movements, are increasingly drawing global attention, with some becoming significant historical landmarks. According to Anderson (2014), the protests of social movements serve to reject the authority of unjust norms imposed by the dominant groups. In their case, they emphasize the authority of protests themselves. They assert the necessity of their own voices being heard. When carried out by oppressed individuals, this act directly challenges an unjust hierarchy, which is distinct from the specific content they express. However, these actions have pragmatic implications, as reflected in news reports conveying the messages of protests.

Nigeria as an independent Nation ushered in a new democratically Government on May 29, 2023 with Ahmad Bola Tinubu emerging as the President. Upon assumption of office, he announced the removal of petroleum subsidy and floatation of dollars in Nigeria. This pronouncements triggered an uproar in the country with the attendant effects on the prices of essential commodities especially food items. While a number of economic experts and social commentators were praising the courageous step of the President, claiming that such steps by the President would have last long effect on the economic advancement of the country, the common people were complaining of the untold hardship the President's economic policies have subjected them to. By July 2024, the hardships were becoming unbearable for the common man as evident in the economic indices of the country. Towards the end of July, the Nigerian youth and other citizen tagged the President Tinubu's Government as operating a bad governance system for which they gave the President an ultimatum to reverse his



economic policies which Nigerians considered to be throwing them into extreme poverty and early grave, or face ceaseless protest across the country for ten days. The protest was hash tagged: #EndBadGovernance

The Punch Newspaper pointed out the following as the demands of the protesters:

- (a) *Hunger*: immediate reduction in food prices, cost of living.
- (b) *Cost of living*: address rising cost of living, reduce pump price of fuel to N195/litre, reduce electricity tariffs/import taxes.
- (c) *Insecurity*: curb insecurity across the country/ resettle IDPs.
- (d) *Bloated Nass*: reduce by 50% running costs of executive/ NASS, scrap agencies/ reduce size of government, scrap hardship, entertainment/other Nass allowances, remove all 7,447 projects worth N2.24tn inserted by NASS in 2024 budget.
- (e) *EndSARS*: release all EndSARS protesters/ payment of compensations.
- (f) *Protect farmers*: provide security to farmers across the country, subsidise farm inputs.
- (g) *Human Capital Development*: declare state of emergency on education, increase budgetary allocation to education/ healthcare by 20%, revert to the old national anthem.
- (h) *Electoral reform*: implement justice Uwais report on electoral reform, mandatory electronic balloting/ transmission to IREV, new electoral act must be signed December 2024.
- (i) *Living wage*: establish unemployment/ living wage, immediate deployment for youth, clear all backlog of pension.
- (j) *Judicial reforms*: amend constitution to allow for referendums, judges appointments must be transparent.

Many newspapers reported the news items on the protest as mere political. Some papers claimed that it was sponsored by the contenders in the last Presidential election who lost their bid. These charade of meanings

were based on how different newspapers have presented and portrayed the same issue.

Empirical Studies on Pragmatic Analysis and Newspapers Reports

Zakariyah's (2022) "a pragmatic analysis of selected campaign posters of the two major Nigerian political parties" studied the pragmatic import of the textual components of the selected campaign posters of the two main Nigerian political parties. Twelve campaign posters were selected purposively across two successive periods of election in Nigeria, 2019 and 2023. McCombs and Shaw's (1972) theory of Agenda setting was adopted for the analysis of selected data. The study found that posters are not mere pictures and colour, they convey in-depth messages which are means of appealing to the electorates. The multiple modes in the selected posters prove to be a potent weapon to enhance the persuasive nature and the pragmatic import of the discourse. In addition, the pragmatic import of the selected data makes a lot to be communicated with fewer words as the contents of the posters are subjected to contextual explication of the Nigerian political landscape. The study concluded that due to the availability of the visual resources contained in campaign posters, fewer words are required to persuade or trigger the reaction of the electorates.

Adeoti's (2023) "pragmatic analysis of selected newspapers' coverage of the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria" explored pragmatic investigation of how meanings are interpreted in the selected newspapers coverage of the coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria. Data were selected purposively from *the Punch* and *Vanguard* newspapers between February and June, 2020. Mey (2001) theory was used as the theoretical framework to analyse and interpret the data. The results of the research revealed that the practs used depend on context, situation and existing shared-knowledge of both the speaker and the reader. The study found out that the pragmatic relevance of the COVID-19 newspapers' coverage is embedded in its media functions as it serves as an indicator to interpret the messages inherent in the coronavirus newspapers' coverage and



a pract of warning to the citizens of Nigeria to stay safe. The paper concluded that journalists use contextual language to enhance social relations among the readers.

Pranoto's (2024) "news reports on Indonesia's post-election 2024 from selected national and international newspaper: a pragmatic analysis" examined a pragmatic analysis of news report on the post-presidential election of Indonesia 2024 from selected national and international newspapers using Austin (1962) and Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory. Thirty utterances were purposively taken from three newspapers (The Jakarta Post, The Guardian, and The New York Times). By implementing qualitative research method, this research analysis discussed three aspects of Speech Acts: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. The result of the analysis showed that there was obvious finding on the reporting style of newspapers on the election outcome. Based on the analysis, assertive statements were dominantly found as it is in line with the nature of newspaper style; present factual information impartially, aiding in neutral and concise reporting. Directive statements wielded figures' influence and attitudes toward ongoing issues. Commissive speech acts conveyed promises, pledges, and accusations persuasively, while declarative ones declared figures' initiatives and actions on issues. Expressive speech acts reflected collective societal feelings, particularly regarding election outcomes.

This paper sets out to examine a pragmatic analysis of selected newspapers' reports on #EndBadGovernance protest in Nigeria. The #EndBadGovernance protest which is a response to the Federal Government economic policies being considered as creating economic hardship and poverty for the people in Nigeria would be analysed using Mey (2001) Pragmatic acts theory complemented with Bach and Harnish (1979) intention theory to elucidate the intentions behind the news reports and to gain a comprehensive understanding of media discourse. Therefore, this study distinguishes itself by employing a theoretical combination of Mey's Pragmatic Act Theory and Bach and Harnish's Intention

Theory to analyse a new data from Nigeria's #EndBadGovernance protests, thereby providing a fresh perspective on newspapers' report, protest communication and its pragmatic nuances that prior studies have not addressed.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Act Theory complemented with Bach and Harnish (1979) theory as the theoretical framework.

Jacob Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory

The theory of Pragmatic Act was introduced by J.L Mey (2001). It is an extension and modification of J.L Austin Speech Act theory (1962). The theory states that "meaning can only be recovered when the statement is properly situated in the appropriate speech context or environment" (Mey, 2001, p.209). Mey (2001) enlightens that pragmatic acts theory is an action theory that is anchored on the pragmatic view of language as it is used by people for their own purposes and within their own respective limitations and affordances. Mey (2001) defines pragmatic act as an act which does not explain human language usage by starting from the words uttered by single, idealized speaker, rather it focuses on the international situation in which both the speaker and hearer realize their aims; that is instead of looking for what a word would mean in isolation, the situation in which the word is expressed is invoked to explain what is actually said. Mey exemplifies that the theory focuses on the environment in which both speaker and hearer find their affordances, such that the entire situation is brought to bear on what can be said in the situation, as well as what is actually being said. This perspective is captured as a *pragmeme*, a generalised pragmatic act regarded as the only force associated with making utterances.

Mey (2001) asserts that a pragmatic act is instantiated through an "ipra" or "pract", which realizes a "pragmeme" as every pract is at the same time an allopract, that is, a concrete instantiation of a particular *pragmeme*. In real meaning, what decide a pract are solely



participants' knowledge of interactional situation and the potential effect of a pract in a particular context; thus, Odebunmi (2006) argues that practicing resolves the problem of telling illocutionary force from perlocutionary force. The theory explains that during communication, participants produce various context-informed acts: speech acts, conversational acts, physical acts, psychological acts and prosodic acts. The contexts which inform acts produced include: INF (Inference); REF (Reference); REL (Relevance); VCE (voice); SSK (Shared Situation Knowledge); MPH (Metaphor); and M (Metapragmatic Joker). In the pragmatic acts theory, Mey (2001) states that a speaker may co-opt others, set them up, influence them through conversations, and deny certain claims without betraying such acts through lexical choices.

PRAGMEME

ACTIVITY PART (INTERACTANTS)	TEXTUAL PART (CO(N)TEXT)
SPEECH ACTS	INF REF REL VCE SSK MPH'M'....

INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS
CONVERSATIONAL ('DIALOGUE') ACTS
PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTS (EMOTIONS)
PROSODY (INTONATION, STRESS...)

PHYSICAL ACTS:
BODY MOVES (INCL.GESTURES)
PHYSIOGNOMY (FACIAL EXPRESSIONS)
(BODY EXPRESSIONS OF) EMOTIONS.....
PROSODY (INTONATION, STRESS)

PHYSICAL ACTS:
BODY MOVES (INCL.GESTURES)
PHYSIOGNOMY (FACIAL EXPRESSIONS)
(BODY EXPRESSIONS OF) EMOTIONS
Ø (NULL).

KEY

INF.....Inference
REF.....Reference
REL.....Relevance
SSK.....Shared Situational Knowledge
MPH.....Metaphor
'M'.....Metapragmatic joker

The model above shows that there are two categories involved in the realisation of a pragmeme: the textual part (the context within which the pragmeme operates) and the activity part (meant for the interactants). The textual part is achieved through the use of various choices that range from INF for "Inference", REF for "Reference", REL for "Relevance", VCE stands for "Voice", SSK for "Shared Situational Knowledge", MPH stands for "Metaphor", and M for "Metapragmatic Joker"- an element that directs our attention to something happening on the metapragmatic plane. Odebunmi (2008, p.77) further explains that 'the metapragmatic joker points to particular metapragmatic activities'. All these elements work together to enable the interlocutors to understand and reach their desired interactional goals. On the other side is the activity part which is meant for the interactants. Adeniji and Osunbade (2014, p.13) explain that "the activity part represents the options that are available to the speaker to perform the various functions he so desires". The options include speech acts, indirect speech acts, conversational (dialogue) acts, psychological acts (emotions), prosody (intonation, stress) physical acts, etc.

However, Mey (2001, p.222) further explains that the activity part lists the various choices that the language user has at his or her disposal in communicating. He considers this part as a feature matrix and it can either be filled or empty. If all the cells are empty, the matrix goes to zero (Ø), representing the borderline case of "silence" (which is the same as 'zero communication') (Mey, 2001, p.222). Hence, interlocutors are allowed to make choices from one or more of the items on the items on the left in order to realize their intentions, otherwise the categories are filled with null.

Bach and Harnish (1979) Theory

Bach and Harnish's (1979) theory which is relevant to this study, describe a speech act from the recognition of the speaker's "intention" and "inference". They disagree with the conventional-based theories as



postulated by Austin and Searle. Bach and Harnish are of the opinion that linguistic communication is basically an inferential process. The inferencing procedure states from the recognition of the speaker's intention, and the recognition of the intention is based on a mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer. This, Bach and Harnish term as mutual contextual beliefs (MCBs). Adegbija (1982) opines that differences in MCBs can bring about illocutionary force. Bach and Harnish (1979) explain the point of Adegbija's opinion thus; the hearer relies on, and is intended to rely on, MCBs to determine from the meaning of the sentence uttered, what the speaker is saying, and from that, the force and context of the speaker's illocutionary act. Their contribution are in three folds; to suggest a very general speech act schema (SAS) for communicative illocutionary, to show how inferences based on mutual contextual belief (MCB) play role in communicative speech acts and to make detailed use of Grice's notion of conversational implication in fleshy theory.

Apart from MCBs, they also come up with other socially based beliefs, which the hearer relies on for his inference. These beliefs are Linguistic Presumption (LP) and Communicative Presumption (CP). They suggest that LP is the mutual belief in a linguistic community that a particular language is shared and that "unless there is evidence to the contrary, the hearer is presumed capable of determining the meaning and the referents of the expression in the context of utterance" (Akmajian, et al., 2001, p.371). CP on the other hand is the mutual belief that whenever a member, S (speaker) says something to another member H (hearer), he is doing so with some recognisable illocutionary intent.

Bach and Harnish consider an act to be communicatively successful as soon as the speaker's illocutionary intention is recognised by the hearer and according to Adegbija (1999), intention and inference theory provides an elaborate comprehensive analysis of the process of identifying an illocutionary

act. Therefore, Bach and Harnish's theory is relevant to this study because the theory emphasises on the intention of the speaker and the recognition of these intentions allow the readers to have a proper understanding and interpretation of newspaper reports.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Datum 1:

HL: Hardship protest: Security agencies occupy Abuja venue as IG, organisers disagree.

NI: Soldiers, policemen and other security personnel on Tuesday occupied the popular Eagle square Abuja, venue of the #EndBadGovernance protest scheduled to be held in the Federal Capital Territory and the other major cities on Thursday. (The Punch, July 31st 2024)

Pract: Informing and warning (assertive)

Pragmeme: The datum above uses pract of informing and warning to inform the general public of the presence of security personnel on ground for the upcoming protest and to warn the people to maintain a peaceful protest in order not face the consequences of their actions. The news item focuses on established Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) between the news reporter and the readers because they already know that the presence of security personnel is to forestall crisis and mayhem which could result from the intended protest since protests in the past had led to breaking of laws and order. The datum also refers (REF) to a deadlock in the meeting between the IG and the protesters which informs the presence of security personnel to maintain law and order. The news item also establishes the context of fear among the people who are always apprehensive anytime a protest is about to breakout. It could be inferred (INF) from the news item that the government would not stand idly-by and allow the people to break law and order. The datum also indicates (REL) which shows the relevance of the news item and the protest which underscores that the protest would be monitored and security



personal into maintaining law and order. The intention as captured in datum 1 shows that the Government intended to protect the peaceful protesters and unleash terror against the violent ones.

Datum 2:

HL: Organisers meet IGP, insist on street protests.

NI: Court restricts protest in Lagos to freedom peace park. (Daily Trust, July, 31st, 2024.)

Pract: Informing and warning (assertive), stating (Directive)

Pragmeme: The datum 2 above uses the pract of informing and at the same time warning the general public that the only space officially granted by the Lagos State Government for the protest is the Freedom Peace Park. The datum underscores the Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) by drawing attention to the non-usage of other places for the protest except the Freedom Parks as ordered by a court. The datum also indicates reference (REF) which shows that a court order is being referred to against the planned protest regarding the location where it should (not) hold. The datum also indicates an inference (INF) regarding the court order which is considered to be a plan B on the part of Government after the meeting the protesters and the IG failed to stop the protest. The datum indicate a relevance (REL) between the failed IG meeting and the court orders which shows that the failed meeting is related to the court order so as to limit the assumed negative consequence of the protest. The intention here was to ensure that protest did not occur and that in the case of an eventual occurrence, it would be easy to contain going by the court order against the protesters.

Datum 3:

HL: Tension, food prices rise as hunger protest begins today.

NI: Prices of foodstuff have again gone up in major markets across the country as Nigerians

engaged in panic buying in a bid to stock their homes before the planned nationwide #EndBadGovernance protest begin today. (The Punch; August 1st 2024)

Pract: Informing and stating (assertive)

Pragmeme: In this datum, the pract of informing and stating are used to inform the readers and the general public that the prices of food items have increased due to the higher demands by the public who are preparing ahead of the protest. The datum underscores a Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) that traders usually see higher demands as an avenue to increase the prices of food items since they know that the protest might turn violent and there might be restriction of movement following the Government's failed move to stop the protest. It also indicates reference (REF) that crisis is looming in the country and the pract of informing is relevant (REL) to keep the public informed about the situation, particularly the high demand for food items which led to the increase in the prices of food in anticipation of the tense protest. It could be inferred (INF) from the news item that the rise in food prices is a reaction to the increased demand caused by the panic buying and that there is a planned nationwide protest, prompting people to stock up on food items in anticipation of possible disruptions. The news item also establishes the context of economic instability and inflation in the country. The intention has captured in this datum underscores the socio-economic impact of the planned protest, highlighting how such events can affect the people, particularly in terms of essential goods.

Datum 4:

HL: As protest begins, government urge restraint

NI: As the #EndBadGovernance protest is expected to kick off today, the federal and state governments yesterday again urged restraint. (Daily Trust, August 1st, 2024)



Pract: Requesting and appealing (Directive)

Pragmeme: The above datum is an instantiated pragmatic act with the allopract of requesting and appealing. The Government aimed to influence the angry protesters by asking them to remain calm and avoid violence. To achieve the act of persuading, reference (REF) is made to the government's proactive concern about the impending unrest or violence during the protest and their efforts to maintain peace and order. It can be inferred (INF) from this datum that the Government's call for restraint indicates an effort to manage and mitigate any possible negative outcomes from the protest by promoting calmness and orderliness among the people. The Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) is the common understanding that the EndBadGovernance protest is about to start, prompting the government to repeatedly urge restraint to avoid potential unrest. The timing of this statement by the government reflects the context of urgency and importance of the government's appeal to ensure the protest remains peaceful. The intention here is to encourage protesters to remain peaceful and exercise self-control during the #EndBadGovernance protest, thereby aiming to prevent violence, maintain public order, and minimize potential disruptions.

Datum 5:

HL: 17 feared killed as firms, others count huge losses.

NI: No fewer than 17 persons were feared killed in Abuja, Kano, Niger, Borno, Kaduna and Jigawa during the #EndBadGovernance protest which was held across the country on Thursday. (The Punch; August 2nd, 2024)

Pract: Informing, stating (assertive) disappointment, sadness (expressive)

Pragmeme: Datum 5 is an instantiated pragmatic act with the allopract of informing and stating. It informs the readers about the possibility that seventeen (17) people were

killed during the protest and properties were vandalized. There is also the pract of disappointment and sadness over the loss of lives and properties during the protest after several appeal by the Government that the people should maintain a peaceful protest. It could be inferred (INF) from the news item that there is a significant national discontent with government of Nigeria, leading to widespread protests that have escalated into violence and resulted in casualties. The speaker refers (REF) to the widespread civil unrest across Nigeria, specifically mentioning the locations and the severity of the situation, which resulted in casualties. The relevance (REL) of this reference is to illustrate the intense public dissatisfaction with governance system in Nigeria and the severe impact of the protests, including violence and casualties. This reference is also premised on the Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) that the protests in Nigeria are a critical response to poor governance and have resulted in tragic consequences. The intention of the news reporter is that the protests against poor governance in Nigeria have escalated to a critical level, resulting in terrible violence and loss of lives, which underscores the urgency of addressing the underlying issues that led to the protest and the need to halt it.

Datum 6:

HL: Hunger protest: Public, private properties looted, set ablaze.

NI: In Kano, the Nigeria Communications Commission's (NCC) office was looted and set ablaze, early in the morning of Day 1 of the protest. The newly constructed office was scheduled for inauguration next week. (Daily Trust, 2nd August, 2024)

Pract: Informing and stating (assertive)

Pragmeme: Here, the pract of informing is used to inform the readers and general public of the fact that the protesters have become violent and lives and properties are destroyed. It refers (REF) to the Nigeria Communication



Commission's office which was looted and set ablaze by hoodlums who now see the protest as an avenue to loot private and public properties. The reference is relevant (REL) in order to create an awareness among the people that the protest has turned violent and has become an avenue to loot properties so that they would be more vigilante and take necessary precautions. It could be inferred (INF) from this datum that the protest in Kano has escalated to destructive violence, targeting new infrastructure, and this escalation may affect the planned inauguration and overall stability of the area. There is also a Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) between the writer and the readers that protests can sometimes escalate into violent actions, such as looting and destruction of properties and that when a public infrastructure is damaged or destroyed, it can disrupt or delay planned events such as inaugurations. The intention of this news report is to inform Nigerians about the escalation of the protest to violent acts in different parts of the country that disrupt public services and planned events, thereby prompting a response or increased vigilance.

Datum 7:

HL: Military threatens to intervene as police crack down on protesters, arrest 1,100.

NI: The Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Christopher Musa, during a press conference in Abuja, said the military would step in to control the looting and violence being witnessed in some parts of the country. (The Punch, 3rd August, 2024)

Pract: Threatening (directive), expressing (expressive)

Pragmeme: The datum above performs the pract of threatening and expressing. It threatens the readers that the government is prepared to use military force to restore order amidst escalated looting and violence, signaling a serious stance on maintaining security and order. There is a Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) that the military is a powerful and authoritative institution

responsible for national security, and its involvement usually indicates a serious and decisive response to major unrest. It could be inferred (INF) from the news report that the situation has escalated to a level where the government sees military intervention as necessary to restore order, implying the severity of the protest. It also refers (REF) to the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Christopher Musa who spoke about the Government's intention to take serious measures, through military intervention in order to maintain law and order. Reference (REF) is also made to the one thousand one hundred (1,100) arrested by the police in order to restore peace and order in the country. The datum indicates relevance (REL) that the military's potential intervention underscores the urgency and gravity of the unrest, suggesting that the situation has gone beyond normal law enforcement capabilities. The intention here is to convey that the government recognizes the severity of the unrest and is prepared to use military force to restore order, thereby reassuring the public of its proactive stance in handling the crises and warning the protesters to desist from perpetrating violence.

Datum 8:

HL: Hardship protest: Ex-envoys, former military officers worry as demonstrators wave Russian flag.

NI: Some Nigerians, including a former general and ex-diplomats, have expressed worry after some protesters in the ongoing #EndBadGovernance protest waved what appeared like the Russian flag. (The Punch, 4th August, 2024)

Pract: Informing (assertive) Worrying (Expressive)

Pragmeme: In datum 8, there are practs of informing and worrying which provide information about the reaction of ex-envoys and former military officers to the protest at the flying of the Russian flag. These assert and express a worrisome situation which ignite the



concerns of these individuals regarding the sovereignty of Nigeria. There is a Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) in the datum that the reader is aware of the ongoing protests and understands the significance of the Russian flag in this context which could mean a loss of national sovereignty. The waving of the Russian flag during the protest signifies the protesters' dissatisfaction with the government regarding her policies and how the protesters feel that Russia may perhaps, be in control of the country. Also, waving a Russian flag, which is somewhat reminiscent of the Nigerian Army's flag, could be perceived as a call for military involvement in the nation. Therefore, shared knowledge is necessary for comprehending why the waving of the flag is a matter of concern for the individuals mentioned. It could be inferred (INF) from the news report that the presence of the Russian flag at the protest has caused concern among some prominent Nigerians, including a former general and ex-diplomats, due to its potential implications for political sentiment or foreign influence. The relevance (REL) here is that the presence of the Russian flag during the protest is being interpreted as a potentially significant and troubling symbol that Nigeria is ruled by the Russian government. The intention in datum 8, is to convey that the display of the Russian flag at the protests and how it is causing significant concern among prominent figures, suggesting that it may indicate broader political or diplomatic issues.

Datum 9:

HL: #EndBadGovernance: Sultan, CAN want immediate end to protest.

NI: The Nigerian Inter-religious Council (NIREC), headed by the Sultan of Sokoto and President of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Alhaji Muhammad Sa'adu Abubaker III; and the President of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Archbishop Daniel Okoh, as co-chairman, has called for an immediate end to the EndBadGovernance protests across the country. (Daily Trust, 3rd and 4th August, 2024)

Pract: Ordering (Directive)

Pragmeme: In the datum above, there is an allopract of ordering. The statement issued by the Nigerian Inter-religious Council (NIREC) is a directive speech act. The co-chairmen, the Sultan of Sokoto and the President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), are issuing a call for action, specifically urging the cessation of the EndBadGovernance protests. This shows the authoritative stance of the speakers, who hold high positions in religious institutions. It could be inferred (INF) from the above datum that the religious leaders who prioritize peace and stability over the continuation of the protests are using their authority to urge an end to the protests in order to maintain social order and prevent civil unrest. Also, Reference (REF) is made to the two religious leaders who has the authority to influence the protesters to put a stop to the protest due to the respect people accord to religious leaders. The Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) is that both the speakers (religious leaders) and the audience recognize the authority of the religious leaders and their role in bringing to an end the EndBadGovernance protests. The Relevance (REL) here lies in the religious leaders' urgent intervention, which highlights their concern for the potential impact of the ongoing protest on national stability. The intention of the news reporter in this datum is to convey the religious leaders' urgent appeal for an immediate cessation of the EndBadGovernance protests in order to maintain peace and stability in the country.

Datum 10:

HL: After Day 2, What next? Govt did not do enough to stop protest - Lawyers.

NI: Abeniy Muhammed (SAN) said the failure of the president to address the protesters before or on the slated date for the commencement of the protest was a missed opportunity by the number one citizen to show empathy and identify with the suffering of Nigerians. (Daily Trust, 3rd and 4th August, 2024)



Pract: Informing (assertive), expressing (expressive)

Pragmeme: In datum 10, there is a pract of informing and expressing. Abenye Muhammed, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria is expressing a criticism or evaluation of the president's actions (or inaction). He critiques the president for missing an opportunity to show empathy and connect with the people, which shows a negative assessment of the president's behaviour. It could be inferred (INF) from this news report that the President's failure to address the protesters suggests a lack of empathy and concern for the suffering of Nigerians. There is a Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) is the understanding that the President, as the nation's leader, is expected to address significant public concerns and show empathy towards the citizens, especially during times of protest and unrest. Also, the Reference (REF) here is the phrase "the number one citizen", which refers to the President of the country. The Relevance (REL) in this datum is the implication that the President's inaction during a crucial moment was significant because it reflects on his leadership and his ability to connect with and respond to people's needs. The intention is to criticize the President for not addressing the protesters, highlighting it as a failure to demonstrate empathy and connect with the citizens' struggles.

Findings

The analysis revealed that the news reports from the selected newspapers extensively covered the incidents related to the protest and evaluated its effects on the country's socio-economic structure and security situation. The study established that pragmatic acts are determined by the context, situation and the common knowledge between the speaker and the reader. The analysis of the news reports indicated a number of practs: assertive, directive, expressive which culminated in the interpretations given to the news items by the readers. These practs depend on context,

situation and existing shared-knowledge of both the speaker and the reader. For instance, the assertive practs gave general information about the protest as a way of guiding the readers on how the protest was going, the effects it had on the people and properties and the need to forestall its recurrence. The analysis revealed that directive practs such as stating, requesting, appealing, threatening and ordering were predominantly used to shape public discourse and influence reactions to the #EndBadGovernance protest. The directive practs were also used to help end the increasingly violent protest and restore peace and order in the country. The expressive practs such as disappointment, sadness, expressing and worrying were used to convey emotional responses to the protest. Furthermore, Relevance (REL), Inference (INF), Reference (REF), Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK) were pragmatic elements utilized to denote pragmatic acts. Also, the underlying intent of each news item was examined to reveal the true purpose of the reporter in the coverage.

Conclusion

This paper focused on the pragmatic analysis of some selected newspapers reports on the #EndBadGovernance protest held in Nigeria. The paper analysed ten data from *the Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers with a view to identifying the linguistic imports of the reports for contextual meaning explication. The language of the media is a powerful tool used in shaping public perceptions and influencing societal actions during protests. Mey's theoretical framework provided insights into how these acts contribute to the overall discourse, while Bach and Harnish's theory illuminated the ways in which news reporters' intentions shaped the portrayal of the protest's socio-economic and security impacts. It can be concluded that these theories highlighted the nuanced ways in which media narratives influence public perception and discourse, emphasizing the role of intention and pragmatic action in shaping the portrayal of political and economic events.



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