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Exploring the Effect of China's Belt and Road Initiative on Asian Countries' Export Strategies

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Article History:		<i>This research paper aims to investigate the impact of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on the export strategies of Asian countries. The BRI, introduced by China, is a vast infrastructure and connectivity project aimed at enhancing trade and economic cooperation across Asia, Europe, and Africa. This study seeks to explore how BRI has influenced the export strategies of Asian countries, including the opportunities, challenges, and potential outcomes. The research employs a qualitative approach, combining interviews with key stakeholders, analysis of secondary data, and a review of existing literature. The findings shed light on the role of BRI in shaping export strategies, the sectors most affected, and the implications for Asian countries' economic growth and international trade.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), introduced by China in 2013, has emerged as one of the most significant international development projects of the 21st century. Spanning over 70 countries across Asia, Europe, and Africa, the BRI aims to enhance connectivity, trade, and economic cooperation through extensive infrastructure development and policy coordination. As Asian countries play a central role in this ambitious initiative, it is crucial to examine how the BRI influences their export strategies and contributes to their economic growth.

The export strategies of Asian countries hold great importance as they shape their international trade dynamics, market access, and overall economic performance. The BRI, with its emphasis on transport networks, logistical improvements, and trade facilitation measures, has the potential to significantly impact these strategies. Understanding the effect of the BRI on export strategies is essential for

policymakers, businesses, and scholars in order to harness the opportunities and mitigate challenges presented by this initiative.

This research paper aims to explore the effect of China's Belt and Road Initiative on the export strategies of Asian countries. By analyzing the changes in export patterns, market diversification, sectoral focus, and market access, this study will shed light on the opportunities and challenges arising from the BRI. Moreover, the research will examine the implications of the BRI on the economic growth and international trade of Asian countries, providing valuable insights into the potential benefits and risks associated with their participation in this initiative.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), introduced by China, has garnered significant attention as a far-reaching infrastructure and connectivity project with the potential to reshape global trade and economic dynamics. As Asian countries play a central role in this initiative, understanding the influence of the BRI on their export strategies is crucial. This literature review examines existing research and scholarship related to the effect of the BRI on Asian countries' export strategies, identifies theoretical perspectives and frameworks, and highlights knowledge gaps and research opportunities.

Belt and Road Initiative: Concept and Objectives: Scholars have examined the concept and objectives of the BRI, emphasizing its goal of promoting regional integration, trade facilitation, and infrastructure development. Studies have highlighted the BRI's focus on creating economic corridors, enhancing connectivity through transportation networks, and fostering policy coordination among participating countries.

Export Strategies: Theoretical Perspectives and Frameworks: The literature on export strategies offers various theoretical perspectives and frameworks that can be applied to analyze the influence of the BRI. Internationalization theories, such as the Uppsala model and the network approach, provide insights into firms' decisions to enter foreign markets and expand their export activities. Institutional theory sheds light on the role of formal and informal institutions in shaping export strategies, while resource-based view (RBV) theory focuses on firm-specific resources and capabilities.

Previous Studies on the Impact of BRI on Export Strategies: Several studies have explored the impact of the BRI on Asian countries' export strategies, providing insights into the opportunities and challenges arising from participation in this initiative. Research has examined changes in export patterns, market diversification, sectoral focus, and market access resulting from the BRI. These studies highlight the potential benefits of improved infrastructure, reduced trade costs, and increased market connectivity for enhancing export competitiveness.

Knowledge Gaps and Research Opportunities: Despite the growing body of research on the BRI, there are still knowledge gaps and opportunities for further investigation. First, there is a need for in-depth case studies that examine the BRI's impact on export strategies in specific Asian countries, considering factors such as sector-specific dynamics, government policies, and firm-level strategies. Second, more research is required to assess the long-term effects of the BRI on export performance and economic growth, including the potential risks and challenges faced by participating countries. Additionally, the influence of the BRI on non-traditional sectors, such as services and digital trade, remains relatively unexplored and presents an avenue for further research.

The existing literature provides insights into the BRI's objectives, the theoretical frameworks relevant to export strategies, and previous studies on the impact of the BRI on Asian countries' export strategies. However, there are still gaps in the understanding of the specific mechanisms through which the BRI influences export strategies, as well as the long-term implications for economic growth and the challenges faced by participating countries. This literature review identifies the need for

further research, particularly through case studies and an exploration of non-traditional sectors, to advance our understanding of the effect of the BRI on Asian countries' export strategies and its broader implications.

METHODOLOGY

This research paper adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the effect of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on the export strategies of Asian countries. The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics and contextual factors associated with the BRI and its impact on export strategies. The research methodology consists of data collection methods, sample selection, and data analysis techniques.

Research Design: The research design involves a combination of primary data collection through interviews and secondary data analysis. This mixed-methods approach enables a comprehensive examination of the research topic, incorporating perspectives from key stakeholders and utilizing existing data sources.

Data Collection Methods:

a. **Interviews:** In-depth interviews from 18 interviewees were conducted with key stakeholders, including government officials, industry experts, and business leaders from selected Asian countries involved in the BRI. These interviews will provide valuable insights into the specific changes in export strategies, challenges faced, and opportunities identified in the context of the BRI. Semi-structured interview protocols will be developed to ensure consistency while allowing for flexibility and exploration of emerging themes.

b. **Secondary Data Analysis:** Secondary data sources, such as trade statistics, economic indicators, policy documents, and existing literature, will be analyzed to supplement the findings from the interviews. This analysis will provide a broader context and a comparative perspective on the export strategies of Asian countries participating in the BRI.

Sample Selection: The sample selection will focus on Asian countries that have actively participated in the BRI and have experienced significant changes in their export strategies. A purposive sampling technique will be used to select countries based on their level of involvement, diversity in export sectors, and geographical representation. The selected countries may include examples such as Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia and profile were found in facebook groups and linkdn.

Data Analysis Techniques:

a. **Qualitative Data Analysis:** The interview data will be transcribed, organized, and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This involves identifying key themes, patterns, and relationships in the data. The data will be coded to identify common categories and subcategories related to the influence of the BRI on export strategies. The analysis will involve comparing and contrasting the findings from different interviews to identify overarching trends and insights.

B. **Comparative Analysis:** The secondary data analysis will involve a comparative examination of trade statistics, export trends, and policy frameworks across the selected Asian countries. This analysis will help identify similarities and differences in export strategies and their relationship to the BRI.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical considerations will be taken into account throughout the research process. Informed consent will be obtained from the interview participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. The research will comply with ethical guidelines and principles, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and privacy. By employing a qualitative research approach, including interviews and secondary data analysis, this methodology aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effect of the BRI on the export strategies of Asian countries. The combination of

primary and secondary data will offer valuable insights into the opportunities, challenges, and implications of the BRI for export strategies, contributing to the existing body of knowledge in this area.

Overview of China's Belt and Road Initiative:

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a comprehensive and ambitious development strategy introduced by the Chinese government in 2013. The initiative aims to foster economic cooperation, enhance connectivity, and promote trade and investment across Asia, Europe, and Africa. It encompasses an extensive network of infrastructure projects, policy coordination, financial cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges.

Scope and Objectives: The BRI covers a vast geographic area, spanning over 70 countries and regions, including both developing and developed economies. The initiative seeks to revive the ancient Silk Road trading routes and establish modern infrastructure corridors, including the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The BRI aims to strengthen regional integration, promote economic growth, and facilitate greater trade and investment flows between participating countries.

Key Infrastructure Developments: Infrastructure development is a crucial component of the BRI. Major projects include the construction and upgrading of roads, railways, ports, airports, energy facilities, and telecommunications networks. These infrastructure projects are designed to improve transportation and logistics, enhance connectivity, and reduce trade costs, thereby facilitating greater trade and economic cooperation among participating countries.

Trade and Investment Facilitation Measures: The BRI incorporates various trade and investment facilitation measures to stimulate economic activity and promote cross-border trade. These measures include the reduction of trade barriers, the establishment of economic and trade cooperation zones, the enhancement of customs cooperation, the promotion of e-commerce, and the facilitation of cross-border financial services. By improving market access and trade facilitation, the BRI aims to create a conducive environment for businesses and promote sustainable economic development.

Financial Cooperation: The BRI involves significant financial cooperation to support infrastructure projects and investment activities. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Silk Road Fund are key financial institutions established to provide funding for BRI projects. Additionally, China has established bilateral currency swap agreements and promotes the use of the renminbi (RMB) in cross-border transactions, aiming to strengthen financial connectivity and facilitate trade and investment flows.

People-to-People Exchanges: The BRI emphasizes people-to-people exchanges, cultural understanding, and cooperation among participating countries. It encourages academic collaborations, tourism, cultural exchanges, and educational partnerships. These initiatives aim to foster mutual understanding, strengthen social ties, and promote cross-cultural learning, ultimately enhancing diplomatic relations and promoting regional stability.

Criticisms and Challenges: While the BRI has garnered significant attention and support, it also faces criticisms and challenges. Concerns include the potential debt burden on participating countries, environmental sustainability, transparency in project procurement, geopolitical implications, and issues related to governance and corruption. Addressing these challenges is essential for the successful implementation and long-term sustainability of the BRI.

Therefore, China's Belt and Road Initiative is a multifaceted development strategy aimed at enhancing regional connectivity, trade, and economic cooperation. Through extensive infrastructure projects, policy coordination, financial cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges, the BRI seeks to promote

economic growth, facilitate trade and investment, and strengthen regional integration. While it presents opportunities for participating countries, careful consideration of challenges and effective management is crucial to ensuring the initiative's long-term success.

Analysis of Export Strategies in Asian Countries under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI):

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has had a significant impact on the export strategies of Asian countries involved in this ambitious project. This analysis examines the changes in export strategies, market diversification, sectoral focus, and market access resulting from the BRI, providing insights into the opportunities and challenges faced by Asian countries in expanding their exports under this initiative.

Changes in Export Patterns: Under the BRI, Asian countries have witnessed shifts in their export patterns. Traditional trading partners have been supplemented or replaced by new markets along the BRI routes. Countries have focused on diversifying their export destinations, aiming to reduce reliance on a few key markets and tap into the growing demand in BRI countries. This diversification has opened up opportunities for Asian countries to expand their export base and enter new markets.

Market Diversification: The BRI has encouraged Asian countries to explore untapped markets and diversify their export products. By leveraging improved connectivity and infrastructure development, countries have been able to reach previously inaccessible regions and expand their market reach. This diversification has allowed for reduced dependence on a single market, mitigating the risks associated with economic slowdowns or trade disputes in specific regions.

Sectoral Focus: The BRI has also influenced the sectoral focus of Asian countries' export strategies. Infrastructure-related industries, such as construction, engineering, and transportation, have experienced a surge in export activities due to the demand for infrastructure development in BRI countries. Additionally, sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, and services have benefited from improved market access and trade facilitation measures, enabling greater export competitiveness in these industries.

Market Access: Improved connectivity and trade facilitation measures under the BRI have enhanced market access for Asian countries. Reductions in trade barriers, customs procedures, and transportation costs have contributed to increased trade flows between BRI countries. This has provided Asian countries with new opportunities to expand their export volumes and gain access to larger consumer markets, driving economic growth and export diversification.

Challenges and Risks: While the BRI presents numerous opportunities for Asian countries' export strategies, it is not without challenges and risks. Increased competition from domestic industries in BRI countries can pose challenges for Asian exporters, necessitating the development of competitive advantages and differentiation strategies. Additionally, political and economic risks, including policy uncertainties, trade disputes, and geopolitical tensions, can impact export activities and require proactive risk management.

Policy Implications: The analysis of export strategies under the BRI has important policy implications for Asian countries. Governments need to formulate supportive policies that align with the goals of the BRI, such as enhancing infrastructure development, improving trade facilitation, and promoting sector-specific export capabilities. Furthermore, collaboration among participating countries in areas such as standardization, certification, and harmonization of regulations can further enhance market access and trade opportunities.

The BRI has had a significant impact on the export strategies of Asian countries. Through changes in export patterns, market diversification, sectoral focus, and improved market access, participating countries have been able to harness new opportunities and overcome challenges in expanding their

exports under the BRI. Understanding these dynamics and developing effective policies can enable Asian countries to maximize the benefits of the BRI, contributing to their economic growth and sustainable development in the evolving global trade landscape.

Impact of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on Asian Countries' Economic Growth and International Trade:

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has had a significant impact on the economic growth and international trade of Asian countries involved in this ambitious project. This analysis explores the various ways in which the BRI has influenced the economic growth trajectories and international trade dynamics of these countries.

Enhanced Infrastructure and Connectivity: One of the primary objectives of the BRI is to improve infrastructure and connectivity across participating countries. Through the development of roads, railways, ports, and other transportation networks, the BRI has enhanced connectivity and reduced transportation costs. This improved infrastructure has facilitated trade and investment flows, leading to increased economic activities and contributing to the economic growth of Asian countries.

Increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Trade: The BRI has attracted significant foreign direct investment (FDI) into Asian countries. With the improved connectivity and investment-friendly environment created by the initiative, participating countries have witnessed an influx of foreign capital. This has not only stimulated economic growth but also resulted in increased international trade as Asian countries have expanded their export capacities to meet the growing demands of BRI markets.

Market Access Expansion: The BRI has opened up new markets for Asian countries, particularly in regions where trade and economic integration were previously limited. By providing improved trade routes, reducing trade barriers, and enhancing trade facilitation measures, the BRI has expanded market access for Asian exporters. This has allowed them to diversify their export destinations and tap into the growing consumer demand in BRI countries, driving economic growth and trade expansion.

Sectoral Development and Industrial Upgrading: The BRI has prompted the development and upgrading of various sectors in Asian countries. Infrastructure-related industries, such as construction, engineering, and logistics, have experienced significant growth due to the demand generated by BRI projects. Additionally, sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, and services have benefited from increased trade and investment opportunities arising from the improved connectivity and market access provided by the BRI.

Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration: The BRI has fostered economic cooperation and regional integration among participating countries. Through policy coordination, financial cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges, the BRI has facilitated closer economic ties and strengthened regional economic integration. This has created a conducive environment for trade and investment, leading to increased economic growth and enhanced international trade among Asian countries.

Challenges and Risks: While the BRI presents numerous opportunities, it also comes with challenges and risks for Asian countries. The implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects can pose financial and environmental risks. Additionally, geopolitical tensions, policy uncertainties, and regulatory challenges may impact the smooth functioning of trade and investment activities. Asian countries need to address these challenges through effective risk management and policy coordination to maximize the benefits of the BRI.

The Belt and Road Initiative has had a transformative impact on the economic growth and international trade of Asian countries. Through enhanced infrastructure, increased market access,

sectoral development, and regional integration, the BRI has stimulated economic growth, attracted foreign investment, and expanded international trade opportunities. However, careful management of risks and effective policy coordination are crucial to fully harnessing the potential benefits of the BRI and ensuring sustainable economic development for participating Asian countries.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

To gain further insights into the impact of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on Asian countries' economic growth and international trade, in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from selected Asian countries involved in the BRI. The discussion and findings below highlight the key themes and findings that emerged from the interviews, complemented by relevant literature and data analysis.

Enhanced Infrastructure and Connectivity: Interviewees emphasized the transformative effect of BRI infrastructure projects on economic growth. Improved connectivity has facilitated trade and investment, reduced transportation costs, and enhanced logistical efficiency. The development of transportation networks, such as railways and ports, has boosted trade volumes and enabled Asian countries to better integrate into global value chains.

Increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Trade: The interviews revealed a noticeable increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) flows into Asian countries participating in the BRI. Investors are attracted by the improved investment climate and the potential for market access to BRI countries. This influx of FDI has not only contributed to economic growth but has also led to increased international trade as Asian countries have expanded their export capacities to meet the growing demands of BRI markets.

Market Access Expansion: The BRI has played a pivotal role in expanding market access for Asian countries. Interviewees highlighted the opening of new markets, particularly in regions that were previously underserved. The reduction of trade barriers and improved trade facilitation measures have enabled Asian exporters to diversify their export destinations and tap into the growing consumer demand in BRI countries. This has resulted in increased trade volumes and economic benefits for the participating Asian countries.

Sectoral Development and Industrial Upgrading: The interviews underscored the significant sectoral development and industrial upgrading resulting from the BRI. Infrastructure-related industries, such as construction, engineering, and logistics, have experienced substantial growth due to the demand generated by BRI projects. Additionally, manufacturing, agriculture, and services sectors have benefited from increased trade and investment opportunities arising from the improved connectivity and market access provided by the BRI.

Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration: The BRI has fostered economic cooperation and regional integration among Asian countries. Interviewees emphasized the importance of policy coordination, financial cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges in strengthening economic ties within the region. The BRI has created a platform for closer economic cooperation, leading to increased regional trade, investment flows, and shared development opportunities.

However, the interviews also highlighted several challenges and risks associated with the BRI. Concerns were raised about the financial sustainability of large-scale infrastructure projects and the potential for debt burdens on participating countries. Geopolitical tensions and policy uncertainties were also identified as risks that could impact the smooth functioning of trade and investment activities under the BRI.

Overall, the findings from the interviews align with existing literature and data analysis, indicating that the BRI has had a significant impact on Asian countries' economic growth and international trade.

The enhanced infrastructure and connectivity, increased FDI and trade, market access expansion, sectoral development, and regional integration have contributed to positive economic outcomes. However, careful management of risks, effective policy coordination, and sustainable practices are crucial for maximizing the benefits and mitigating potential challenges associated with the BRI.

It is important to note that these findings are based on the perspectives and experiences of the interviewed stakeholders and may not represent the entire spectrum of viewpoints. Further research and analysis are warranted to validate and expand upon these findings, taking into account a broader range of stakeholders and incorporating quantitative data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of the BRI on Asian countries' economic growth and international trade.

CONCLUSION

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has had a profound impact on the economic growth and international trade of Asian countries. Through enhanced infrastructure, increased market access, sectoral development, and regional integration, the BRI has stimulated economic growth, attracted foreign investment, and expanded international trade opportunities for participating countries. The findings from in-depth interviews with key stakeholders further support the positive outcomes associated with the BRI.

The BRI's emphasis on infrastructure development and connectivity has improved transportation networks, reduced trade costs and facilitating trade and investment flows. This has resulted in increased economic activities and contributed to the economic growth of Asian countries. The BRI has also attracted significant foreign direct investment, providing participating countries with access to capital, technology, and expertise, further driving economic growth and job creation.

Market access expansion has been a notable outcome of the BRI. Participating Asian countries have diversified their export destinations, reducing reliance on a few key markets and tapping into the growing demand in BRI countries. The reduction of trade barriers and improved trade facilitation measures have facilitated trade flows, leading to increased export volumes and economic benefits.

Sectoral development and industrial upgrading have been spurred by the BRI. Infrastructure-related industries, such as construction, engineering, and logistics, have experienced significant growth due to the demand generated by BRI projects. Additionally, sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, and services have benefited from increased trade and investment opportunities, resulting in enhanced competitiveness and economic diversification.

The BRI has fostered economic cooperation and regional integration among participating countries. Policy coordination, financial cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges have strengthened economic ties and facilitated greater collaboration. This has created a conducive environment for trade and investment, leading to increased regional trade and shared development opportunities.

While the BRI presents numerous opportunities, challenges and risks exist that need to be carefully managed. Concerns include the financial sustainability of large-scale infrastructure projects, debt burdens on participating countries, geopolitical tensions, and policy uncertainties. Effective risk management, transparent governance, and sustainable practices are essential to mitigate these challenges and ensure the long-term success of the BRI.

Belt and Road Initiative has had a transformative impact on Asian countries' economic growth and international trade. By enhancing infrastructure, expanding market access, promoting sectoral development, and fostering economic cooperation, the BRI has stimulated economic growth, attracted investment, and expanded international trade opportunities. However, it is crucial for participating countries to address challenges, manage risks, and implement effective policies to maximize the benefits of the BRI and ensure sustainable and inclusive economic development in the region.

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Spatial Distribution of Abattoirs in Kano State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The average meat production is on going up approximately by 2%annually. The aim of this study was to examine spatial distribution of abattoirs in Kano state, Nigeria. Two-Mixed approach of quantitative and qualitative was employed. Two sampling technique was used to sample 44abattoirs and 44traditional head of butchers (Sarakunan-Pawa) and chairperson of butchers' association. This research used statistical tools, frequency count analysis for data analysis and presentation. Findings of this research revealed that there are 50 abattoirs distributed in 34. The spatial distribution of these abattoirs is unevenly and located closed to geographical factors. The main factors of spatial distribution of these abattoirs are population and demand, road accessibility, direction flow of wind and so on. This research concluded that large abattoirs are located in metropolitan local government areas while small abattoirs are situated in non-metropolitan local government areas. It is recommended that abattoir should compliance with urban and regional planning as well as other environmental agencies' laws and policies through fine and/or imprisonment on those contravene setting abattoirs not in appropriate location.



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INTRODUCTION

Livestock is part of agriculture and occupies almost 38.4% as of 2017's GDP in Nigeria (National Bureau Statistics [NBS], 2017).Meat becomes part of the people's live as they cannot survive without it especially in urban areas depending upon the culture, economic status, medically aware and other factors. Moreover, Nigeria is among the world top countries that produce goat meat. It was ranked third in the world that produces goat meat in 2011 after China (58%), India (18%), Nigeria and Pakistan 9% each and Bangladesh with 6% (Central Pollution

Control Board [CPCB], 2017). In terms of cattle production, Nigeria ranked 14th in the world and 4th in Africa in 2015 (Cook, 2019) and occupied 17th position in the world for cattle production. Nigeria is endowed with abundance of animals.

On the other hand, locating abattoirs in urban centre provides numerous benefits to the people therein. Despite the fact that, the impact of abattoir operation poses threat to the environment. Locating abattoir in an area could be of potential benefits though, they are major source of public health and environmental threats if its waste is not properly managed (Twumasi, *et al.*, 2016; FAO, 2010). Abattoir solid wastes are major source of air pollution worldwide (WHO, 2005). They are generally known all over the world to pollute the environment either directly or indirectly from their various processes (Adelagan 2002; Osibanjo & Adie 2007).

Moreover, assigning location for abattoir could assist in managing abattoir solid waste. Environment Protection Agency [EPA] (2002) reported that site selection is the critical environmental issue for abattoirs. Site selection significantly reduces the environmental problems especially solid waste.

Statement of the Research Problem

Abattoirs are important component of the livestock industry in Nigeria, providing domestic meat supplies to over 120 million people and employment opportunities for the teeming population both males and females (Nafarnda *et al.*, 2012). It is one of the facilities that should be located around residential areas; that is not too far from the people due to the perishability nature of its products and for easy accessibility to meat consumers. Furthermore, despite their lot of importance abattoirs provided, they (abattoirs) in the study area are in critical condition about cheap and environmentally accepted location to dispose their waste. On the other hand, for every standard abattoir there shall be a space allocated for every abattoir operation such as stunning, bleeding, flaying, and storage. But in Kano state abattoirs, there is no division in terms of slaughtering process like: stunning, slaughtering, hanging, skinning, evisceration, splitting, deboning, chilling, and freezing as well as transportation, which affects the hygienic nature of meat and environment.

Additionally, locating abattoir close to residential area pollutes water, land and air. It also reduces life expectancy not only in Kano State's abattoirs but in most developing countries especially in Africa (WHO, 2005). On the other hand, most of previous studies (Abdullahi *et al.*, 2015; Bello & Oyedemi, 2009; Roberts, De jager & Blight, 2009; Emeka, Braide, & Chindah, 2009; World Bank, 2009; Nwanta *et al.*, 2010) did not broadly discuss the factors that affect the location of abattoir. Therefore, this study examined the spatial distribution of abattoirs and factors that determine the location of abattoir in Kano State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For the health of the people and environment in general, abattoirs should be located outside residential area. This is because, abattoir produces huge amount of solid waste and wastewater, emission of gases or fuel (burning), and bad odour, etc which affect the people's health directly or indirectly (DARD, 2009).

Abattoir

Abattoir has root from the French verb *abattre*, which means, "to strike down" or "fell" (Tekkiet

al., 2012). It is regarded as any building that is approved and registered by the controlling authority in which animals are slaughtered and prepared for human consumption (Alimentarius, 1993; Bello, Kwaga & Raji, 2011). EPA (2001) defines an abattoir or slaughterhouse as a building for butchering. It specifies that an abattoir is a house where animals are slaughtered; dress, cut and inspect meats; refrigerate, and take care of its by-products. This is to provide cleaner and hygienic animal slaughtering services; to ensure proper utilization of animal by-products such as hooves, hide, skin, horns, bones; to establish and control standards, and to generate income for the services rendered; and improve impact on the environment by controlling the waste generation and disposal system.

On the other hand, locating abattoirs in urban centre furnish many advantages to the people therein. Abattoir is one of the facilities that should be located around residential areas; that is not too far from the people. This facility produces organic waste which as a result of non-compliance with abattoir laws, residents around abattoir locality can be at a greater risk (Bello & Oyedemi, 2009).

Negative Effects of Location Abattoir to the Residential Area

Indiscriminate disposal of abattoir solid waste contains many diseases induced organisms. These organisms cause diseases such as headache, asthma, heart burn, dysentery, general body weakness, fever and typhoid fever pneumonia, respiratory and chest diseases, coughing, burning eyes, skin rash or irritation, wool sorter diseases, nausea or vomiting, foot, mouth diseases and dengue (Robert, De jager, Blight, 2009; Wing & Wolf, 2000). Besides, reduces life expectancy in most developing countries especially in Africa it has been associated with inadequate and hazardous waste management, among other factors (WHO, 2005). Similarly, despite animal dung could be served as manure, but it contains viruses, bacteria, microorganisms and salt which could impair quality of water in an environment when washed into river or stream (Adewumi, Babatola & Adejuwon, 2016).

Utilization of Abattoir Waste

The main reasons behind establishing abattoir facility are: to provide cleaner and hygienic animal slaughtering services; to ensure proper utilization of animal by-products including blood, hide, skin, hooves, horns, bones; to establish and control standards, and to generate revenue for the services rendered; and to improve impact on the environment by controlling the waste disposal system. Apart from covering environmental problems by converting abattoir waste to biogas, still it acts as fertilizer, as available nitrogen and other substances remain in the treated slurry (Alvarez & Lide'n, 2008). Biogas production potential can produce 53 m³ by 100kg of abattoir solid waste; that is 1Kg of abattoir waste can produce 0.053 m³ of biogas (Sindibu, Solomon, & Ermias, 2018).

The abattoir industry is an important component of livestock industry in Nigeria, providing domestic meat supplies to over 150 million people and employment opportunities for the teaming population both males and females (Nafarnda *et al.*, 2012). Some researchers specifically conducted their studies on utilization of abattoir solid waste such as Adhikari, Chae, & Bressler (2018).

Central Place Theory

This theory was developed by Walter Christaller around 1933 in order to explain how hierarchical distribution of settlements can grow. Christaller attempted to design a model that would demonstrate how and where central places in the urban hierarchy would be spatially and functionally distributed. His theory is based on some assumptions which include:

An isotropic surface (flat surface and no physical barriers). That central goods are gotten from the nearest central place. There is existence of equally distributed resources - similar purchasing power of all consumers. All trade areas must be served by a central place. That no excess profit may be made by any central place. There is an evenly distributed population.

Central Place theory explains urban hierarchy, which is based on the functions available in a city and is related to population as well as functions and services. Central Place is a settlement, which offers one or more services for the population living around it. They compete with each other to provide goods and services. Specialized services such as hospitals, higher institution, and so on, are said to be of high order while simple basic services (e.g. foodstuff, grocery stores, among others) are said to be of low order. Having a high order service entails that there are low order services around it, but not vice versa. More so, larger settlement tends to be farther away from its kind and provides higher order services for its surrounding. As he stated that, the larger the settlements, the fewer will be their number. Christaller also glued his theory with the following elements as:

Economic reach is a measure of centrality which every city has

Centrality: it is fundamental to the development of urban places and their service areas

Threshold population: this is the minimum effective population that is required to support or sustain a business.

Range: it is the maximum distance over which people would be willing to travel in order to purchase a good or derive a service offered at a central place. The range increases as the population increases.

Complementary regions: They are the regions served by a central place. Those central places serving large areas are called High Order Centres and those serving small areas are known as Low Order Centres. The service limit of each centre was described: by the outer limit of the range of the commodity in which it dealt.

Hinterland: it refers to the area surrounding a service from which consumers are drawn. He applied the above assumptions and came up with the following conclusion that: The model explained that City is the first order centre which serves the complementary regions includes the region of the village, hamlet and town and provides additional goods and services. It is regarded as high order centre, which has large range. The second order in this model is town, which provides village and hamlet with additional goods and services. It has lower population; but many in number compare to the high order centre. Village includes the region of the hamlet and furnishes some additional goods and services to hamlet. Hamlet is the lowest order, which has the fewest goods and services available to serve the hinterland (Figure 1).

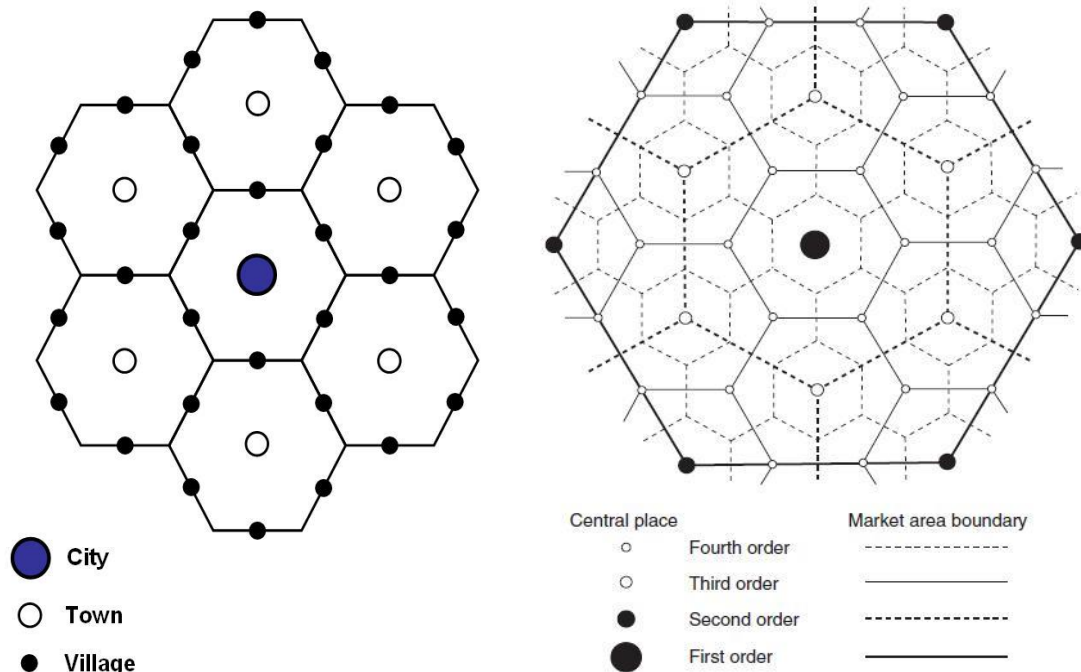


Figure 1: Hierarchy of spatial arrangement of central place theory

Source: Christaller, 1933

Additionally, the system of central places and complimentary regions entails that central places are Towns that serve as central for regional communities by providing them with central goods and services. High order centres stock a wide variety of goods and services as well as serve large areas. Lower order centres stock smaller range of goods and services with lower coverage area. So, this study would testify the applicability of Christaller’s model for abattoir hierarchy and location distribution.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

TYPES AND SOURCES OF DATA

Types of data

Two types of data were used; that is the primary and the secondary data. The primary data include the coordinates of abattoirs locations and factors that determine the location of abattoirs. On the other hand, the secondary data includes the following:

Number of abattoirs in Kano State and their locations

Number of traditional head of butchers (Sarkin-pawa) and chairman of butchers’ association.

Sources of data

Primary source of data was sourced from traditional head of butchers and chairpersons of butchers’ association in the sampled abattoirs. The quantitative sources of data are: GPS and GIS

techniques. For the qualitative source of data, in-depth interview was used. On the other hand, the secondary data were sourced from the following institutions:

Kano State Butchers Multipurpose Enterprise (2019): number of abattoirs and their locations

Kano State Ministry of environment (2019): name and phone number of each traditional head of butchers and chairman of butchers' association

Methods of Quantitative Data Collection

Based on primary source of data, the coordinates of each abattoir within Kano state were recorded in the field. This data was used in producing map of spatial distribution of abattoirs in Kano state. More so, regarding secondary data, the number of abattoirs was collected from Kano State Butchers Multipurpose Enterprise (2019) register. The summary of the register contains local government area and town where abattoir is located. Name of chairman of butchers' association of each abattoir in Kano state with his phone number is recorded on the register. Additionally, name and phone number of each traditional head of butchers and chairman of butchers' association was collected from Ministry of environment situated at Kofar Mazugal abattoir.

Methods of Qualitative Data Collection

Regarding factors that determine abattoir location of ASWM were collected from traditional head of butchers and chairperson of butchers' association.

Sample and Sampling Population

There are fifty (50) abattoirs in the whole Kano State distributed in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan local government areas. Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970), 44 abattoirs were selected using stratified sampling technique. The reason for adopting stratified sampling techniques is that abattoirs are different in terms of handling capacity, types of animals slaughtered, day(s) of operation and even the size of the abattoirs. The abattoirs were divided into 3 stratum: stratum 1 is small abattoirs and 35 abattoirs were selected. Stratum 2 is medium abattoirs which contain 5 abattoirs; census sampling technique was employed here. The last stratum contains large abattoirs based on handling capacity. Here, census-sampling technique was used also.

On the other hand, total population of the respondents include: traditional heads of butchers and chairmen of butchers' association with total number of 44 each. Similarly, purposive sampling technique was employed, since there are different categories of operation specialization at abattoir. This purposive sampling technique was used for interview; where all Sarkin-Pawa and chairman of butchers' association were selected purposely for their unique knowledge they have about abattoir. However, disproportionate sample was used for interview.

INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Instruments used for Qualitative Data Collection

In-depth interview: in-depth interview was used in collecting data from abattoirs' traditional head of butchers (Sarkin-Pawa) and Chairmen of butchers' association regarding factors influencing location of abattoir.

Instruments used for quantitative data collection

Global Positioning System (GPS) device Garmin cx76 model was used for taking coordinates of all abattoirs under study area so as to map their spatial distribution in a Geographical Information System (GIS) software environment (Arc GIS 10.3 Model). This was used in identifying spatial distribution of abattoirs situated within the study area.

Methods for Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collected using GPS and in-depth interview were analysed through the following methods:

For spatial distribution of abattoirs in Kano State, GIS analysis was performed using ArcGIS 10.3 software. Coordinates were recorded in an excel file, which was then exported into ArcGIS environment for analysis. The file contains therein all the corresponding coordinates of all the abattoirs and relative coordinates. The exported file was then converted into ArcGIS format shape-file, to allow use for GIS analysis, and together with Kano state shape-file (Kano State Local Government and State Boundary map and roads) same georeference format was set to World Geographic System 1984 (WGS 84). The data presentation employed the use of maps.

Nearest Neighbour Analysis was performed to identify how abattoirs in the study area are distributed; are they cluster, scattered or random? On the other hand, factors that determine abattoir location were analyzed using frequency table.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Inventory, Location and Spatial Distribution of Abattoirs in Kano State

Inventory of Abattoirs in Kano State

Based on the result of inventory, fifty (50) abattoirs were identified which were distributed within 34 local government areas (Appendix I). The availability and concentration of abattoirs in Kano state varied with respects to the 34 local governments areas studied. There is no name for abattoirs by the local people but rather, the people call each abattoir with the ward it is located. People in Kano state use two most common names for abattoir: '*kwata*', or '*mayanka*' except for Kofar Mazugal abattoir which is called '*abbatuwa*'.

On the other hand, there are 10 local government areas without abattoirs (Albasu, Ajingi, Bagwai, Fagge, Gwale, KMC, Makoda, Rogo, Tofa and Warawa) in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan local government areas. The possible reasons for not having abattoir in non-metropolitan local government areas are: all local government areas in non-metropolitan are subsumed by larger local government area. For example, Albasu and Ajingi depend mostly on Gaya and Wudil for most of their infrastructural facilities. While Bagwai depends upon Bichi for its most social amenities; Makoda gets most of its social facilities from Danbatta and Bichi. Tofa is situated in one corridor which makes it to depend on Dawakin Tofa and Rimin gado. Warawa local government area derives most of its infrastructural facilities from Dawakin kudu and Gezawa, while Rogo derives some of its social amenities from Kiru local government area. Additionally, transportation network is another factor to be considered for not having abattoirs in these local government areas. Most of them are not on high way or on roads that link that local government to big town or city. For example, Albasu, Bagwai, Makoda, Rogo, Tofa and Warawa are not on high way, nor on interstate road network; but rather on a nook.

Unlike some local government areas such as: Dawakin Kudu, Dawakin Tofa, Garko, Kabo, Kibiya, Madobi, Minjibir, Takai, Tudun wada and Wudil which have 2 abattoirs each. As it was observed that, most of these local government areas have more than one town and each is independent which creates competition among them. For example, Madobi and Kwankwaso, Dawakin Tofa and Dawanau, Kabo and Garo, Takai and Kachako, Wudil and Darki, just mentioned a few.

On the other hand, 3 local government areas that do not have abattoir in Kano metropolitan are: Fagge, Gwale and Kano Municipal (KMC). Due to urbanization, it is impossible to differentiate between one local government area to another, as some have gutter or road line as borderline and mostly there is no sign of demarcation written boldly. So, there is symbiosis relationship among these local government areas. Therefore, they depend on Kofar Mazugal abattoir which is situated in Dala local government area for meat. Another reason is that there is no enough space in metropolitan local government which an abattoir can be erected due to the nature of its operation and space consuming (such as place for slaughtering, skinning, evisceration, splitting, deboning, storage, waste dumping site, etc).

Classification of Abattoirs in Kano State

Based on the finding of this result, it is indicated that abattoirs in Kano State could be classified based on types of animals slaughtered, handling capacity, day of operation and processes for slaughtering animals. This classification identified from qualitative and quantitative data derived from interview and observation checklist respectively. These classifications are based on:

Types of animal slaughtered

Abattoirs in Kano state were divided into small (goats and sheep) and large (cattle and camels) animals slaughtered. Among abattoirs within Kano metropolitan, only Sauna abattoir is specialized in slaughtering single type of animal (goats and/or sheep). Apart from Sauna, there is no single abattoir specialized in slaughtering either small or large animals. On the other hand, 6 abattoirs in non-metropolitan local government areas specialize in slaughtering single (goats/sheep) type of animal. These abattoirs are: Danzabuwa, Dumbulin, Kunya, Madobi, Shuwaki, and Zakirai. However, no single abattoir in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan local government areas specializes in either slaughtering cattle or camels (Table 1).

Table 1: Types of animals slaughtered

	Name of Abattoir	LGA	Ward	Status of Abattoir
S/N	Specialize in slaughtering Camel, Cattle and Goat/Sheep			
1	Kofar Mazugal abattoir	Dala	Kofar Mazugal	Sampled
2	Unguwa uku abattoir	Tarauni	Unguwa Uku	Sampled
3	Bachirawa abattoir	Ungoggo	Bachirawa	Sampled
4	Takai abattoir	Takai	Takai	Sampled
5	Makole abattoir	Dawakin kudu	Lahadin Makole	Sampled

S/N	Specialize in slaughtering Cattle and Goat/Sheep			
1	Danbatta abattoir	Danbatta	Danbatta	Sampled
2	Kumbotso abattoir	Kumbotso	Unguwa Uku	Sampled
3	Dangawan abattoir	Dawakin Tofa	Dawanau	Sampled
4	Rano abattoir	Rano	Rano	Sampled
5	Tudun Wada abattoir	Nassarawa	Tudun Murtala	Sampled
6	Wudil abattoir	Wudil	Wudil	Sampled
7	Bichi abattoir	Bichi	Bichi	Not sampled
8	Bunkure abattoir	Bunkure	Bunkure	Sampled
9	Bebeji abattoir	Bebeji	Bebeji	Sampled
10	Dawakin tofa abattoir	Dawakin Tofa	Dawakin Tofa	Not sampled
11	Dawakin kudu abattoir	Dawakin kudu	Dawakin kudu	Not sampled
12	Doguwa abattoir	Doguwa	Sabon gari	Sampled
13	Garin Malam abattoir	Garin Malam	Garin Malam	Sampled
14	Dal abattoir	Garko	Dal	Not sampled
15	Garko abattoir	Garko	Garko	Sampled
16	Gaya abattoir	Gaya	Gaya	Sampled
17	Gwarzo abattoir	Gwarzo	Gwarzo	Sampled
18	Gezawa abattoir	Gezawa	Gezawa	Sampled
19	Getso abattoir	Gwarzo	Getso	Sampled
20	Kabo abattoir	Kabo	Kabo	Sampled
21	Garo abattoir	Kabo	Garo	Not sampled
22	Karaye abattoir	Karaye	Karaye	Sampled
23	Kibiya abattoir	Kibiya	Kibiya	Sampled
24	Saya-saya abattoir	Kibiya	Sayasaya	Sampled
25	Kiru abattoir	Kiru	Kiru	Sampled
26	Yako abattoir	Kiru	Yako	Sampled
27	Kwanar Dangora abattoir	Kiru	Yelwa	Sampled
28	Kura abattoir	Kura	Kura	Sampled

29	Kwankwaso abattoir	Madobi	Kwankwaso	Sampled
30	Minjibir abattoir	Minjibir	Minjibir	Sampled
31	Rimin gado abattoir	Rimin gado	Rimin gado	Sampled
32	Shanono abattoir	Shanono	Shanono	Sampled
33	Sumaila abattoir	Sumaila	Sumaila	Not sampled
34	Kachako abattoir	Takai	Kachako	Sampled
35	Dalawa abattoir	Tudun wada	Dalawa	Sampled
36	Tudun Wada abattoir	Tudun wada	Tudun wada	Sampled
37	Darki abattoir	Wudil	Darki	Sampled

S/N	Specialize in slaughtering Goat/Sheep			
1	Danzabuwa abattoir	Bichi	Danzabuwa	Sampled
2	Badume abattoir	Bichi	Badume	Sampled
3	Shuwaki abattoir	Kunchi	Shuwaki	Sampled
4	Kunya abattoir	Minjibir	Kunya	Sampled
5	Dumbulin abattoir	Tsanyawa	Dumbulin	Sampled
6	Zakirai abattoir	Gabasawa	Zakirai	Sampled
7	Sauna abattoir	Nassarawa	Sauna	Sampled
8	Madobi abattoir	Madobi	Madobi	Sampled

Source: Field survey, 2020

Handling Capacity

Abattoirs in Kano State were divided into three stratum based on handling capacity: large, medium and small. Dala, Ungoggo, Tarauni and Kumbotso local government areas have high order capacity or class A (large) abattoirs (table 1). Danbatta, Rano, Dawakin Tofa, Wudil and Nassarawa local government areas have medium abattoirs while other 41 abattoirs are considered as small abattoirs or slaughterhouses. The divisions of these abattoirs in Kano state into 3 stratum are:

Stratum 1 Small: less than 100 small animals (goats and/or sheep) per operation or less than 10 large animals (camels and/or cattle) per abattoir market day. Additionally, in this stratum, 41 abattoirs were identified (table 2). As stated by some Sarakunan-pawa that Darki is the largest goats/sheep market for the whole Kano state and fall under this category in terms of slaughter handling capacity.

Stratum 2 Medium: 100-299 goats/sheep or 10-49 camels and/or cattle. Therefore, there are 5 abattoirs in this category. Additionally, Danbatta and Wudil abattoirs which are the major domestic livestock markets in Kano State fall under this category. Wudil market is the largest

market for cattle in Nigeria and probably the largest in West Africa due to large volume of cattle brought to the market every Friday. Danbatta market is among the largest cattle markets in Kano state which operates every Sunday (Gambo, 2020). Though, both abattoirs fall under medium abattoirs; they are the largest markets, but not the largest abattoirs in terms of handling capacity in the state. For the whole Kano state, there is no market for camels. In terms of slaughtering camels, Kofar Mazugal abattoir is the largest in Nigeria.

Table 2: Types of animals and handling capacity

S/N	LGA	Ward	Types of animals		
			Goat	Cattle	Camel
Large abattoir based on handling capacity					
1	Dala	Kofar Mazugal	1500	300	120
2	Kumbotso	Unguwa Uku	200	10	
3	Tarauni	Unguwa Uku	600	15	4
4	Ungoggo	Bachirawa	800	50	5
	Total		3100	375	129
Medium abattoir based on handling capacity					
1	Danbatta	Danbatta	570	85	
2	Dawakin Tofa	Dawanau	50	15	
3	Rano	Rano	530	116	
4	Nassarawa	Tudun Murtala	50	3	
5	Wudil	Wudil	205	93	
	Total		835	227	0
Small abattoir based on handling capacity					
1	Bichi	Badume	100		
2	Bichi	Bichi	6	1	
3	Bichi	Danzabuwa	105		
4	Bunkure	Bunkure	39	2	
5	Bebeji	Bebeji	15	4	
6	Dawakin Tofa	Dawakin Tofa	60	3	
7	Dawakin kudu	Dawakin kudu	250	15	
8	Dawakin kudu	Lahadin Makole	110	20	2

9	Doguwa	Sabon gari	18	5	
10	Gabasawa	Zakirai	15		
11	Garin Malam	Garin Malam	20	8	
12	Garko	Dal	100	30	
13	Garko	Garko	40	10	
14	Gaya	Gaya	18	15	
15	Gwarzo	Gwarzo	180	34	
16	Gezawa	Gezawa	174	6	
17	Gwarzo	Getso	162	47	
18	Kabo	Kabo	205	7	
19	Kabo	Garo	60	10	
20	Karaye	Karaye	140	35	
21	Kibiya	Kibiya	28	9	
22	Kibiya	Sayasaya	10	1	
23	Kiru	Kiru	90	17	
24	Kiru	Yako	20	8	
25	Kiru	Yelwa	45	4	
26	Kunchi	Shuwaki	115		
27	Kura	Kura	120	16	
28	Madobi	Kwankwaso	50	2	
29	Madobi	Madobi	10		
30	Minjibir	Kunya	50		
31	Minjibir	Minjibir	125	4	
32	Nassarawa	Sauna	15		
33	Rimin gado	Rimin gado	100	10	
34	Shanono	Shanono	142	8	
35	Sumaila	Sumaila	15	10	
36	Takai	Takai	100	30	7
37	Takai	Kachako	91	12	

38	Tsanyawa	Dumbulin	50	
39	Tudun wada	Dalawa	50	10
40	Tudun wada	Tudun wada	60	12
41	Wudil	Darki	100	2
Total			3203	407
			9	

Source: Field survey, 2020

Stratum 3 Large: 300 goats or sheep to above per market-day or 50 camels or cattle to above per market-day. These abattoirs are source of meat not to other metropolitan local government areas, but to many states within the nation and other countries such as Saudi Arabia as stated by Sakinpawa of Kofar Mazugal and Bachirawa abattoirs during interview conducted. This is among the possible reasons that there is no abattoir in Fagge, Gwale and Kano Municipal local government areas due to the huge meat produce by these 3 abattoirs.

Day(s) of operation per week

This study identified abattoirs that operate on daily basis are 8 in number in Kano state (Figure 2). All these abattoirs are within Kano metropolitan local government areas except Dawanau and Bichi abattoirs. However, abattoirs that operate weekly are 18. Seven abattoirs out of 18 (38.9%) operate on Friday; 4 operate on Tuesday. Abattoirs that operate on Wednesday are 3; with two abattoirs operate on Thursday and Sunday each. No abattoir in Kano State operates on either Saturday or Monday.

On the other hand, 15 abattoirs operate on daily/weekly basis. These abattoirs slaughter daily in small quantity, but on market day the number of animals slaughtered is high. Out of 15 abattoirs, 7 (46.70%) operate on daily and Friday. The possible reason for having the largest percentage of Friday as a market-day might be related to religious activities (since Friday is considered as Sacred day among the Muslim). Two abattoirs each operate daily and on Sunday (market day); daily and on Wednesday; daily and Monday. The remaining 2 abattoirs operate daily and on Tuesday as well as daily and on Thursday. There is no abattoir that operates on Saturday in this category (Figure 2).

Additionally, 4 abattoirs operate twice in a week. Abattoir in Kwankwaso, Madobi and Yako town operate on Monday and Friday while Garo abattoir operates on Saturday and Tuesday. On the other hand, the remaining 5 abattoirs: Gaya, Gezawa and Tudun wada abattoir operate on one day-off. While Garin malam and Shanono abattoirs operate daily and twice in a week (Monday & Friday).

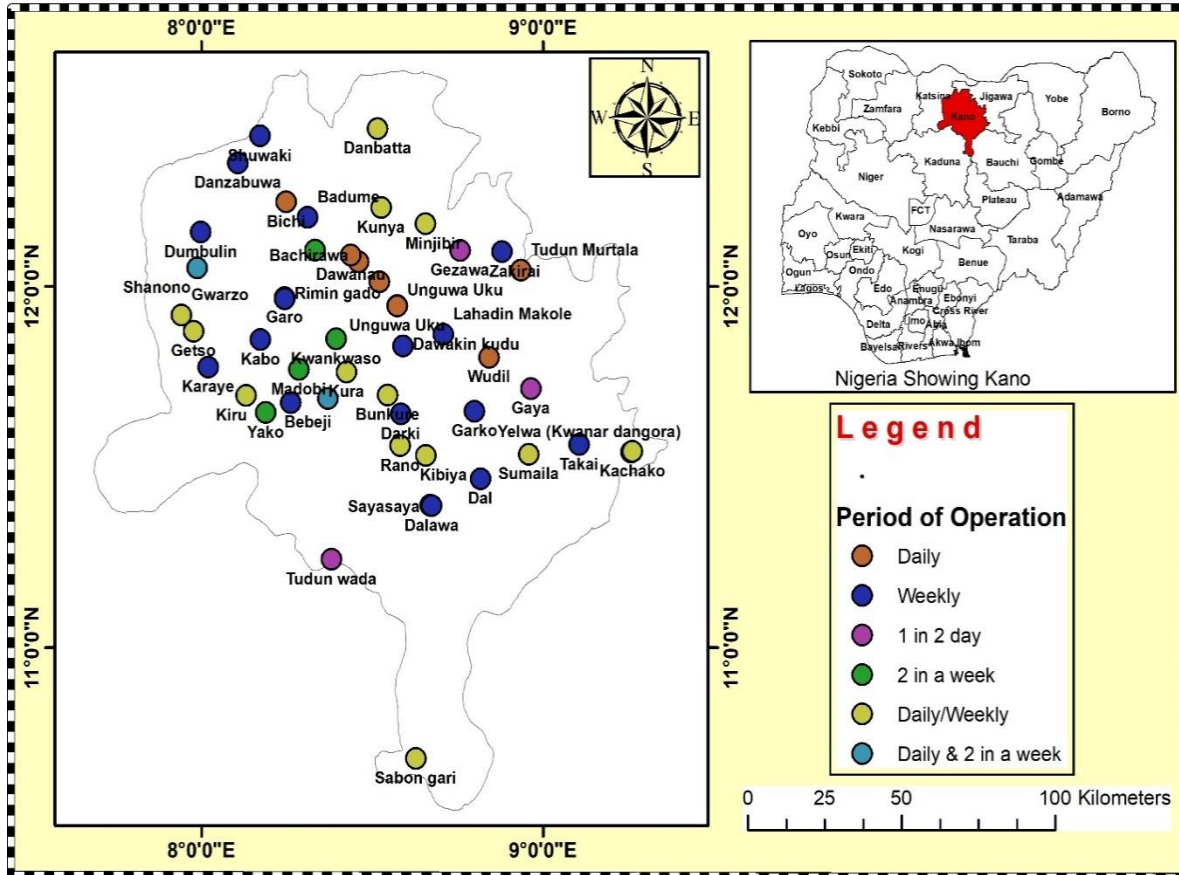


Figure 2: abattoir frequency of operation

Source: Fieldwork, 2020

Spatial Distribution of Abattoirs in Kano State

Abattoirs in Kano state are distributed unevenly which occurred as a result of some geographical factors such as population density, commercial activities, transportation network and space available. So, the pattern of the distribution of abattoir in Kano State is random as it can be seen in Figure 3.

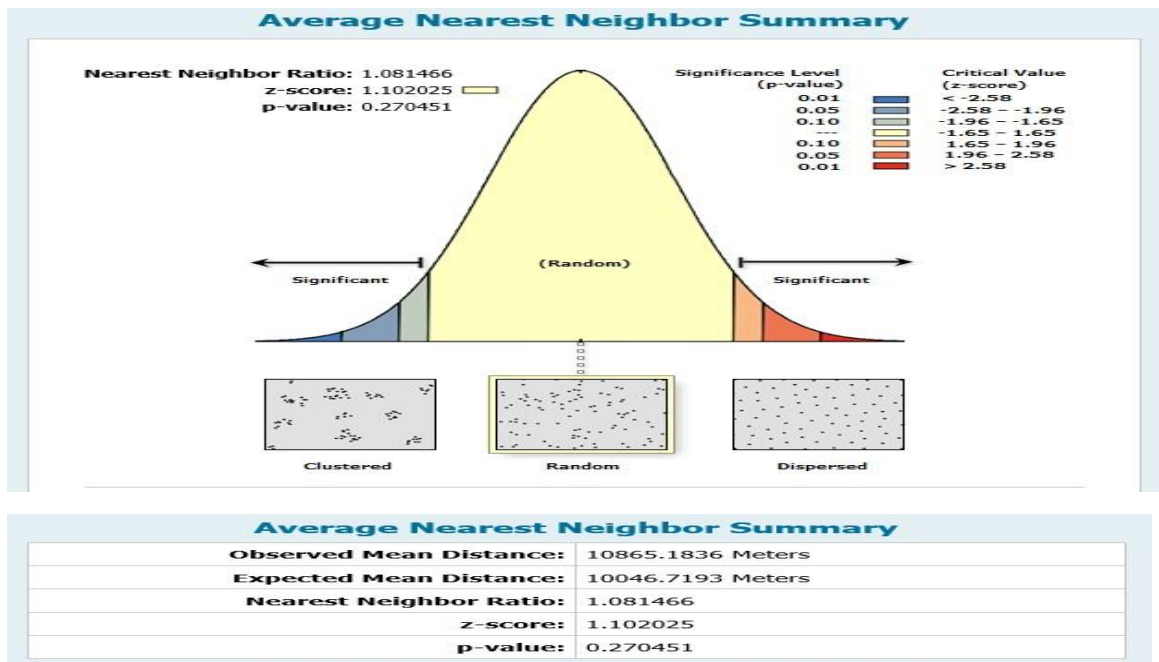


Figure 3: Nearest Neighbour Analysis in the Study Area

Source: Fieldwork, 2020

From Figure 3, it was calculated the Nearest Neighbour Index (NNI) is greater than 1 and Z score is also greater than 1. This means that the pattern of abattoirs in Kano State is random. This is because the abattoirs are distributed or built randomly in different commercial hubs, road transportation site and high population concentration local government areas.

Location of large abattoirs in Kano State

Based on handling capacity, 4 abattoirs were identified as large. These abattoirs are concentrated in Kano metropolitan local government areas. These 4 abattoirs (Kofar Mazugal, Bachirawa, Unguwa uku Tarauni and Unguwa uku Kumbotso) produce more than half of all what other abattoirs produce in Kano state in terms of meat and waste (table 2). Their spatial pattern of distribution is mostly clustered (Fig. 4). All are located close to motor parks except Bachirawa. On the other hand, KofarMazugal abattoir is amidst of multi-billionaire markets in Kano State which are Akija, Kantin kwari, Kofar Wambai, Kurmi, Sabon gari, Singer, Wapa (Maigari, 2014).

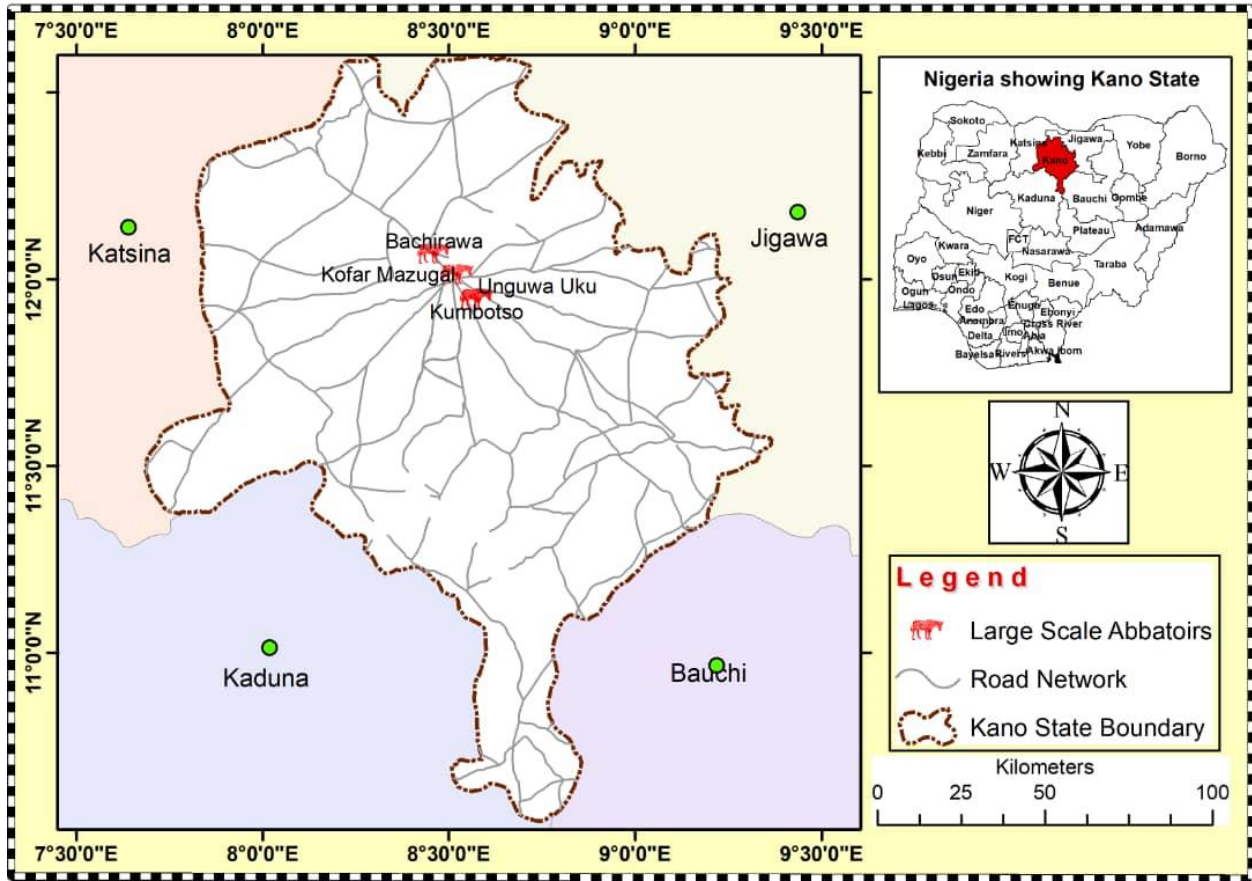


Fig. 4: Spatial Pattern of Medium abattoirs in Kano State
Source: Fieldwork, 2020

Location of Medium abattoirs in Kano State

Medium abattoirs are 5; with only one (Tudun Murtala) is in Kano metropolitan. Spatially, their pattern of distribution is random (Fig. 5). These abattoirs are concentrated mostly in Kano north and south (relatively) longitudinally. Wudil is found in eastern part of Kano state, but there is no category of medium abattoir in western region. Furthermore, all are located close to road and within the market, except Tudun Murtala which is close to the road and other industries. They all serve other smaller communities with meat and other services. Theoretically, this finding supports the Christaller's Central Place Theory (1966). In terms of animals slaughtered, they do not slaughter camel in their regular activities, except by accident.

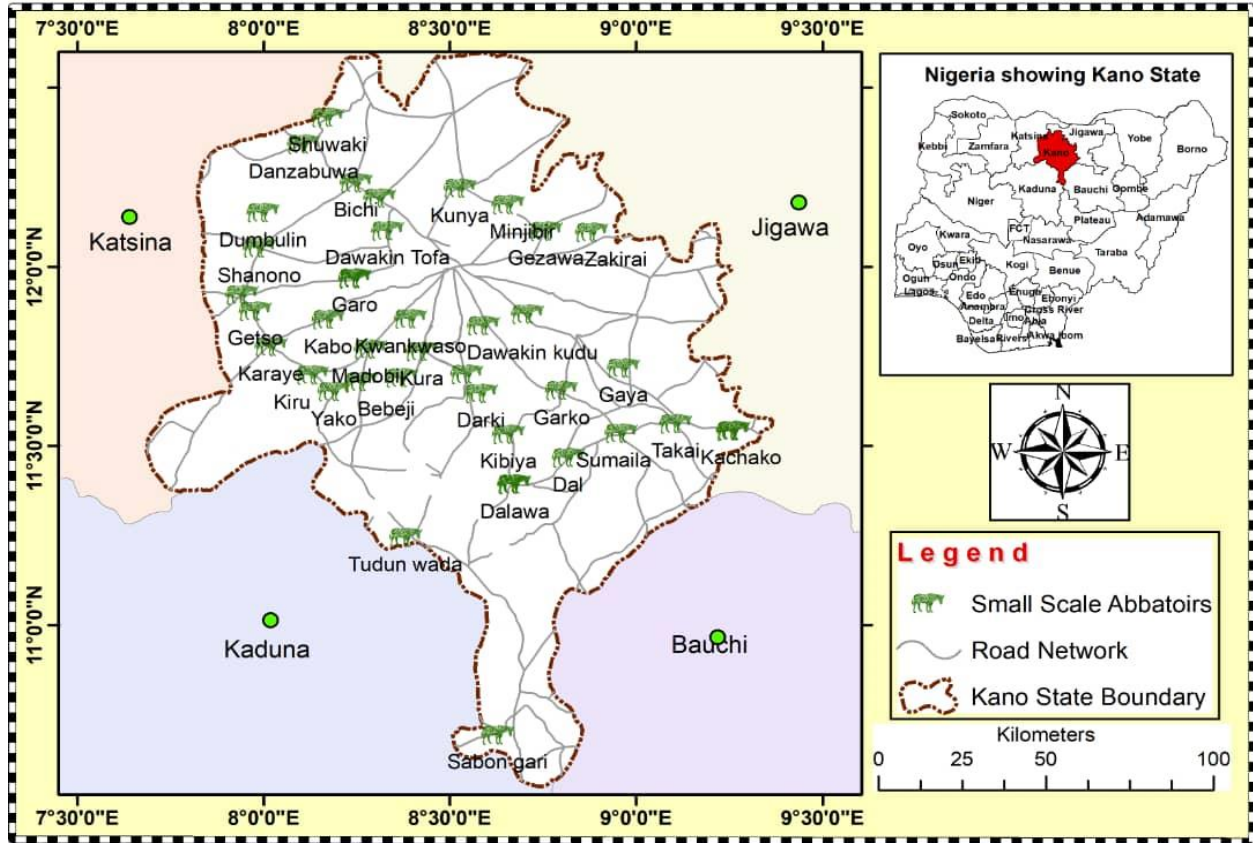


Source: Fieldwork, 2020

Fig. 5: Spatial pattern of medium abattoirs in Kano State

Location of Small abattoirs in Kano State

This category has 41 abattoirs. Their spatial distribution is fairly even (Fig. 6). For example, in northern and southern Kano there are small abattoirs in Kunchi and Doguwa local government areas respectively. From eastern part of Kano, there are abattoirs in Gaya, Sumaila and Takai while in western fringe there are abattoirs in Gwarzo, Karaye and Kiru. Centrally, there are abattoirs in Nassarawa, Dawakin Tofa and Madobi. Out of 41 small abattoirs in Kano state, only Sauna abattoir in Nassawara local government area is located in Kano metropolitan but the rest are in non-metropolitan area. However, the small abattoirs are tenth and eighth times of large and medium abattoirs respectively, but produce less than fifth times of their edible and non-edible meat in a week. Theoretically, this finding corroborates Christaller's Central Place Theory which states that the lowest order units are higher than the first order unit in hierarchy of settlement.



Source: Fieldwork, 2020

Fig. 6: Spatial pattern of small abattoirs in Kano State

Factors that Determine the Locations of Abattoir in the Study Area

The most important factors for this distribution of abattoirs are population, demand for meat, road accessibility, markets, just mentioned a few. Fig. 6 showed that all abattoirs are located close to road transportation or footpath.

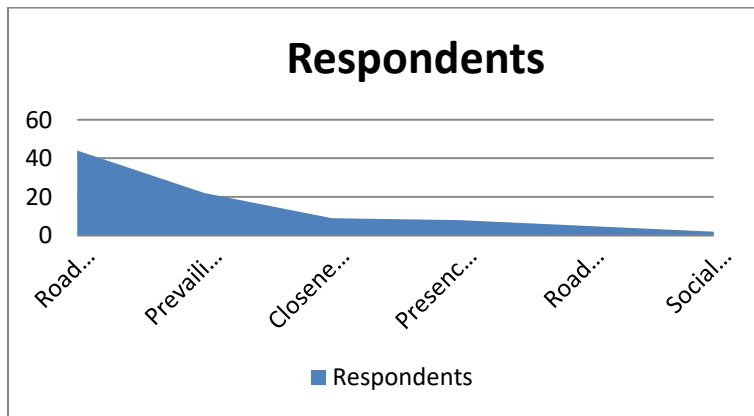


Fig 7: Factors influencing the location of abattoirs
Source: Fieldwork, 2020

Looking at the Fig. 7 above, total responses are 158 which supposes to be 132 respondents (44 officers from each local government area under Agriculture Department, 44 Sarakunanpawa and 44 Chairpersons of butchers). Some of the interviewees stated more than one reason for locating abattoir in an area. There is agreement among all Sarakunanpawa and Chairpersons of butchers together with few local government officers that road accessibility is the major factor considers for locating abattoir in an area. The road can be foot path, minor road, secondary or main road. Apart from road accessibility, direction of wind takes second position, followed by closeness to settlement. While traditional ceremonies take the last position. In summary, all the factors stated by the respondents could either be physical, social or economic factors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Abattoirs are not evenly distributed in Kano State as this study discovered. They are more concentrated in highly populated and commercial areas with more concentration of large abattoirs in Kano metropolitan. The abattoirs were erected at 34 local government areas. The pattern of distribution of these abattoirs is random which can affect the immediate environment. However, 10 local government areas without abattoir: 7 and 3 from non-metropolitan and metropolitan local government areas respectively. These 7 local government areas having depending on larger local government neighbouring them for most of their social amenities and transportation network is another factor to be consider for not having abattoirs in these local government areas. On the other hand, there is symbiosis relationship among metropolitan local government areas, so, these 3 local government areas depend on Kofar Mazugal abattoir which is situated in Dala local government area for meat production.

On the other hand, social factors play vital role in determine the location of abattoir in the study area. The most central factors that determine the distribution of abattoirs are population, demand for meat, road accessibility, markets, just mentioned a few. It is showed that all abattoirs are located close to road transportation or footpath.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are given:

It is recommended that the government should relocate some abattoirs in Kano metropolitan to suburban area so as to reduce the negative effects of abattoirs that might be found. For those local government have more than one abattoir, one of the abattoirs should be relocated to local government area where is no abattoirs and government provide subsidy for newly relocated abattoir such as removing taxation, chief electricity, water, and so on.

It is also recommended that transportation network should be provided to link all local government areas as it is one of the requirements for establishing abattoir in an area for easy convey of live animals and carcass as well as commute people.

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Auditor Independence and Audit Quality in Nigerian Banks: Mediating role of Auditor-Client Relationships

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Article History:		<p><i>The study mediates the effect of auditor-client relationships on the association between auditor independence and quality audits within the Nigerian banking sector. A non-probability convenience sampling method was utilized to gather data from 150 internal auditors working in Nigerian banks. Data analysis was performed with the aid of Path Analysis-Structural Equation Modelling (PA-SEM). The results of the Path Analysis with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) highlight the nuanced relationship between auditor independence, auditor-client relationships, and audit quality in the banking sector. The study provides evidence of a partial mediating effect of auditor-client relationships on the relationship between auditor independence and the quality of audits. Both auditor independence and auditor-client relationships independently predict quality audits, aligning with established guidelines. This conclusion underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing audit quality in the banking industry. Therefore, the policymakers should consider reviewing and updating existing regulatory frameworks to incorporate the importance of both auditor independence and auditor-client relationships in ensuring audit quality.</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

The pivotal role of the banking sector in driving economic growth in Nigeria cannot be overstated. Through the provision of financial services, banks play a key role in facilitating investment, entrepreneurship, and capital formation, thereby fostering the overall development of the economy (Ogbeide & Osaze, 2017). According to Okpukpara (2015), banks are instrumental in advancing financial inclusion by offering a diverse range of services to various segments of the population. Initiatives such as mobile banking and agent banking have proven effective in integrating previously unbanked or underbanked individuals and businesses into the formal financial system. Afolabi (2013) supports this perspective, emphasizing that access to financial services, made possible by the banking sector, contributes significantly to poverty reduction. The provision of banking services empowers

individuals and businesses to save, invest, and access credit, ultimately enhancing their economic well-being over time.

In recent times, the banking sector has grappled with challenges related to fraud and financial mismanagement. Recent research findings indicate that Nigerian banks have incurred substantial losses of approximately N159 billion, equivalent to about 202 million dollars, due to fraudulent activities since 2020. Notably, more than 25 billion naira has been lost to various forms of fraud, encompassing illicit activities in internet banking, malicious digital loans, point-of-sale (POS) transactions, ATMs, and mobile applications. According to the report from the Financial Institution Training Centre (FITC), the first quarter of 2023 witnessed recorded fraudulent activities amounting to 473 million naira, while the figure surged to over 5 billion naira in the second quarter of the same year (Imafidon et al., 2023). This alarming trend has significantly undermined the confidence of both local and foreign investors, as well as eroded public trust in the banking sector.

The significance of a quality audit has been widely recognized by scholars, financial analysts, and researchers as a remedy for unethical practices within the banking sector. According to Imafidon et al. (2023), a quality audit plays a crucial role in ensuring the financial stability and integrity of banks. It serves as a vital tool for detecting, deterring, and mitigating fraud and mismanagement, acting as an independent line of defense that safeguards depositors' funds, fosters public trust, and helps prevent financial crises. Ogbeide, and Osaze (2017) emphasize that quality audits are instrumental in identifying operational inefficiencies and weaknesses in internal controls. This identification prompts improvements that optimize performance and enhance resource allocation. This underscores the notion that a quality audit serves as a robust mechanism for reviewing internal controls, financial records, and transactions, often uncovering discrepancies and irregularities indicative of fraud. Therefore, the preservation of auditor independence and the cultivation of strong auditor-client relationships are deemed essential for conducting quality audits, propelling the banking sector into the global spotlight of relevance (Okafor, Nnadi, & Onugu, 2020; IAASB, 2023; Tower, 2023).

Auditor independence has been identified as a tool that influence quality audits, which is referring to the impartiality and lack of bias in the audit process. It is the freedom of auditors from any financial, personal, or other relationships that may compromise their ability to make objective and unbiased judgments (Salehi & Moradi, 2010). In the same direction, Tower (2023) demonstrates that auditor independence is a cornerstone of the auditing profession as well as a crucial element in the statutory corporate reporting process. It is also a key prerequisite for adding value to financial statements (Shakhatreh, Alsmadi, & Alkhataybeh, 2020; Ahmed, 2014). Tower (2023) also confirms that the requirement of auditor independence arises from the need to establish the independent auditor as an objective and trustworthy arbiter of the fair presentation of financial results.

In addition to upholding auditor independence, the significance of auditor-client relationships as crucial tools for efficient and insightful audits has been widely acknowledged. It is noteworthy that these relationships empower auditors to acquire in-depth knowledge of a client's business, internal controls, and risks, facilitating the swift identification of key audit areas and the seamless execution of audits (Imafidon et al., 2023). Taking a similar perspective, some argue that auditor-client relationships act as a double-edged sword in the pursuit of high-quality audits. While close collaboration can enhance efficiency and comprehension, it concurrently raises concerns about potential threats to auditor independence (Fossung, & Verges, 2022). Striking the right balance becomes paramount in

ensuring accurate financial reporting and fostering public trust in the auditing profession (Ivungu, Kenneth, & Austine, 2019).

Existing research has correlated auditor independence with quality audits, and parallel studies have explored the relationship between auditor-client relationships and quality audits across various sectors, including manufacturing, education, agriculture, automobile, and services (Imafidon, Josiah, & Agbo, 2023; Shakhathreh, Alsmadi, & Alkhataybeh, 2020; Simon, 2018; Sunday, 2019; Fossung, & Verges, 2022). However, there is a notable gap in the literature, as no available studies have examined the extent to which auditor independence influences quality audits when auditor-client relationships are introduced. This novel study aims to address this gap by exploring the mediating effect of auditor-client relationships on the association between auditor independence and quality audits within the Nigerian banking sector.

The research is anticipated to make a meaningful contribution to the banking sector's efforts in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by mobilizing significant financial resources for the funding of sustainable development projects by the year 2030.

Theoretical Framework

Various theoretical frameworks frequently arise in discussions about auditor independence, auditor-client relationships, and quality audits. Noteworthy among these are institutional theory (Shakhathreh et al., 2020; Al-Khaddash., 2013), agency theory (Simon., 2018; Amahalu., 2018), social exchange theory (Imafidon et al., 2023; Fossung, & Verges, 2022), resource dependency theory (Stella, & Uchenna, 2019; Ivungu et al., 2019), and structuration theory (Sunday., 2019; Adegbe et al., 2017). Surprisingly, none of the existing studies have amalgamated these theories to elucidate the nexus between auditor independence, auditor-client relationships, and quality audits. This innovative investigation diverges from this trend by incorporating institutional theory, Stakeholder theory, and social exchange theory. These combined theories are employed to elucidate the mediating role of the auditor-client relationship in the connection between auditor independence and quality audits. This approach provides a novel framework for comprehending the intricacies of auditor independence, quality audits, and auditor-client relationships, shedding light on the factors that influence these pivotal aspects of the auditing process.

Institutional Theory

In the realm of auditing, institutional theory, rooted in sociology and organizational studies, emerged during the 1970s as a prominent framework for comprehending how organizations conform to and are shaped by institutional norms, values, and expectations (Shakhathreh et al., 2020). This theory asserts that organizations strive for legitimacy by aligning with institutional pressures, encompassing cultural, social, and regulatory expectations. Within the context of auditing, Institutional theory suggests that auditors adhere to institutional norms and expectations, offering insights into how the institutional environment influences auditor behavior, encompassing independence and adherence to auditing standards (Shakhathreh et al., 2020). Al-Khaddash (2013) posits that institutional theory provides auditors with a platform to function within a broader institutional environment comprising regulatory bodies, professional standards, and societal expectations. This implies that auditors must conform to these norms to establish and sustain legitimacy. According to Simon (2018), the adherence to institutional expectations plays a pivotal role in ensuring the independence of auditors, facilitating the performance of their roles with objectivity and impartiality. Stella, and Uchenna (2019) further illustrates the connection between institutional theory and quality

audits, emphasizing how institutions shape expectations and standards for auditing practices. Institutional pressures impact the adoption of best practices, methodologies, and standards in auditing. Sadem advocates that adherence to established norms and standards enhances the legitimacy of auditors, fostering a positive perception of their role among clients and stakeholders.

In a related study, Sunday (2019) reinforces the theory that adherence to institutional norms and standards builds trust in the auditor-client relationship. Clients are more likely to trust auditors who follow established practices and standards, as this conformity aligns with societal expectations and institutional norms. Consequently, Institutional theory suggests that Nigerian banks, including auditors, should actively seek legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders and the broader institutional environment. Compliance with standards and norms is essential to mitigate the risk of audit failures, financial scandals, and legal repercussions. This, in turn, enhances the overall stability and reliability of the auditor-client relationship.

Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory, a management and organizational framework, underscores the importance of recognizing and fulfilling the needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders within an organization. In the banking context, this theory translates into a commitment to considering and balancing the interests of all stakeholders for sustained success (Shakhathreh et al., 2020). This study delves into the relevance of stakeholder theory in three pivotal facets of the banking industry: quality audits, auditor independence, and auditor-client relationships. According to Fossung, and Verges (2022), stakeholder theory underscores the significance of audits addressing the needs of all stakeholders, extending beyond shareholders. This implies that audits should evaluate risks impacting various stakeholders, encompassing financial stability, operational efficiency, ethical conduct, and environmental impact. For instance, an audit should not solely focus on financial performance but also assess compliance with environmental regulations and the bank's influence on local communities.

Furthermore, Ivungu, Kenneth, and Austine (2019) assert that stakeholder theory posits auditors have a responsibility to a range of stakeholders, including creditors, employees, and the public. Independence is crucial to serve the interests of all stakeholders by furnishing accurate and reliable financial information. Stakeholder theory also considers the broader impact of the auditor-client relationship on stakeholders, perceiving a healthy relationship as beneficial for transparency and accountability. This theory also establishes a foundation for banks to showcase a quality audit through independent auditors and amicable auditor-client relationships, enhancing credibility and trustworthiness for all stakeholders (Parker & Guthrie, 2010).

In a parallel vein, the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) (2012) confirms that stakeholder theory promotes open communication and transparency between auditors and bank management, fostering a collaborative approach to identifying and addressing risks. This collaborative effort benefits all stakeholders by building trust and understanding between auditors and clients. Stakeholder theory, therefore, offers a comprehensive framework for understanding and managing the relationships between auditors, clients, and other stakeholders in the banking sector. By recognizing the diverse interests involved, Stakeholder theory contributes to the enhancement of quality audits, the promotion of auditor independence, and the cultivation of positive auditor-client relationships. This integrated approach aligns with the broader goals of organizational sustainability and stakeholder value creation.

Social exchange theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) has its origins in sociology and social psychology, gaining prominence in the early to mid-20th century and being further developed by scholars like George C. Homans, Peter M. Blau, and Richard M. Emerson (Glover, Prawitt, & Woods, 2018). At its core, SET revolves around the principles of social behaviour and relationships, proposing that individuals participate in social interactions with the anticipation of reciprocity or the exchange of resources. Van Der Zahn (2004) emphasizes that social exchange within auditing involves mutual expectations of trust and honesty. The independence of auditors is a pivotal element in upholding trust throughout the auditing process. Stakeholders rely on auditors to provide an impartial evaluation, while auditors, in turn, depend on stakeholder trust for sustained relevance and credibility. In the SET framework, independence becomes a form of social exchange between auditors and stakeholders, where auditors offer their expertise and assurance services, and stakeholders, encompassing shareholders and the public, trust that auditors act in their best interest.

Horton et al. (2008) highlight the social exchange dynamics in the auditor-client relationship, characterized by the interchange of information and resources. Clients furnish necessary information for audits, and auditors reciprocate with expertise and assurance. Trust and open communication play pivotal roles in shaping the effectiveness of this exchange, significantly influencing the auditor-client relationship. Echoing this sentiment, Glover et al. (2018) argue that the quality of the audit process is shaped by the social exchange between auditors and clients. Effective communication and collaboration contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the client's business, thereby enhancing the overall audit quality. According to Dart (2011), auditors play a crucial role in providing assurance to external stakeholders that corporate reports and financial statements accurately represent the performance of the company. To fulfill this responsibility effectively, it is imperative that auditors maintain independence from the client company while fostering a positive and cooperative relationship with their clients.

In line with these perspectives, it is advocated that banks should create an environment conducive to auditor independence and the effectiveness of the auditor-client relationship. This enables auditors to deliver their expertise and assurance services, fostering trust among stakeholders, including shareholders and the public, who rely on auditors to act in their best interests.

Empirical Review and Hypotheses Development

Several studies have investigated the impact of auditor independence on audit quality, with consistent findings. Abdul et al. (2014) in Indonesia, Adeyemi and Okpala (2011) in Nigeria, Ahmed (2014) in Egypt, Babatolu et al. (2016) in Nigeria, and Soltani (2007) in a global context all conclude that independent authors are more likely to conduct high-quality audits. Madumare and Onwucheka (2020) also investigated the impact of auditor independence on the quality of audits within Nigerian banks, establishing a significant association between auditor independence and the quality of audits. Similarly, Yakub and William (2020) explored the relationship between auditor independence and the quality of audits in listed firms, concluding that auditor independence is significantly linked to enhanced audit quality.

In a separate study, Aliu, Okpanachi, and Mohammed (2018) focused on the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry, finding that auditor independence serves as a key predictor of high-quality audits. Otuya (2019) affirmed the significance of auditor independence by demonstrating its substantial association with the quality of corporate reporting in the Nigerian manufacturing

industry. Basse et al. (2020) delved into the connections between auditor independence and the quality of auditing in Nigeria, revealing a significant relationship between various dimensions of auditor independence and audit quality.

Further emphasizing the impact of auditor independence, a study conducted by Ebubechukwu (2023) concentrated on non-financial firms in Nigeria, indicating that auditor independence plays a pivotal role in ensuring the quality of financial reporting. Owolabi and Agbaje et al. (2021) explored the influence of auditor independence on the quality of financial reporting in Nigerian banks, finding a significant association between auditor independence and enhanced financial reporting quality. Similarly, Okunola (2020) affirmed the substantial effect of auditor independence on the quality of financial reporting in Lagos State Parastatals. Ezuwore, and Elias (2020) conducted a study on the effect of auditor independence on audit quality, providing confirmation that auditor independence significantly contributes to the attainment of high-quality audits. These collective findings underscore the consistent and crucial role of auditor independence in ensuring the quality and reliability of audit outcomes across various industries in Nigeria. Hence, the following hypothesis emerged:

H1: Auditor independence has a significant link with quality audits

Mediating effect of Auditor-Client Relationship

The relationship between auditors and clients can be traced back to the early stages of formal accounting practices, with roots in ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia and Egypt (Knechel, Nitzan, & Tubbs, 2020). Described as intricate and multifaceted by Durtschi, Knoepfle, and Knechel (2014), this longstanding association yields undeniable benefits for both parties. Through the cultivation of transparent communication, the sharing of knowledge, and the adherence to ethical standards, the auditor-client relationship significantly enhances the quality and independence of audits, ultimately serving the best interests of investors, stakeholders, and the broader financial markets. Van der Stede and Young (2011) argue that clients grant auditors access to internal information, systems, and personnel, providing invaluable insider knowledge. This access enables auditors to gain a profound understanding of the client's business, identifying potential risks and areas warranting closer examination. Supporting this perspective, Davis, Ricchiute, and Trompeter (2015) affirm that the auditor-client relationship fosters open communication and collaboration, facilitating the timely exchange of information, clarification of complex issues, and the resolution of disagreements in a constructive manner.

A research investigation carried out by Aondoakaa, and Achika (2020) highlights that the auditor-client relationship plays a role in shaping the connection between auditor independence and the quality of audits in Bahrain. Similarly, in another study, Magdas, Tudor, and Popa (2022) assert that the auditor-client relationship serves as a platform where auditor independence and the quality of audits are intertwined. In backing this claim, Bleibtreu, and Stefani (2018) illustrate that the auditor-client relationship serves as a framework establishing the meaningful correlation between auditor independence and the quality of audits on a global scale. He et al. (2017) contend that a strong auditor-client relationship, grounded in auditor independence, is vital for safeguarding the precision and dependability of financial reporting. This implies that auditor independence, cultivated within the dynamics of the auditor-client interaction, notably enhances the quality of presented financial information.

Nevertheless, research conducted by Hamilton, Ruddock, Stokes, and Taylor (2005) indicated that a prolonged auditor-client relationship appears to hinder the auditor's ability to attain a

high level of conduct necessary for elevating audit quality. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Auditor independence has a significant association with auditor-client relationship

H3: Auditor-client relationship has a significant association with quality audits

H4: Auditor-client relationship mediates between auditor independence and quality audits

Conceptual Framework

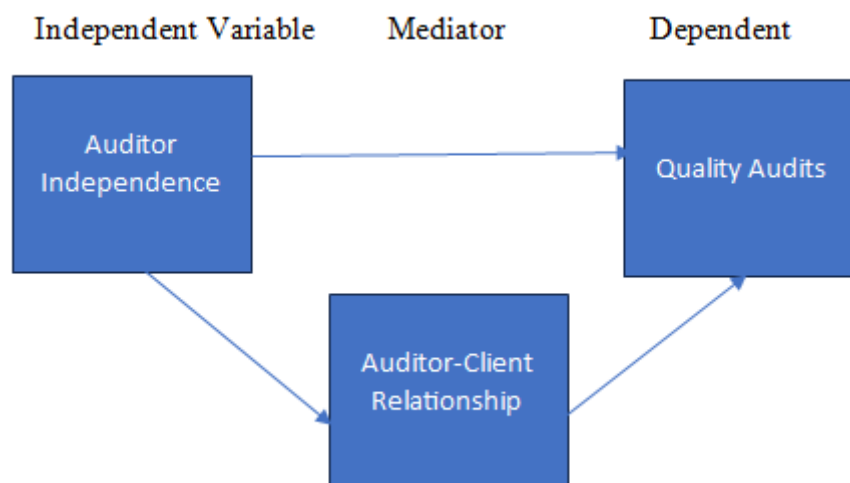


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedures

A non-probability convenience sampling method was utilized to gather data from 150 internal auditors working in Nigerian banks. The demographic details of the participants are outlined as follows: 55% of the sample were male, while 45% were female, indicating a gender-sensitive approach in the banks' employment policies. Regarding age distribution, 50% fell within the 20 to 35 years bracket, 30% were in the 36 to 45 years bracket, and the remaining respondents were 46 years and older. This suggests that a majority of the participants are in the prime of their professional careers, poised to contribute to the global prominence of the sector. In terms of educational qualifications, 40% of the respondents held a master's degree, 50% held a bachelor's degree, and 10% possessed a diploma; all respondents were holders of an Accounting professional certificate. Additionally, 8% reported 1-5 years of working experience, 40% had 5-10 years, and 58% had over 10 years of experience. This indicates that all respondents have a high level of proficiency in auditing practices.

Survey Instrument

The study employed three instruments: the auditor independence scale, the auditor-client relationship scale, and the quality audits scale. All scales were structured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). The auditor independence scale, consisting of 5 items, drew inspiration from the works of Yakub and

William (2020) and Ebubechukwu (2023). The auditor-client relationship scale, comprising 4 items, was developed and validated by Knechel, Nitzan, and Tubbs (2020). Additionally, the quality audits scale, consisting of 5 items, was derived from the research conducted by Magdas, Tudor, and Popa (2022). The internal consistency factors (α) reported by the authors were 0.78 for auditor independence, 0.81 for the auditor-client relationship, and 0.84 for quality audits, indicating the reliability of the respective scales.

Table 1: Summary of Results of the Measurement Instruments Validation

variable		Cronbach's alpha
Auditor Independence – Cronbach Alpha – (AIS = 0.852)		
AIS 1	Auditors in our bank are free to make decisions without undue influence from management or other parties.	0.812
AIS 2	Auditors in our bank maintain objectivity in their judgment and are not swayed by personal or financial interests.	0.799
AIS 3	External pressures, such as client relationships or financial incentives, do not compromise the independence of auditors in our bank.	0.821
AIS 4	Auditors in our bank consistently adhere to professional standards and ethical guidelines to ensure independence in their work	0.802
AIS 5	The reports generated by auditors in our organization are transparent and unbiased, reflecting a commitment to maintaining independence in the audit process.	0.816
Auditor- client relationship: Cronbach Alpha – (ACR = 0.867)		
ACR1	There is effective communication and cooperation between auditors and banking clients during the audit process	0.803
ACR2	Clients actively cooperate with audit procedures, facilitating a thorough and effective audit.	0.789
ACR3	Auditors maintain independence and objectivity in their interactions with banking clients, avoiding conflicts of interest.	0.811
ACR4	Information required for the audit is exchanged in a timely manner between auditors and banking clients	0.815
Quality Audits - Cronbach Alpha – (QUS = 0.819)		
QUS 1	Our organization actively engages in continuous improvement efforts to enhance the quality of audit processes and outcomes.	0.812
QUS 2	Auditors in our organization maintain independence and objectivity, contributing to the overall quality of audits.	0.808
QUS 3	Our audit practices consistently adhere to professional standards and guidelines, ensuring a high level of quality	0.804

QUS 4	The audit procedures employed in our organization are effective in uncovering relevant information and risks.	0.809
QUS 5	The audit planning process in our organization is thorough and ensures that all relevant aspects are adequately considered.	0.810

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that the factor weights for all indicators surpass 0.5. This suggests that the questions effectively account for the variability in the associated variables. Consequently, the measurement model is deemed appropriate for analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed with the aid of Path Analysis-Structural Equation Modelling (PA-SEM).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: PA-SEM (Direct Effect)

Path	Coef.	t-value	p-value	Hypothesis	Remark
QUS <- AIS	.3278822	4.39	0.000	H1	Confirmed
QUS <- ACR	.40139	5.74	0.000	H2	
ACR <- AIS	.6610355	9.27	0.000	H3	Confirmed

Table 2 presents the direct effects in a Path Analysis-Structural Equation Model (PA-SEM) and their significance levels. The beta- value of 0.327 and t-value of 4.39 indicate that the auditor independence (AIS) has a positive relationship with quality audits. The p-value of 0.000 further confirms the statistical significance of the relationship. This finding aligns with theoretical expectations and supports the notion that independent auditors are less susceptible to bias and pressure, leading to more thorough and objective audits (Okunola, 2020). This connotes that promoting auditor independence enhances the quality of audits and safeguards the interests of investors. Cultivating a culture of independence within the audit profession ensures the integrity and reliability of financial reporting, thereby making a significant contribution to a more stable and efficient financial system. This finding is in alignment with the previous studies that auditor independence has a positive and significant association with quality of audits, which safeguards the interests of investors (Otuya, 2019; Owolabi & Afolayan, 2020; Ebubechukwu, 2023). Therefore, H1 is supported.

The beta-value of 0.4013, coupled with a t-value of 5.74, signifies a positive association between the auditor-client relationship and quality audits. This suggests that an elevated level of auditor-client relationship corresponds to a higher standard of quality audits. This implies that fostering a stronger and more collaborative relationship between auditors and clients could contribute to an enhanced standard of quality in audit processes. This suggests that investing in and nurturing effective communication and cooperation between auditors and clients may result in improved audit outcomes and a higher level of assurance in financial reporting. The study concurs with the existing research that auditor-client relationship is a strong predictor of quality audits (Khashermer & Hezabr, 2016; Magdas et al., 2022). Hence, H2 is confirmed.

The evidence further indicates a positive correlation between the auditor-client relationship and auditor independence, as reflected in a beta-value of 0.661 and a t-value of 9.27. The significance is underscored by a p-value of 0.000, affirming the meaningful linkage between the two variables. This suggests that a robust and positive auditor-client relationship is closely tied to higher levels of auditor independence. Organizations and regulatory bodies may consider prioritizing measures that foster positive interactions between auditors and clients to potentially strengthen auditor independence, thus promoting trust and reliability in financial reporting. Hence, H3 is supported .

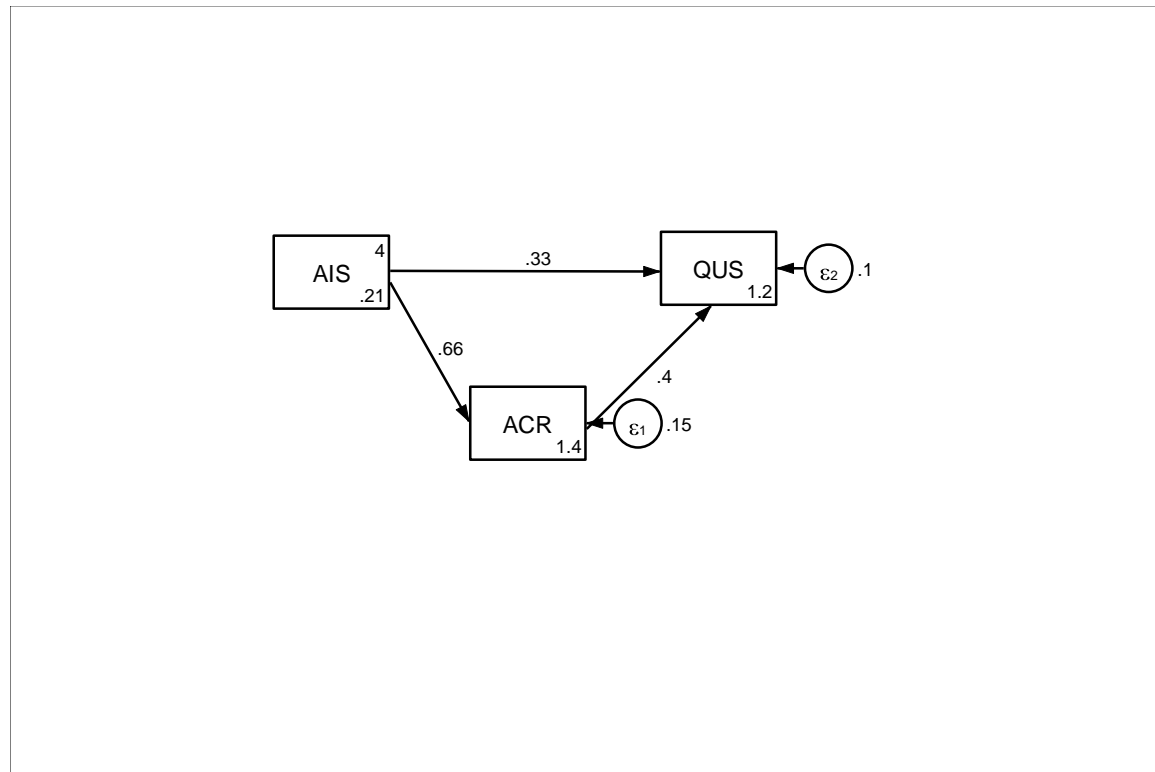


Figure 1: SEM

Table 3: PA-SEM (Indirect Effects)

Path	Coef.	t-value	p-value	Hypothesis	Remark
QUS <- ACR<-AIS	.2653	4.88	0.000	H4	Partially supported

The table displays findings from a Path Analysis utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), with a specific emphasis on indirect effects. The beta coefficient of 0.265 and a t-value of 4.88 suggest a partial mediating influence of auditor-client relationships on the association between auditor independence and the quality of audits (see Fig 1). This conclusion is supported by the observation that both auditor independence and the auditor-client relationship serve as predictors for quality audits. The study aligns with the guidelines proposed by Kenny and Baron (1986), which state that when the independent variable (in this case, auditor independence) and the mediator (auditor-client relationships) are predictors of the dependent variable (quality audits), partial mediation occurs. This adds credibility to the study's findings, as they are consistent with established theoretical frameworks. This suggests that these two factors independently contribute to the quality of audits conducted. The relationship between the auditor and the client, as well as the independence of the auditor, are

important considerations in understanding and predicting the quality of audit outcomes. Hence, H4 is partially supported.

CONCLUSION

The results of the Path Analysis with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) highlight the nuanced relationship between auditor independence, auditor-client relationships, and audit quality in the banking sector. The study provides evidence of a partial mediating effect of auditor-client relationships on the relationship between auditor independence and the quality of audits. Both auditor independence and auditor-client relationships independently predict quality audits, aligning with established guidelines. This conclusion underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing audit quality in the banking industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Banks should strengthen their mechanisms for overseeing and ensuring auditor independence. This involves implementing robust policies and procedures to identify and mitigate potential conflicts of interest. Regular audits of the independence of auditing firms can contribute to maintaining a high standard of objectivity and impartiality in the auditing process.
2. Banks should invest in effective management of these relationships. Establishing clear communication channels, fostering transparency, and promoting a collaborative environment between auditors and clients can enhance the overall quality of audits. Regular training programs for auditors on relationship management skills may be beneficial.
3. Based on the study findings, policymakers should consider reviewing and updating existing regulatory frameworks to incorporate the importance of both auditor independence and auditor-client relationships in ensuring audit quality.

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Factors influencing Choice of Clothing and textiles among undergraduate students: A study of Teaching Facilities, Career Prospects and Strategies for improvement

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ARTICLE INFO			ABSTRACT
Article History:			<p><i>This study explores the factors influencing choice of Clothing and textiles among undergraduate students in Delta State, with a focus on teaching facilities, career prospects, and strategies for improvement. The study adopts a descriptive survey method and Pearson Product Moment Correlation research design. The population comprises 220 undergraduates students of Clothing and textiles in Delta State, Nigeria, Data is collected through a structured questionnaire, titled "Factors Influencing Choice of Clothing and Textiles among Undergraduates Students, teaching facilities, Job Prospects and Strategies for Improvement Questionnaire" (FICCTUSTFJPSIQ), which was validated and tested for reliability. The analysis includes mean and standard deviation for research questions and Pearson product moment correlation for hypotheses. The findings indicate that teaching facilities, such ICT facilities, computer aided instruction, well-equipped laboratories, enough conducive classrooms, instructional materials, with educational facilities and equipment significantly influence choice of Clothing and textiles undergraduate students. Many career opportunities in Clothing and Textiles such as Fashion designing, Pattern and Clothing production, Interior and Exterior designing, weaving, knitting/crocheting and tie dye/ batik production also play significant role . Strategies to improve students' choice involve were giving incentives, donation of equipment, excursion to clothing manufacturing industries among others. In conclusion, the study emphasizes the importance of teaching facilities and career prospects in shaping students' choice of Clothing and Textiles. To enhance this choice, educators should consider students' vocational and entrepreneurial skills need while employing effective teaching strategies. It is recommended for educators to base teaching and learning more on practical skills for business operations and stakeholders should support in motivating students' that excel in productivity in the area of Clothing and textiles education.</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

Clothing and textiles is a very vital area in Home Economics studied at different levels of education with emphasis on the learner's acquisition of knowledge, skills and development of capabilities. It concerns the development and enhancement with practicable skills of borderless possibilities, relevance and opportunities for effective national economic and technological growth. Clothing and textiles being skill-centred course equips the students with sellable skills for self-reliance, entrepreneurial and occupational/employability opportunities in clothing construction, garment making, tie-dye and batik making, clothing merchandizing, cosmetology, laundry and dry cleaning, among others for productive for product living (Olubiyi et al, 2018; Bob-Eze, 2023). Clothing and textiles enable the students to be equipped with needed reasonable knowledge and abilities to plan, source, and provide clothing, enhance the clothing products and services, recognize and meet the clothing needs of individuals and families even globally (Azonuche & Anyakoha, 2018; Adilo et al 2023). Clothing and textiles education provide adequate knowledge, understanding, attitude for proper and appropriate clothing for self and environment for the students who become acquitted with wearing and care of clothing items (Olasebehkan & 2019). Obiana et al (2022) noted that Clothing and textiles skill development contribute to optimal capacity building for individuals, sustain families and grow and develop the nation through adequate application and utilization of acquired knowledge and capabilities. They further stressed that the development of human capacity acquired through Clothing and textiles practical skill innovation and creativity can help to advance competences in methods and motivations that boost students' curiosity, interest and choice for skill learning, mastering, exploration and development (Obiana et al, 2022).

The study of Clothing and textiles in the university as the highest citadel of knowledge and learning is quite beneficial, but it seems from observation that students most often place more value on choice and learning food and nutrition than clothing and textiles due to some predisposing factors (Anerua & Azonuche 2010), even when it offers a wide range of career options. As such, it is paramount for the students equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to possess sound foundational based subject in order to be competent to make informed decisions necessary for the career choice options.

Choice deals with preference or value of what is considered worthwhile to another or of her available options to someone. It entails selection of one thing amidst several alternatives based on some disposing factors. Clothing and textiles leverage on job prospects and benefits derived as motivation to students' choice despite challenges encountered in the teaching and learning process; such as teaching facilities, qualified personnel, fund, subject mastering, among others. Aruybayi (2014) buttressed that individuals have preference for different outcomes; greater desirability of outcomes result from higher preferences or choice.

Clothing and textiles cuts across different areas of humanities and sciences studies, its multidisciplinary character often times are challenging to both students and educators. Given the subject's complexity, it follows that lecturers/instructors must be competent in or have specialized understanding of the main facets of the course in instruction. This will allow the instructors to have an influence on the information, abilities, and fundamental ideas that students need to succeed in the Clothing and textiles field of study (Stewart et al., 2023).

The under graduate students majoring in the area of clothing and textiles sometimes have to make tough choices with resilience on the particular fields of study in which they choose to focus. These decisions may have a big impact on their schooling and future employment.

Students give careful thought to their future job options while choosing a concentration (Chen et al.,2022). Students in the discipline of Clothing and textiles frequently consider the employment opportunities related to several subfields. These students are more likely to select specialties like nutrition or hotel management that believed to provide bright futures for their careers (Goleman, 2018). Demand in the job market and prospective earnings capacity have a big influence on students' choices. Prior studies by Broberg et al., (2017) and Kennepohl (2023) has demonstrated that a variety of factors, including instructional resources, facilities, employment opportunities, and development tactics, may have an impact on students' choice of subject/course of study in an educational programme.

The school facilities involve materials; physical structures and other technical systems support in organization's program or an educational setting that enhance teaching and learning. School facilities as defined by Maier et al., (2022) as the process of coordinating the physical workspace with the personnel and organizational tasks. It combines the ideas of engineering, architecture, behavioral science, and educational management. School facilities raise the standard of the learning environment within the school, raising the standard of instruction. It is of note that students are able to pay more attention to teaching and learning with teachers experiencing fewer distractions if the classroom layout takes the room's acoustics into consideration (Kim, 2020). The availability and quality of instructional resources enable students internalize learning and this have a big influence on what pupils choose. Other facilities in the schools include; Information communication technology (ICT), furniture, storage facilities, toilet facilities, parking lots, lightings, acoustics, cleaning materials and special facilities for special needs (Onyebuenyi et al, 2022). Resources, contemporary classrooms, and well-equipped practical laboratory are crucial in drawing students to certain choice of course. Modern facilities have a favorable impact on students' choice and selections in addition to improving the learning experience (Liao & Li, 2022). Adequacy of facilities and resources in teaching clothing and textiles courses foster an atmosphere where students may successfully explore their interests and acquire practical skills. Lai et al., (2014), highlighted school facilities as key determinant of a high-quality education that is core condition of educational advancement. It suggests a significant investment in the school system's setup, which might have an impact on students' academic achievement if it is not effectively managed and maintained. Quarcool et al., (2022) stated that if the activities involved in high-quality teacher preparation meet the requirements of vocational and technical teacher education,which include; all preferential activities aimed at producing competent teachers who may influence students' choice of clothing and textiles, regardless of other factors, these activities could be deemed fundamental.

Clothing and Textile education as skill oriented course contributes greatly to human resource and economic growth, development and productivity. Ability to do something well with expertise constitutes skill. Adewuyi (2017) pointed that skill development is very necessary in harnessing ones level of acquisition in a particular task or activities and clothing and textiles is inclusive. However, the students needs to devise workable strategies through skill acquired vocation such as Clothing and Textiles to sustainable economy. To achieve this, there should be a shifted to students participation and involvement in sustainable capacity building on business ventures that will sustain them after graduation financially and ensure they are stabile in life. The knowledge and skills students acquired from clothing and textiles provide available jobs that can be utilized for self-reliance or employer of labour in formal or non-formal set up (Abamba et al, 2022)

There are many career prospects/options in the area of clothing and textiles readily available at students' disposal on their graduation from the Universities, which include; pattern illustration and making, garment making, fashion designing, teaching, modeling, fashion merchandizing, fabric dyeing, textiles and accessories trade, fashion writing, knitting, crocheting, among others (Olubiyi, et al 2018; Abamba et al, 2022). These occupational jobs promote resourcefulness that ensure productive living, help combat unemployment and poverty among graduates and human productivity for enhanced life. Obiana et al (2022) pointed that Clothing and textiles vocational jobs can furnish the students, families and the whole nation with needed human capital development for financial stability. Clothing and textile entrepreneur innovate inside these dimensions with creativity and constant change as well as be goal oriented, making it attractive and sellable to increase choice among students to be sustainable. Students should be taught with modern facilities in teaching and learning, proficient personnel for instructional delivery, motivation of students, practical and individualized instructional teaching and learning, provision of funds, field trips, exposure to job opportunities among others to enhance their choice of clothing and textiles.

There appear to be a strong choice and like for one area of Home Economics profession over another, despite the wide range of need and opportunities available to other areas. The students may be influenced by a variety of plausible factors, including their lack of interest in the subject, phobia, peer influence, environment, lack of information, inadequate parental and school guidance and counseling services, a lack of training facilities, a shortage of qualified and competent teachers, and a poor outlook for their future careers (Baiden et al., 2022; Resch & Schrittmesser, 2023; AL-Smadi, 2015). These factors are assumed to have an impact on students' choice of course of study as well as government and societal policies. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine if teaching facilities and career prospects influence undergraduate students choice of Clothing and textiles; and ascertain strategies that can improve students choice. Although it makes sense for students to enroll in all of the subject's aspects given the advantages it affords graduates, close examination of students' selections, choice and preferences suggest that some topics are more favored than others in instruction. Due to this, it looks like there is an imbalance in the way resources are being used, with some places seeming to be overusing their human and material resources while others appear to be underusing them. The precise determinants that impact Clothing and textiles choice/selection among undergraduate students have remained empirically unknown, despite the possibility that these factors differ depending on a student's geographic location. Therefore, this study is designed to determine the factors influencing choice of Clothing and textiles of undergraduates: A study of Teaching facilities, Career prospects and Strategies for improvement

Study framework

Education consists of three main parts: intake, process, and output. Olaoye (2014) provided support for this claim by stating that an educational system consists of a collection of inputs that are subject to procedures intended to produce outputs. The outputs are made to meet the goals of the systems. The independent variable of topic choice is related to the input variable in this study. The teaching and learning process involves the input variable. Process variables (moderating variables) are those that relate to how the instructor, students, and school resource provision—teaching facilities and occupation/employment prospects—interact. The Clothing and textiles students that arise from the process of the teacher-student interaction are the subject of the output variable.

The study was based on Hull’s theory of behavioural paradigm of Stimulus Organism Response (S – O – R) equation which was propounded in 1943. Hull developed a hypothesis on how animals might learn by being trained to exhibit particular behaviors. In biological terms, Hull’s model goes as follows: an organism experiences deprivation; this leads to demands, which in turn trigger drives, which in turn trigger behavior; behavior is goal-directed, and reaching the goal is important for survival. Connecting this to the research being reviewed, the entity in this instance is the students of Clothing and textiles at a certain school were exposed to the stimulation of their preferred topic. The organism's deficit (knowledge deficiency) made the stimulus required. The organism develops a demand as a result of the stimuli. When the organism responds favorably to its demands through the specified objectives set forth by the instructor, it changes its behavior and becomes a Clothing and textiles student, which is a survival value. The model displayed in Figure 1 serves as an example of this.

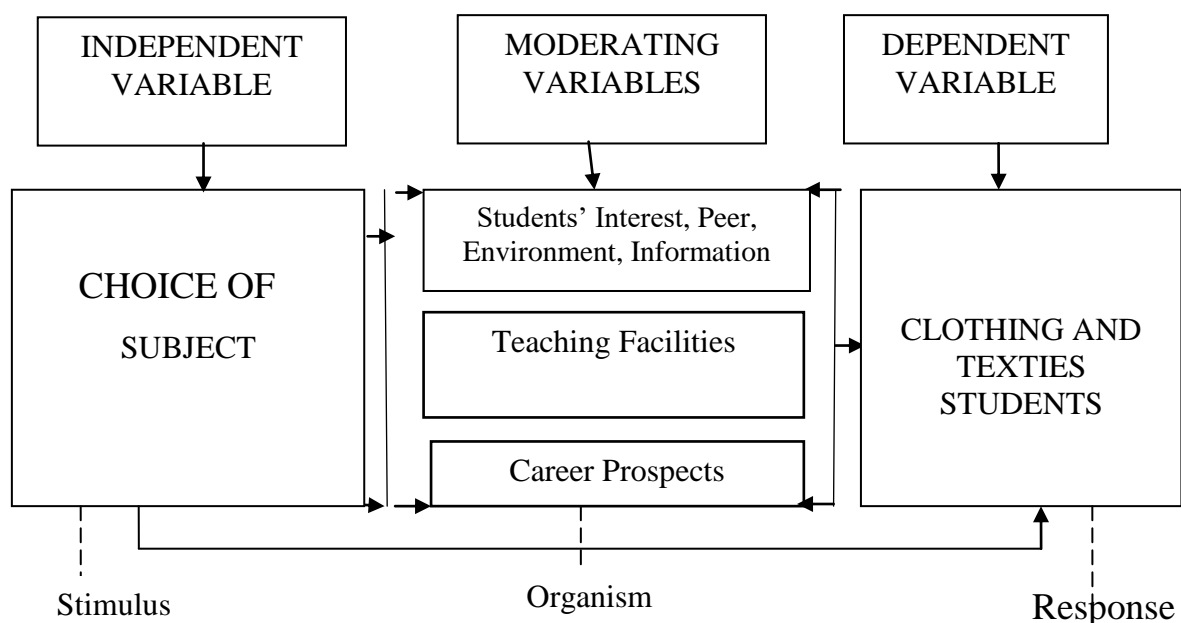


Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework on Clothing and Textiles Choice of undergraduate students.*

The independent factors' effects on the dependent variable were examined in this study. Choice of subject is the independent variable, as shown in the research model. This is because it was the variable that was changed to affect changes in the dependent variable, or the result, it was referred to as the independent variable. The stimulus (S) dimension in the behavior paradigm is represented by these independent variables. It was assumed that a few elements would function as a mediator between this stimulus and the result (responses). As shown in the study's model, these were referred to as moderating factors. In the behavioral paradigm, these variables correspond to the organism variable (O). The organism's reaction mechanism is impacted by these variables. The outcome (responses) as a result of the stimulus's impact Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduate students on the organism is represented by the dependent variable. A positive or negative reaction depends on how the organism reacts to the stimuli.

Purpose of the Study

- i. To determine the influence teaching facilities on Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduate students in Universities.
- ii. How career prospect influence Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduate students in Universities.
- iii. The strategies to be adopted to improve on the undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.

Research Questions

- i. How does teaching facilities influence Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduates students?
- ii. How does career prospect influence Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduates students in universities?
- iii. What are the strategies to be adopted to improve on the undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities?

5. Research Hypotheses

- i. There is no significant relationship between availability of teaching facilities and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between career prospect and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.
- iii. There is no significant relationship between Strategies to be adopted and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.

Design of the Study

The descriptive survey design and Pearson product moment correlation research methodology were used in this investigation. Since the study project examines the link between variables, this design was chosen. This is because the study would concentrate on the interaction between students and variables influencing undergraduate students' desire and choice of Clothing and textiles in the universities, the design was deemed acceptable. A total of 220 students from all the universities and affiliate programmes of the universities operating in Delta State both full and part time based made up the study's population.

The sample size was 220 students with no sampling approach used. Since the population was thought to be modest and controllable, the entire population was used for the research. Delta State University, Abraka = 30, University of Delta, Agbor =17, Dennis Osadebe University, Asaba =20 Affiliate programmes viz: Colleges of Education, Warri =55, from Mosogar =44, Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba = 54 students. The researcher created a structured questionnaire called " Factors influencing Choice of Clothing and Textiles among Undergraduate Students, the Teaching Facilities, Career Prospect and Strategies for Improvement" (FICCTUSTFCPSI) as the tool for gathering data. It has two components. The respondents' demographic information was requested in Section A, while items derived from the study's goal and the studied literature were found in Section B on a four-point rating scale

of Strongly Agreed (SA) = 1, Agreed (A) = 2, Disagreed (D) = 3, and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 4, which respondents specified their views.

Two lecturer in Clothing and textiles and a lecturer in measurement and evaluation, carefully analyzed each item to assess how effectively it represented the problem expressed in order to determine the validity of the research instrument. Their input led to the instrument's inclusion of recommendations and adjustments, which is how the validity of the instrument was determined. Twenty (20) Clothing and textiles undergraduate students from Ignatius Ajuru University, Port Harcourt, River State, who were not involved in the study, were given the instrument as part of a pilot test retest to determine the instrument's reliability. The replies were examined using the Cronbach alpha technique of reliability, and an internal consistency reliability coefficient of 0.76 was discovered. With the assistance of three research assistants, the researcher conducted the questionnaire with the respondents. The 220 completed questionnaire copies were promptly returned. One year and three months were spent on the study.

In order to address all of the study questions and ascertain whether or not the respondents' mean scores were homogeneous, the data were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation. Strongly Agreed is defined as a mean of 2.50 or higher, and Strongly Disagreed as a mean of 2.50 or below. At the 0.05 level of significance, the study's hypotheses were tested using the Pearson product moment correlation statistics. The mean and standard deviation were the statistical instruments employed to address the study topic.

RESULTS

Research question 1: How does teaching facilities influence Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduate students in Universities?

Table 1: Mean rating of the influence of teaching facilities on Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduate students in Universities.

S/N	Items	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Decision
1.	The use of ICT facilities teaching and learning facilitated my choice of Clothing and textiles	3.53	0.56	Agreed
2.	Computer aided instruction is utilized in teaching and learning pattern making.	2.73	1.02	Agreed
3.	Adequately equipped laboratory is available for practical teaching and learning.	3.38	0.57	Agreed
4.	Students have access to the use of teaching and learning facilities for practice.	3.32	0.65	Agreed
5.	Enough conducive classrooms are available for teaching and learning.			

		3.54	0.61	Agreed
6.	Cutting equipment/tools are used as instructional material in practical teaching and learning	3.43	0.54	Agreed
7.	Functional departmental library equipped with current educational facilities is available.	3.46	0.56	Agreed
8.	Classroom furniture is adequate making the students comfortable in teaching and learning.	3.50	0.63	Agreed
	Measuring tools are available for teaching and learning	3.30	0.69	Agreed
	Pressing tools/equipment are available for teaching and learning	3.64	0.74	Agreed
9.	Clothing cutting equipment is adequate for students' practical teaching and learning.	3.43	.507	Agreed
10.	Clothing fitting facilities are available for students for use.	3.51	0.51	Agreed
11.				
	Sewing tools/equipment is adequate for use in teaching and learning.	3.41	0.53	Agreed
	Reference materials (catalogues, magazines, work presentation among others) are utilized in teaching and learning	3.68	0.74	Agreed
12.	I handle practical items personally for learning.	2.67	0.51	Agreed
13.	I model products during practical class.	3.51	0.50	Agreed
14.	Mannequins/dress forms are available for use in teaching and learning practical demonstration.	3.39	0.59	Agreed

Result as seen from Table 1 shows influence of teaching facilities on clothing and textiles choice; all the items had their mean greater than 2.50, mean ranged from 2.67-3.68. Reference materials as catalogue had highest mean of 3.68, Pressing tools/equipment are available had mean 3.64, availability of ICT mean was 3.53, among other teaching facilities. This indicates that Clothing and textiles choice is influenced by a variety of teaching facilities, including use of catalogue as reference material, available pressing

tools/equipment, the availability of ICT, computer aided instruction, enough conducive classrooms, adequately equipped laboratory, functional library with educational facilities and equipment, access to the use of teaching and learning facilities for practice, cutting, sewing tools, among others.

Research question 2: How does career prospects influence Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduates students in universities?

Table 2: Mean rating of the influence of career prospects on Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduates students in universities?

S/N	Items	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Decision
1.	There are many available career/ job opportunities in choosing Clothing and textiles as area of study.	3.58	0.50	Agreed
2.	Clothing and Textile has broad area of career and job opportunities that can help meet people's clothing needs.	2.90	1.05	Agreed
3.	The choice of Clothing and textiles will help exhibit skill in Fashion designing as Fashion designer			Agreed
	My choice of Clothing and textiles will help me to skillful in batik/tie dye production	3.53	0.50	Agreed
		3.65	0.72	Agreed
4.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me produce pattern for sale	2.74	1.02	Agreed
5.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me become Clothing Entrepreneur	2.58	1.05	Agreed
6.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me become Interior designer	3.50	0.57	Agreed
7.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me become Exterior/Event designer	2.56	1.03	Agreed
8.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me gain skills in wool work (knitting and crocheting) articles production for sales	3.53	0.51	Agreed
9.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me become Pattern Illustrator	3.49	0.52	Agreed
10.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me become Clothing Merchandiser	3.45	0.57	Agreed

11.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me gain skills in embroidery on articles.	3.47	0.52	Agreed
12.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will equip me with skills to operate Laundry and dry cleaning services	3.35	.659	Agreed
13.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me become researcher as well as render consultancy services	3.60	0.47	Agreed
14.	Choice of Clothing and textiles will equip me skills to go into Akwa Ocha/ Aso Oke production	3.66	0.72	Agreed
	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me go into hat/fascinator making venture.	2.89	1.03 A	
	Choice of Clothing and textiles will enable me operate make up/ tying of head gear / bead making outfit for occasions	3.45	0.74	Agreed

SD=Standard deviation

Result in Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation rating of responses on influence of career prospects on Clothing and textiles choice of undergraduates, all the items had mean with mean range between 2.56 and 3.58. This indicates that they exceeded the established threshold of 2.50. This suggests that the undergraduate students' choice of Clothing and textiles are influenced by many career opportunities to meet clothing needs of people, exhibit skill in Fashion designing as Fashion designer, to produce batik/tie dye, produce pattern for sale, be clothing entrepreneur, interior and exterior designer, pattern illustrator, clothing merchandiser, among others. The items' standard deviations varied from 0.50 to 1.50

Research question 3: What are the strategies to be adopted to improve on the undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities?

Table 3: Mean rating of the strategies to be adopted to improve on the undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities?

S/N	Items	Mean (\bar{x})	SD	Decision
1.	Graduates of Clothing and textiles should put into practice knowledge/skills learnt in school	3.38	0.56	Agreed
2.	Emphasis should be more on practical drill of students for subject mastery	3.42	0.64	Agreed
3.	Engage Lecturers with Clothing and textiles mastery in	3.56	0.63	

	practical and theory in its teaching and learning process.			Agreed
4.	Give incentives to students who exhibit excellence in the course	3.40	0.54	Agreed
5.	Organize excursion to Clothing and textiles manufacturing industries to get acquainted with the industrial set up	3.50	0.55	Agreed
6.	School authority should help to subsidize for the purchase of practical materials used in teaching and learning	3.52	0.56	Agreed
7.	Involve donors in the promotion of Clothing and textiles skill acquisition through donation of needed tools and equipment.	3.44	0.51	Agreed
8.	Award of scholarship to student with best academic performance in clothing and textiles each session	3.61	0.52	Agreed
9.	Give attention to individualized instruction	3.50	0.66	Agreed
10.	In-service training of lecturers to improve the teaching/learning output.	3.62	0.53	Agreed
11.	Give more time to practical class	3.50	0.50	Agreed
12.	Proper supervision of Instruction	3.54	0.51	Agreed
13.	Students should model products after production	3.40	0.56	Agreed
14.	Organize exhibition of products at the end of each semester's work	3.56	0.50	Agreed
15.	Provision of modern instructional facilities for effective teaching and learning	2.90	1.05	Agreed
16.	Effective participation in Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) to expose them to professional work techniques	3.52	0.51	Agreed

SD=Standard deviation

Result in Table 3 is mean rating and standard deviation of strategies to improve on the undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities with mean range from 2.90 to 3.62 for all the items. This indicates that all the items are the strategies to be adopted to improve students' choice include; graduates to practice knowledge and skills learnt, more emphasis on practical drill of students for subject mastery, Engage Lecturers with Clothing and textiles mastery in practical and theory teaching and learning process, give incentives to students with excellence in the course, organize excursion to Clothing and textiles manufacturing industries, subsidize for the purchase of practical materials, donation of needed tools and equipment to promote the course among others. The items' standard deviations varied from 0.50 to 1.05

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between teaching facilities and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.

Table 4: *Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the relationship between teaching facilities and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.*

	Teaching Facilities	Clothing and textiles
Pearson Correlation	1	.233**
Teaching Facilities Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	220	220
Pearson Correlation	.233**	1
Clothing and textiles Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	220	220

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

Table 4 showed Pearson Product Moment Correlation between availability of teaching facilities and student subject area preference. It showed a correlation value (r) = .233 and a p-value of .000. Testing at an alpha level of .05, the p-value is less than the alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between teaching facilities and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between career prospects and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.

Table 5: *Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the relationship between career prospects and undergraduate students’ choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.*

		Job Prospects	Subject Area
Job Prospects	Pearson Correlation	1	.269**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	220	220
Subject Area	Pearson Correlation	.269**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	220	220

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

Table 5 showed Pearson Product Moment Correlation between job prospect and student subject area preference. It showed a correlation value ($r = .269$) and a p-value of .000. Testing at an alpha level of .05, the p-value is less than the alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between career prospects and undergraduate students’ choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between strategies to be adopted for improvement and undergraduate students’ choice of clothing and textiles in the universities.

Table 6: *Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the relationship between strategies to be adopted for improvement and undergraduate students’ choice of clothing and textiles*

		Strategies for improvement	Clothing and textiles
Strategies for improvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	220	220
Clothing and textiles	Pearson Correlation	.470**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	220	220

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

Table 6 showed Pearson Product Moment Correlation between teaching method and students' subject area preference. It showed a correlation value (r) = .470 and a p-value of .000. Testing at an alpha level of .05, the p-value is less than the alpha level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between strategies to be adopted for improvement and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS:

Finding showed that a variety of teaching facilities influence choice of Clothing and textiles which include; use of catalogue as reference material, available pressing tools/equipment, the availability of ICT, computer aided instruction, enough conducive classrooms, adequately equipped laboratory, functional library with educational facilities and equipment, access to the use of teaching and learning facilities for practice, cutting, sewing tools, among others. There was a significant relationship between teaching facilities and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles in the universities. This finding is in agreement with Kennepohl (2023); Kim (2020); and Onyebuenyi et al, (2022) who reported that workshops, laboratories, sufficient and functional instruments, practical experience, and training were necessary for effective teaching and learning. Quarcoo (2022) reported reference books and textbooks, fashion magazines and catalogues that make teaching and learning meaningful and interesting. In contrast to this finding, Quarcoo (2021) in study found that, clothing and Textiles teachers did not have conducive classroom for Clothing and Textiles teaching and learning while students reported not having adequate ventilation, dangerous hanging wires in clothing laboratories, distractions among others were observed in the classroom environment This type of situation, Resch and Schrittmesser (2023) stressed that there is a significant divide between theory and practice in the institutions due to non-functional and non-available facilities, which make it difficult to provide adequate instruction and negatively affect students' choice of courses. AL-Smadi (2015) stated that choosing and utilizing instructional spaces effectively can help students stay motivated and engaged, clarify material, introduce fresh concepts, spark discussions, test their ability to think independently, summarize what they have learned, and provide opportunities for applying what they have learned to new tasks.

Finding also showed that the undergraduate students' choice of Clothing and textiles are influenced by many career opportunities such as to meet clothing needs of people, exhibit skill in Fashion designing as Fashion designer, to produce batik/tie dye, produce pattern for sale, be clothing entrepreneur, interior and exterior designer, pattern illustrator, weaving, clothing merchandiser among others. Hypothesis indicated a noteworthy correlation between the likelihood of career prospects and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles. This suggested that Clothing and textiles undergraduate students choice is based on their employment prospects. This finding supports the finding of Broberg et al, (2021); Janfry (2019) studies that found career/job opportunities for vocational professions and occupational skills as a possible strategy for human capacity development for sustenance, social and economic development as its impart felt in the sphere of modern Clothing and textiles industries in various ways, uses and especially in the areas of manufacturing processes and production new product designs (Obiana et al, 2022). Weaving of Akwa Ocha an indigenous fabric used in special occasions such as marriages, burial, cultural festivals and chieftaincy ceremonies are of very high demand and only few persons are skilled in the production, hence it is expensive to purchase. Presently, Aso Oke fabric is also on a very high demand

due to its value in culturally and fashion wise. Depending on the students capacity development, those with specific expertise skill and entrepreneurial drive have potentials to work as Fashion designers, Interior and Exterior decorators, Clothing merchandiser, Pattern illustrator, Tie dye/batik producer and cloth weaving after graduation (Bob-Eze, 2023) which help them overcome job seeking saga and unemployment. Knowledge and skills acquired through education and training empowers learners to tackle economic and social challenges that may face them and ensure stability in life.

Furthermore, finding showed the strategies to be adopted to improve students' choice to include; graduates to practice knowledge and skills learnt, more emphasis on practical drill of students for subject mastery, Engaging Lecturers with Clothing and textiles mastery in practical and theory teaching and learning process, giving incentives to students with excellence in the course, organizing excursion to Clothing and textiles manufacturing industries, subsidizing for the purchase of practical materials, donation of needed tools and equipment to promote the course among others. There was a significant correlation between strategies to be adopted for improvement and undergraduate students' choice of clothing and textiles. This is in consonance with Olubiyi et al, (2018) who reported that employing qualified skill/technologists, provision of fund, well equipped laboratories, in service training for teachers and students, more time for practical class among others for effective teaching of entrepreneurial/ trade subjects to achieve set objectives. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) stated that in-service training is developed as an integral part of continuity in teacher education to take care of inadequacies. Since clothing and textiles is a practical skill acquisition course, it needs funding as a life wire for educational programme and bedrock for effective practical skills acquisition (Arubayi, 2014).

It is glaring that Clothing and textile vocation needs creativity drive to achieve its oriented goal to be sustainable and increase students' choice. This is Stewart et al (2020) who pointed that teaching and learning process is continuous for stability and are facilitated when there is conducive environment to give the students experiences targeted at achieving certain set goals (Comings, 2023). Innovation is an important factor in the scope of clothing and textile vocation with its complex economic, socio-psychological, socio-cultural and aesthetic dimension. It is strategically necessary incorporating relevant areas that emphasize work practical skills like learning weaving, crocheting, knitting and more entrepreneurial areas like event decoration, textile trade, bead making and tie and dye. Furthermore, practical oriented skills equally have to be emphasized more than the theoretical knowledge to create jobs and employment. This is because education is tasked with influencing the course of the next generation of instruction and practice for optimum development.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study delves into the intricate factors that influence the choice of clothing and textiles education as a vocational and entrepreneurial skill that needs critical strategies for human capital development. Findings shed light on the pivotal role of teaching facilities, job prospects and specific strategies in shaping the choice. The results reveal that the availability of adequate teaching facilities significantly impacts students' choices of Clothing and textiles course. Notably, resources like ICT facilities, computer aided instruction, well-equipped laboratories, enough conducive classrooms, instructional materials, with educational facilities and equipment, and practical tools all contribute to the students' inclination toward particular field. The access to these resources enhances their learning experiences and fosters a more favorable academic environment. Many career opportunities

is also a factor such as Fashion designing, Pattern and Clothing production, Interior and Exterior designing, weaving, knitting/crocheting and tie dye/ batik production. Practicing knowledge and skills learnt after graduation, more practical drill of students for subject mastery, Engaging Lecturers with subject mastery in practical and theory teaching, giving incentives to students who excel in the course, excursion visits to Clothing and textiles manufacturing industries, subsidy for practical materials, donation of needed tools and equipment among others were strategies to be adopted to improve students' choice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teaching and learning should focus more on the development of practical skills useful for practice and business venture operations.
2. Workshops and training should be organized for both lecturers and students to update them with skills relevant for mastery in modern clothing and textiles to meet consumers' needs.
3. Stakeholders in education should motivate students to increase their interest in the course and improve participation through rewarding excellence in productivity

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Political Corruption as Catalyst for Social Crises in Nigeria: A Re-reading of Emeka Nwabueze’s A Parliament of Vultures

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary Nigerian society is unfortunately enmeshed in an unprecedented socio-political and economic conundrum, particularly traceable to the political elites who brazenly engage in corrupt practices with impunity. The bane of Nigeria’s development, peace and social stability is the recurring emergence of terribly clueless and uninformed political leaders who collectively feast on the nation’s common wealth; who consciously enthrone and celebrate mediocrity at the expense of competence; who institutionalize unfair reward system for their own selfish interests, and manipulate the electoral process to perpetuate the statusquo. It is this systemic corruption that Emeka Nwabueze artistically brings to the forecourt of his audience in A Parliament of Vultures, with a view to enlightening the masses and provoking political consciousness in them to effect the desired change. A cursory look at the thematic preoccupation of this protest literature brings to the fore a myriad of debilitating issues to address: institutionalized robbery, colossal inefficiency, electoral malpractice, brazen ineptitude, money-politics and monumental corruption. Consequent upon the foregoing, this paper critically examines political corruption in Nigerian as portrayed in the text. Through content and thematic analysis, the present study examines how incidents in the society of the text quite glaringly depict the Nigerian situation, and how these catalyze social crises in the country. The paper concludes that political corruption being perpetrated by the political class is enormously responsible for the avalanche of social and security crises that bedevil the Nigerian society at present, and advocates for a paradigm shift in the manner political power is exercised and governance approached by the political elites if Nigeria must recover from her current sorry state.



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INTRODUCTION

Deliberate indulgence in personal and institutional corruption, and the unbridled penchant to sustain the status quo at all cost are undeniably the major clog in the wheels of Africa's (and Nigeria's) advancement, frustrating every development efforts towards socio-economic emancipation, poverty eradication and entrenchment of decent living condition. This social malaise manifests in multi-dimensional ways – bribery, embezzlement, extortion, favouritism, unaccountability and unfair reward system. In a society where individuals secure wealth and power illegally for personal gains, misuse public power for personal gratification, engage in acts that violate the duties of an office holder with the intention to accumulate wealth illegally for personal benefit, corruption is said to be both endemic and systemic. The foregoing is unfortunately the lot of many African nations, including Nigeria.

The existence and manifestation of corruption in the African continent vary from rare (Botswana) to widespread (Ghana) to systemic (Nigeria), and the consequence is that out of the 148 poorest countries of the world, African continent alone houses 32 of such countries (Alabi, 283). In this circumstance, the Nigerian situation is severely disheartening because corruption in Nigeria is not only widespread but also systematic, and has become an institutionalized way of conducting official/public affairs. It has been acknowledged globally that corruption sits well in Nigeria. The Transparency International (TI), in its survey of corruption globally, places Nigeria in the 136th position in 2015 and 148th position in 2017. Today, the situation has abysmally worsened in this regard, making some analysts perceive corruption in Nigeria as part and parcel of everyday living, cutting across all strata of the society (Momah, 25; Alabi, 283) and defying age, sex, religion and tribe. Indeed, the worsening state of corruption in Nigeria is occasioned by the fact that people and institutions have continued to tackle the effects of corruption and not the actual causes --- where the social cankerworm really emanates from before its acceptance and spread.

Incontrovertibly, high profile corruption that has perpetuated the sorry state of Nigeria is being perpetrated by members of the political class who have developed gargantuan appetite for corrupt practices. The debilitating effects of their reckless actions are visibly detrimental because they occupy exalted public offices and exercise powers that are significant to personal and societal development. This is more worrisome in that “corruption goes with power, and whatever the ordinary citizens may have is not power”, and so, any sincere discourse on corruption must “locate it where it properly belong --- in the ranks of the powerful” (Achebe, 38). Nigerian political office holders such as members of the legislature, the judiciary and the executive arms of government (who misuse power they fraudulently acquire) are culprits in this circumstance. Considering their utterances and the activities they exhibit right from the time they nurse the ambition to vie for political offices to the electioneering process that eventually brings them into power, one can clearly see reckless indulgence in corrupt practices to achieve personal and party selfish ambitions. Ike (225) has rightly argued that a political party, for example, will not require intending candidates to pay one million naira for a nomination form and ten million naira nomination to contest under its platform “if the honest intension of that political party is to field persons willing and able to offer honest service” to the people they represent.

In a society terribly bedeviled and battered by corruption, literary writers usually respond to the ugly situation by vociferously challenging the system through their works. Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures* is one of such protest literatures that are crafted to expose the deep-seated, systemic corruption ravaging Nigeria over the years. From its thematic concerns, well-crafted plot, language use and well-suited imagery, it is obvious that the work is a harsh, unsentimental literary response to the political corruption instituted by the political class in Nigeria – particularly by members of the legislature (exposing how their selfish actions not only impoverish the masses, but also impede Nigeria's socioeconomic development). Against this background, therefore, this paper strives to examine, through content and thematic analysis, political corruption in the Nigerian context as effectively captured and accurately depicted in the dramatic work, and how this social vice catalyzes social crises and uprisings that have continued to confront Nigeria in the contemporary time.

A Synopsis of Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*

Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures* is a harsh literary exposition in the dramatic genre of literature, artistically crafted to attack the socio-political corruption and misgovernance in developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The work is a deliberate exposure of the iniquitous leadership wickedness unleashed on the citizenry by those who purport to be representing them in the political circle, using an imaginary parliament as a focal point. It is set in an imaginary sociopolitical milieu that resembles one of the fragile, struggling democratic nations in Africa, severely battered by political corruption and leadership ineptitude.

Exploiting the widespread ignorance, illiteracy, poverty, deprivation and hunger that ravage the vulnerable citizens in the society of our text, notable members of the political class enthrone themselves and their fellow unqualified cronies into power through a massively rigged election. They become members of the parliament with no clear agenda for the nation and their respective constituencies aside personal enrichment. The election manipulation made possible through the instrumentality of Bob Brown in connivance with the nation's electoral umpire ensures a landslide victory for all the contestants from a particular political party without a single winner from the opposition parties. The Returning Officer compromises his statutory duties and eventually declares Chief Nathaniel Habamero, Madam Omeaku, Rev. Jossy, Mr. Bob Brown and others winners at the expense of credibility, justice and fair play. This development unfortunately marks the beginning of an unprecedented anarchy in the political history of the nation.

Fortunately for the system and the forgotten masses, two antagonists – Dr. Parkers and Mr. Otobo – eventually emerge as the House settles down for its legislative business. However, this victory is short-lived as the other parliamentarians declare them thorns in the flesh of the Assembly members who deserve severe sanctions and possible annihilation. They are constantly reminded how they emerge as parliamentarians in the first place, their offense being that they want effective representation and selfless service to the electorate whose mandate they hold.

Contrary to the plans of the party caucus to syphon public funds and transfer them abroad with the help of Dr. Parkers (who they convince to return from the US and contest election on the platform of their party), Dr. Parkers alongside Chris Otobo begins to talk about accountability and financial prudence when he eventually wins the election and is sworn in. Infuriated by this turn of event, votes of no confidence are passed on Dr. Parkers and Otobo by their colleagues, and quickly followed by outright impeachment as Speaker and Secretary of the Parliament

respectively. This results in the enthronement of Chief Nathaniel Habamero and Madam Omeaku as the Speaker and Secretary of the Assembly respectively, notwithstanding the fact that Madam Omeaku is unable to write or read proceedings (minutes) of the parliamentary activities owing to her extremely low level of education. However, this unfortunate development is unable to deter Dr. Parkers and Otobo, as they continue to voice out against injustice, embezzlement, and daylight pen-robbery that now characterize the activities of the House under the new leadership.

Chief Nathaniel Habamero-led administration cannot contain the 'excesses' of Dr. Parkers and Otobo upon realizing that the conspiracy against them could not tame them or compel them into submission to the whims and caprices of the House leadership. The two rivals instead continue to speak louder and louder against unethical conducts of their fellow parliamentarians whose collective desire is to loot the country dry. For instance, they question the rationale behind approval of two billion naira for making mere dresses for the parliamentarians and hiring music group to attend a thanksgiving service for which the House is invited; they query the House leadership and demand explanations on why one hundred million naira should be voted just to organize a parliamentary party to celebrate the inauguration of the Assembly, while many sectors of the economy are in deplorable conditions that require urgent attention.

Unable to bear the constant heat generated by Dr. Parkers and Chris Otobos' uncompromising attitude in the House, the House leadership accuse them of committing treasonable felony (primarily because Dr. Parkers has continued to write about the outrageous activities of the parliament and have them published in the national newspapers). Consequently, the House leadership conspired with the nation's top security agents, and Dr. Parkers and Chris Otobo are arrested and detained without trial. With their exit, the parliamentarians now begin to distribute the wealth of the nation among themselves unchallenged by anyone.

Interestingly, when the despicable dealings of the law-makers become unbearable to the masses, coupled with the widespread anger generated by the unlawful arrest and detention of Dr. Parkers and Otobo, the people finally decide to take their destiny into their own hands. A nationwide protest/revolution is eventually enforced, and the sitting government is brought down, beginning from the demolition and setting ablaze of the presidential mansion at the capital territory. The parliamentary building is thereafter set on fire, and the law-makers lynched by the angry mob, comprising mainly members of the University Students Union Government in a league with Men of Destiny, who are made up of unemployed, able-bodied graduates in the country.

Political Corruption in Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*: A Reflection of the Nigerian Situation

The dramatic work, *A Parliament of Vultures*, though set in a fictional milieu, is a realistic portrayal of the unfortunate sociopolitical conundrum into which the Nigerian society has been plunged for many decades now. It loudly echoes the political corruption that has continued to batter the Nigeria's nascent and fragile democracy, with its attendant aftermath; it is a protest work crafted out of deep frustration over the brutal rape of democracy and good governance by the political elites on the one hand, and the consequent underserved sufferings of the helpless masses in the midst of abundance, on the other hand.

A critical re-reading of this dramatic text with particular focus on its thematic preoccupation brings to the limelight a myriad of disturbing issues to address: electoral malpractice, political godfatherism, institutionalized corruption, celebration of mediocrity, colossal inefficiency,

hypocrisy, brazen incompetence, political manipulation and mind control, self-aggrandizement and avaricious tendencies, etc. From whatever perspective one approaches it, the picture which this artistic work paints is that of failed leadership occasioned by colossal waste of public resources, with its attendant consequences on the people --- entrenching hunger, unemployment, malfunctioning education system, insecurity of lives and property, social crises, terrorism and youth restiveness. These existential realities in Nigeria inspired the crafting of this artistic work which reveals “the purgation of the writer’s frustration and hopelessness in the face of the brazen and unbridled display of misgovernance in his milieu” (Anumihe. 178). In all these, political corruption is particularly fingered as the worst culprit, a perennial feature of the Nigerian political system.

Indubitably, any useful discussion of corruption in Nigeria must inevitably situate the discourse around its political system, and channel it to the political class where corrupt practices are most prominent. Indeed, corruption is not alien to Nigeria and Nigerians. As far back as 1983 (four decades ago), the existence, widespread and enormity of corruption in Nigeria has started attracting deserved attention from well-meaning individuals. Achebe (41-42) regrettably states that

It would be impossible and, even if possible, of little value to attempt a comprehensive picture of the type and scope of Nigerian corruption. Most people will agree that corruption has grown enormously in variety, magnitude and brazenness since the beginning of the second republic because it has been extravagantly fuelled by budgetary abuse and political patronage on an unprecedented scale.. Public funds are now routinely doled out to political allies and personal friends in the guise of contracts to execute public work of one kind or another or licenses to import restricted commodities. Generally, a political contractor will have no expertise or even the intention to perform.

We have deliberately cited Achebe’s observation forty years ago to bring to the fore that political corruption in Nigeria is as old as the country itself. What Nwabueze’s work has done is to project and expose the current state of affair in this regard, its new dimension and the degree of impunity with which the political class perpetrate this social vice. To this end, this paper will engage in the discussion of political corruption as revealed in the text in these subheadings: manipulation of the electorate and the electoral process, misappropriation of public fund and lack of accountability, and unfair reward system, celebration of and reward for mediocrity and incompetence, examining how these manifestations of political corruption reflect the Nigerian situation.

Manipulation of the Electorate and the Electoral Process

There is a glaring revelation of tactical manipulation and mind control (of the electorate) in the activities of politicians in the society of our text. These are orchestrated by crook politicians to deliberately compel their victims to do their bidding, and by so doing, achieve their selfish political ambitions. The most unfortunate thing about this form of manipulation is that those being manipulated, deceived, controlled, used and dumped are quite oblivious of the intentions of their manipulators. The first set of people who are hoodwinked and manipulated are the electorate, the masses who are supposed to be the real custodian of political power and legitimacy. The politicians consciously create hunger, deprivation and illiteracy, and effectively use these weapons to subjugate the uninformed and vulnerable electorate, hence they succumb to their whims and caprices effortlessly. Mr. Asili, Madam Omeaku’s campaign manager, reveals

this reality as he addresses the electorate in their constituency (in a campaign of calumny against Barrister Umeh):

Asili: My good people of Anioma, what you eat is what you get from politics.

Now is the time for a little less talk and a little more action. (Dips his right hand into his pocket, brings out a ward of currency notes and raises it high for the crowd to see). This is courtesy of Madam Omeaku.

Voice: She is our man!

Asili: This is only the beginning. Now catch!

(Throws the currency notes into the crowd. They begin to struggle for them. Madam Omeaku and Chris Otobo look at them with satisfaction. As they begin to leave, the crowd follow them, singing songs of praises for Madam Omeaku. (24).

What actually transpired is that the people are being brainwashed with material things into believing that Barrister Umeh's wife will not be able to give them food and money or allow her husband do so whenever they visit their home as Madam Omeaku would do, and so, does not deserve their votes. This trick becomes successful because the hunger intentionally created in the land by the political class, coupled with high rate of ignorance fuelled by illiteracy has taken away sound reasoning from the citizens. Consequently, Mr. Asili further reminds them of their reality and the material things they stand to get from voting Madam Omeaku and jettisoning Barrister Umeh and his promise of effective representation as he addresses members of the constituency:

Asili: My good people, you don't bath your body on the stomach alone. You know what you want. I don't have to remind you that the man who has just spoken to you is married to a Canadian woman. Will you vote for Canada? (Raises his voice). A man who is promoting husband scarcity in this nation, a man who has no regard for your mothers, wives, daughters, etc. He says charity begins at home when he is married to a foreigner? You cannot even be allowed to visit his house by that stump he calls a wife. I tell you my people, what you eat is what you get from politics. You need a representative whose house you can visit and be sure of good meals and drinks. And that is what Madam Omeaku stands for. (Madam Omeaku smiles broadly and raises her hands). If you visit Barrister Umeh when he gets elected, will his Canadian wife offer you pounded yam and bitter-leaf soup? (23).

Having being promised of material inducement, the jubilant crowd are convinced to vote Madam Omeaku. Mr. Asili and Madam Omeaku watch the people with contented smile as they fall on themselves scrambling for the currency notes thrown at them. This is characteristic of Nigerian electioneering campaign scenario, where ignorant Nigerians are being deceived with bags of rice and beans, wrappers and some miserable, paltry sum of money to sell their birthright.

Furthermore, the electorate are also being manipulated by politicians through deceit and fabrication of cheap lies to achieve false credibility and party acceptance among the voters. Party chieftains give revered titles and appellations to their flag bearers when they do not merit such symbols of honour and respect. For instance, Mr. Jossy is being addressed as 'Reverend' whereas he is not a priest of any Christian denomination; another contestant is being called a 'Professor' so as to ridicule Dr. Parkers for his rebellion against the corrupt system, and also to further create a positive impression about their party, and not that the addressee is actually a professor. This clandestine, deceptive act is revealed in a conversation between Madam Omeaku and Mr. Brown:

Brown: (waves his right hand) Forget about him. We called him reverend during the campaign because we thought the title would purchase us some credibility from the voters. And it worked (laughs heartily). Politics is no child's play, my sister.

Madam Omeaku: Imagine the likeness!

Brown: Oh! You think the professor is really one? He is a factory worker in London. We asked him to take the title to make our party look intellectual. You see, our people are obsessed with titles. He doesn't even have a certificate. After all, we haven't told a lie at all. We haven't called him Professor of anything. We just called him professor (sips his drink and laughs heartily). Politics is no child's play, my sister. Just trust me, Madam. I am a political juggernaut. (5).

This typically exemplifies what obtains in the Nigerian political system, where desire for unmerited and undeserved titles is high and these titles arrogated to the politicians in a bid to enhance their false dignity. Even those without any school certificate or professional trainings and qualifications acquire titles --- academic and traditional --- to portray themselves as learned, successful and accomplished. To maintain their inflated ego and relevance, they brazenly manipulate both the masses and the electoral officials to clinch victory at the polls through financial inducements, intimidation, threats and sponsorship of political thugs and miscreants. Among the political class itself, political godfathers and party chieftains manipulate, deceive and use their fellow politicians to achieve selfish political ambitions. In our text under examination, Dr. Parkers is manipulated by the party chieftains into abandoning his academic career in the US to return home and contest election on their party platform with the intention to use him achieve their aim of looting the nation's treasury to death. Again, the electoral system is equally

manipulated. The Returning Officer is financially induced to rig the election in favour of Chris Otob's party. The reason for his acceptance to compromise the electoral process is further revealed:

Brown: Forget about Dr. Parkers. He is no force at all. After all, we brought him back from America for a purpose.

Madam Omeaku: What purpose?

Brown: Having lived in the United States of America for more than fifteen years, we felt he should have enough connections to help us put money in foreign banks. After all, what was the worth of his campaign? He would have

crashed like a pack of cards if I hadn't stepped in to rescue him. Fortunately, the Returning Officer was my classmate. It wasn't difficult for me to negotiate the right figures for him as I did in your own case. (.4).

Electoral manipulation that enthrone wrong, incompetent leaders into sensitive positions of authority is the bane of Africa's (and Nigeria's) development, advancement and progress. In the contemporary polity, what matters is not what one is capable of offering to the society, his competence and useful experience, but how much money one has and is willing to offer as inducement to the electorate and election officers alike. This is indeed the highest height of political corruption that dangerously impede Nigeria's sociopolitical development.

Misappropriation of Public Fund, Lack of Accountability and Effective Representation

The primary role of parliamentarians as members of the legislature is to make progressive laws for the betterment of the citizenry and the society, ensure checks and balances, and assist the executive arm of government, through oversight functions, render effective services to the electorate. But the legislature in the society of our text comprises incompetent, selfish individuals who are united by a common purpose --- embezzlement (and squandering) of the nation's resources through misappropriation of funds and diverting them for personal use. These parliamentarians, of course, represent themselves, their families and political cronies, rather than their respective constituencies whose mandate they hold.

Right from the inauguration of the House, every issue raised before the Assembly becomes an avenue to milk the nation's treasury dry and distribute the loot among themselves. Dissenting views against this unethical conduct from Dr. Parkers and Otobo are summarily silenced through votes of no confidence (which remove them from their leadership positions in the House). And with the emergence of the new Speaker, Chief Habamero, the House becomes a safe haven for misappropriation and looting of public funds. While basking in the euphoria of his manipulated victory, the Speaker informs his allies on how they would celebrate their victory and subsequent enjoyment that would accompany it:

Habamero: This is only to kick-start the day. We shall move from here to the Hilton. My Special Assistant has already made reservations for us. We shall

eat and drink until we are saturated. Then, we shall each check into a Presidential suite to cool off before returning to our homes.

Brown and Jossy: Up Speaker!

Madam Omeaku: Wait! Are we not entitled to inconvenience allowance? I mean for eating out or sleeping out. What are we parliamentarians for?

Brown: You know, she is correct. Madam Ho-ha!

Madam: I am fine!

Jossy: I support the position in toto.

Habamero: By the powers vested on me as the Speaker of the House, and Chairman of the Assembly, I approve the sum of two million naira for each member as inconvenience allowance. (15)

With this unfortunate development, the House adopts it as a culture to allocate and approve all sorts of allowances for the law-makers, and cover them up by resolving that the fund is use for one fictitious project or the other. For example, the two million naira approved as inconvenience allowance for members is to be covered up by calling an emergency meeting of the Political Affairs Committee at the Hilton Hotels.

As the new House leadership settles down fully for legislative business, more outrageous votes and approval of funds for frivolities to enrich members come to limelight. For instance, a member's idea of organizing a parliamentary party is quickly accepted, and a sum of one hundred million naira approved for that purpose despite the objections from Dr. Parkers and Chris Otobo over the unnecessary expenditure. Again, a huge sum of money is syphoned by the majority of the House members through voting and approval of funds to honour a mere church harvest thanksgiving. All arguments and pleas from Dr. Parkers and Otobo for the House to jettison the idea and channel the fund into useful projects in some sectors requiring urgent financial attention fall on deaf ears. Even when Mr. Otobo final opines that the amount voted for that purpose be reduced, the Speaker dismisses the idea with a wave of the hand:

Habamero: You can see, Honourable Otobo, that ten million naira will not be adequate to take care of the business. The bulk of the money will be disbursed through the payment of inconvenience allowance to members for attending the thanksgiving service. Extra expenses will be accrued through the making of appropriate dress for members and hiring the music group. I, therefore, approve the sum of two billion naira for this purpose. Approved?

All: (Except Dr. Parkers and Otobo) Approved! (47)

Dr. Parkers and Otobo are shocked to the marrow, but they are helpless as usual, as the decision of the majority would always stand. Similar votes and approvals follow subsequently as the

House continues to adopt novel tactics to embezzle and distribute public funds among themselves --- through inflated cost of contracts with no intention to execute them, award of contracts to party members and political godfathers, appropriation of funds for unconstitutional and unnecessary programmes and activities, and diversion of money meant for execution of projects in some ministries and agencies without accounting for their utilization.

There is no doubt that the dubious activities of the House members in the society of our text is a replication of the activities of the Nigerian legislators who have become parasites, devouring the nation's treasury without mercy. Through approval of outrageous allowances, the Nigerian legislators have become the highest paid law-makers all over the world, when the country itself ranks as the world's headquarters of poverty (harboring the world's poorest individuals). Nwosu and Onwuasoanya (116) inform us that a 2010 survey carried out by the Business Day Newspaper found out that the Nigerian legislature had gulped a whopping sum of 684 billion naira in eleven years of Nigerian democratic experience. Today, this figure has multiplied even in the face of increased poverty, lack and deprivation among the citizenry.

Unfair Reward System, Celebration of and Reward for Mediocrity and Incompetence

Nothing aptly captures the Nigerian situation in the dramatic text under examination than the unjust reward for mediocrity and incompetence in a society prodigiously blessed with enormously talented, educated and skilled men and women. In the fictional society of our text, a great number of highly skilled individuals contribute so much to the growth of the nation, and yet receive so little, while a negligible, incompetent few on the corridor of power do very little and receive much more than they actually deserve.

Unfortunately, politicians in positions of authority who should leverage on their skills and competences to transform the nation are seen underperforming because they have no prerequisite knowledge for the positions they have dubiously acquired. Yet, they amass so much wealth by creating an unfair reward system that celebrates and rewards mediocrity at the expense of expertise, competence, useful experience and productivity. A case in point is the emergence of most of the parliamentarians as law-makers representing their people (such as Madam Omeaku, Rev. Josy, Mr. Brown, Chief Nathaniel Habamero, etc.), who would never have any business with governance in any sane society. For instance, Madam Omeaku, who later becomes the parliamentary Secretary has no formal education, and thus, is unable to write and read minutes of the parliamentary proceedings. In spite of her illiteracy and gross incompetence, she becomes a strong force in the House, challenging highly educated and enlightened individuals and colleagues, including her own husband. Her cantankerous and boastful nature amidst ignorance is revealed as she engages in a strong altercation with her husband, Mr. Omeaku:

Madam Omeaku: (Angry) You're a shameless man! Now, let's compare notes.

You are an educated man, but yet you can't even maintain your family. With your

education, have you ever given us a decent life? With your education, you have wasted the best thirty five years of your life, and you have nothing to show for it.

I have worked my way into a position of authority without education. Do you know what happens in the University when they hear than an honourable member

of Parliament is coming to visit campus? Idiot! You are not ashamed to call me illiterate. You can't even speak better than I do. (10)

Actually, what matters in the present society is that one works one's way into a position of authority and begins to enjoy undeserved benefits therein, and not necessarily whether one has the capacity to deliver in that capacity. This is, unfortunately, our situation in today's Nigerian society.

Furthermore, Madam Omeaku's colleague who is being addressed as 'Professor' is a factory worker in London before he returned to the country and joined politics. He has no sufficient education, professional skills or any administrative experience whatsoever. Yet, he is declared elected as a parliamentarian. Again, through Madam Omeaku's political connections, her daughter, Nkechi, finds herself inside the government house where she is made the Chief Press Secretary to the President. She is only a secondary school leaver with no higher education, exposure and competence to function effectively in that capacity. Also, the new Speaker himself, Chief Habamero, is terribly clueless and uninformed when it comes to parliamentary affairs, and yet he is elected as Speaker of the Assembly. He continues to fall out with Dr. Parkers who often corrects his fumbling during plenary sessions. This embarrassing cluelessness often infuriates Dr. Parkers, and he would insist that parliamentary proceedings be conducted in line with international best practices. On one occasion, he refuse to be silenced as he bursts:

Dr. Parkers: Objection, Mr. Chairman! A majority is the number greater than

half of the votes cast. The plurality refers to the most votes cast regardless of the majority. The two-third majority is never, repeat never, determined by the Chairman. To determine a two-third majority votes, quickly double the negative votes cast and if equal to or less than the affirmative votes cast, a two-third vote has been clearly obtained. (35)

The Speaker, who is obviously ignorant of these laid down procedures (or rather wishes to jettison them), ignores the corrections of his learned colleague. He continues to lead the Assembly in a way that pleases him as his allies.

The foregoing is indeed our situation in Nigeria where competence is sacrificed on the altar of mediocrity, and incompetent public servants rewarded with more juicy political appointments. This unreasonable practice has continued to bring the wheels of Nigeria's progress grinding to a halt. The greatest sufferer in this circumstance, according to Achebe (19), is the society itself which has to "accommodate the incompetence of the favoured citizens and painfully endure a general decline of morale and subversion of efficiency caused by an erratic system of performance and reward." Indeed, when mediocrity is enthroned and venerated above merit and competence as a result of corruption, meaningful development becomes practically unattainable.

Social and Security Crises as Aftermath of Political Corruption in Contemporary Nigeria

Nigeria, the self-acclaimed giant of Africa, is witnessing an avalanche of unpleasant social, political and security challenges in recent time whose source is traceable to the mismanagement of political power and national resources. The political elites who have developed unbridled penchant for corruption are culprit in this circumstance (Olusegun, 16). Through enactment of self-centered policies, the political class has subjected the Nigerian citizens into appalling conditions that inhibit comfort, advancement and attainment of worthwhile personal goals and self-actualization. Selfish yearly appropriation of large chunk of the national budget for a few number of person in the National Assembly, extremely high cost of governance, abandonment of Nigerians during the Covid-19 pandemic era, subjection of the citizens to unwarranted hardship through the recent naira redesign policy, fraudulent conduct of the 2023 general election, unplanned and ill-timed removal of the fuel subsidy, and the 70 billion naira approved for the National Assembly members as fuel subsidy removal palliative, while 18 thousand naira is approved for disbursement to each selected vulnerable Nigerian are some of the current instances of slavery and subjugation into which ordinary Nigerians have found themselves.

The aftermath of the foregoing is that today, Nigeria has become one of the unsafe places in the universe for human habitation. As a result of anger and frustration, there is constant clamour for secession from some regions; young people now pick arms at slightest provocation to kill and maim. Nowhere and nobody is safe any longer due to widespread insecurity and constant eruption of social crises. It is a sad commentary that security challenges in Nigeria can be traced to the early years of military rule when large quantities of arms were imported into the country for the use of the military during and after the Nigerian civil war (Idris, 288 quoting Ese, 5), and some of which got into the hands of the civilians and ex-military men who used them for destructive purposes. Today, it is even more worrisome that the conduct of desperate and selfish 'civilian dictators' have resulted in an unprecedented proliferation of firearms and an astronomical increase in the number of miscreants with mischievous intentions to rub, kill and destroy. This has significantly heightened insecurity and social crises in the country.

The regrettable consequence of the young peoples' access to firearms and other instruments of terror is that Nigerian now experiences banditry, terrorism, armed robbery, assassination, Fulani herdsmen rampage, extra-judicial killing, kidnapping and vandalism. The nation witnesses a litany of horrendous incidents that have become a daily nightmare; there is nowadays perpetual fear and apprehension across the land. Adimora-Ezeigbo (20) and Tomi (328) observe that Nigerians live in constant fear at present --- fear of hired assassins, organized terrorism, militancy, agitation for secession and political violence. For instance, Onyenweaku (9) reports that just in one day (precisely on the 30th of May, 2021), Almed Gulak, a chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) was murdered in cold blood in Imo State; a legislator was abducted in Nassarawa State; 200 Islamic scholars were kidnapped; an INEC officer, a police station and an immigration centre were all burnt. He further informs us that on the following day, Justice Stanley Nnaji was kidnapped by unknown gunmen in Enugu State; unknown number of Nigerians were abducted by bandits in Zamfara State; Fulani herdsmen murdered 9 people in Enugu State, and another set of herdsmen killed a pregnant woman in Nassarawa State. At present, Nigeria records more shocking, gory tales than the ones being experienced in 2021. Indeed, the activities of the political elites have fuelled social and security crises in a manner never witnessed before in the history of Nigeria. And unfortunately, a remedy is not in sight.

A lasting solution to the current situation would be a conscious paradigm shift in the way and manner politicians approach political power and governance in Nigeria. A political culture that celebrates mediocrity and ineptitude, and encourages election malpractice and money-politics cannot guarantee peace, social stability and development of the nation. Nigeria is today fast becoming a failed state, and has been made a laughing stock in the comity of nations because governance has been left in the hands of a restricted cult of incompetent cabals who neither have the capacity to lead a twenty-first century society nor consider the welfare of the masses in their administrative policies and decisions.

CONCLUSION

Political corruption is a social cankerworm that has continued to truncate the development of Nigeria over the years. The debilitating impact of this social malaise on the lives of highly industrious and prodigiously talented Nigerians cannot be overemphasized. Regrettably, the political class who perpetuate the unfortunate statusquo through enactment, enforcement and execution of anti-people economic and political policies with mischievous and selfish tendencies are responsible for this state of affairs. Emeka Nwabueze's portrayal of this bitter reality in *A Parliament of Vultures* has been examined in the present study. The preoccupation of this paper has been to ascertain, through critical analysis of the text, how the dubious, corrupt activities of the political class catalyze social crises that bedevil Nigeria. The result of the enquiry has indicated that political corruption as exemplified in the society of our text is a direct depiction of the Nigerian situation, which has significantly contributed to social uprising, insecurity, poverty and under-development that characterize the contemporary Nigerian society. Consequently, the paper concludes that Nigerian politicians are largely responsible for the litany of social, security, political and economic challenges that menacingly confront the Nigerian society and her people at present, and advocates for a paradigm shift in the manner political power is exercised and governance approached by the political elites if Nigeria must recover from her current sorry state.

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