



PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: OVERCOMING BARRIERS AND DRIVING PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) IN AFRICA

¹Muhammad Abdullahi, Ph.D.

²Hauwa Baba Musami

³Ali Abiso

¹m33abdullahi@unimaid.edu.ng

²hauwahajja048@gmail.com

³aliabiso01@gmail.com

^{1,2,3}Department of Public Administration,
University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

¹ORCID NO: 0000-0002-0067-0667

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the obstacles to the women's contribution to sustainable development goals (SDGs) as well as the roles they could play in driving SDGs. The focus of the paper is on Africa, which is a continent where gender disparities in development remains a challenge. Yet, the women in Africa have historically played key roles in caregiving and resource management. The paper is hinged on conceptual and theoretical approach using secondary data derived from published and unpublished sources with analysis based of thematic approach using document analysis. Some of the obstacles identified and discussed include discrimination in employment, limited access to financial resources, inadequate property rights, health disparities, educational inequities and cultural norms. The paper further examines the important roles that women could play in shaping public policies, advocating for gender equality and ensuring community resilience. The paper therefore emphasizes the importance of empowering women with financial resources, improved access to education and leadership opportunities, which are critical to facilitating inclusive development and growth. Ultimately, the paper concludes that advancing gender justice is both a fundamental human right and a significant strategy for achieving sustainable development and the SDGs in Africa. It is recommended therefore that government and civil society actors must prioritize women inclusion in decision making and gender equality principles in all community development efforts in order to ensure that women are not only beneficiaries, but also active contributors to sustainable development.

Keywords:

Women, SDGs, Gender, Sustainability, Community Development

Introduction

In an era where sustainable development has become a global imperative, the role of women as catalysts for change is increasingly recognized. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women as essential components for achieving sustainable development (United Nations [UN], 2015). Globally, it is increasingly evident that empowering women not only enhances social equity but also significantly contributes to environmental sustainability and economic growth (Mastrorillo et al., 2016). In Europe, significant advancements have been made in integrating gender perspectives into sustainability policies. The European Union has implemented various frameworks aimed at enhancing women's participation in the green

economy, recognizing that gender-inclusive policies lead to more effective environmental outcomes (European Commission, 2020). Similarly, in Asia, women have emerged as critical players within grassroots movements advocating for sustainable practices. Their involvement has led to a notable influence on national and regional policy frameworks that promote environmental conservation and sustainable agricultural practices (Bennett, 2017).

Contrastingly, the situation in Africa presents a complex tapestry of challenges and opportunities. The continent grapples with unique barriers that impede women's full participation in sustainable community development. Socioeconomic constraints, entrenched cultural norms, and limited access to education and resources significantly hinder women's capacity to engage in sustainable practices and decision-making processes (UN Women, 2023). Despite these obstacles, African women are increasingly contributing to community-driven initiatives. Though this is increasingly unrecognized and under-reported. Yet, the women, if supported, have the capacity to leverage traditional knowledge, community mobilization and innovative solutions to address pressing community challenges, thereby driving progress towards the SDGs. Gender equality is not merely a fundamental human right; it is also essential for addressing some of the most pressing global challenges, including economic crises, healthcare inequities, climate change, violence against women, and escalating conflicts. Women are disproportionately affected by these issues and, at the same time, hold the insights and leadership essential for addressing them.

The persistent gender discrimination that hinders women's progress ultimately impedes global advancement (UN Women, 2022; Musami & Abdullahi, 2023). Recognizing and addressing these challenges is crucial for fostering a sustainable future that benefits everyone (Manpaa, *et al*, 2024). In the context of sustaining community development, women's involvement and empowerment are integral to ensuring that developmental progress is not only achieved but maintained over the long term. Sustainable development is about creating a future where all members of the community can thrive, and women, with their roles as primary caregivers, resource managers, and community builders, are central to this vision. Sustaining community development has to do with building a system that can endure over time, ensuring adaptation to changes and that the benefits of development reach everyone, regardless of their social status, especially marginalized groups. The women's active participation in community development is necessary in attaining the SDGs in countries and communities where gender disparities are still prevalent.

Materials and Methods

This paper adopts a conceptual approach. It relied on secondary data gathered from both published and unpublished sources. The study focuses on thematic content analysis which involves systematically identifying, analyzing and interpreting key themes across the selected documents. The data sources include academic journals, reports, policy documents, and other relevant materials that provide insights into the subject matter. This methodology allows for an in-depth exploration of the topic, drawing connections and uncovering patterns within the existing body of literature. The data obtained were analysed in a thematic fashion and categorized as obstacles to women's contributions to SDGs, then the integral role of women in achieving the SDGs.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The world leaders came together on 25th September 2015 to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It was a bold and transformative vision designed to eliminate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for everyone through the 17 SDGs. This ambitious plan reflects a shared global commitment to creating a more sustainable future that focuses on economic, social and environmental factors, as well as

applying to every country, regardless of its development status. The SDGs aim to end poverty in all its forms (SDG 1), fight hunger and ensure food security (SDG 2), and promote health and well-being for everyone (SDG 3). These goals aim to improve the quality of life for all people, ensuring that no one is left behind in securing basic needs and human rights. They also focus on providing inclusive, equitable education (SDG 4) for everyone that creates opportunities for lifelong learning.

In addition, gender equality (SDG 5) is a priority, as empowering women is necessary to achieving all the goals. This includes addressing critical needs like access to sanitation and clean water (SDG 6), which are essential for maintaining dignity and good health. The agenda also calls for clean and affordable (SDG 7) for everyone, which ensures that the world has the energy it needs while promoting renewable sources. It aims at promoting economic growth and decent work (SDG 8), which creates opportunities for people to thrive while encouraging sustainable industries and innovation. The SDGs also emphasize reducing inequalities (SDG 10), ensuring that the benefits of progress reaches everyone, regardless of gender, wealth or background. Creating sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) is another key goal, which ensures that cities are livable with accessible infrastructure, safe housing and green spaces. Addressing the climate crisis is urgent and climate action (SDG 13) is critical to mitigating environmental damage. Likewise, protecting life on land (SDG 15) is necessary to preserve bio-diversity, halt deforestation and combat desertification for future generations. The SDGs also stress the protection of life below water (SDG 14) ensuring that oceans and marine ecosystems are free from pollution and over-exploitation.

The SDGs are all interconnected. Its progress in one area often relying on success in another. For example, empowering women (SDG 5) can help reduce poverty (SDG 1) and improve education (SDG 4). The Peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16) are also significant to ensuring that progress happens in a stable, transparent and accountable environment. Collaboration is necessary for achieving the SDGs and partnerships across sectors are encouraged to help make these goals a reality (SDG 17). A key part of this global systematic approach is making sure that women are active participants in decision-making and resource allocation. Therefore, removing the barriers that prevent women from accessing opportunities and resources is essential in meeting the SDGs.

Obstacles to Women's Contributions to Sustainable Development Goals

The obstacles that women face in contributing to SDGs are numerous, including financial resource limitations, discrimination in work and employment, property rights challenges, health inequities, educational barriers, etc. Some of these key obstacles are discussed as follows, with specific examples:

i. Financial Resource Limitations

The typical African women, especially those in rural areas often experience barriers when it comes to accessing credit and financial services in their communities. This financial discrimination practice which favours men over women have weaken many women. Sometimes it doesn't manifest as outright rejection, but in the form of strict requirement for collateral which often left the women excluded from such opportunities. This issue is prevalent mostly in rural communities where informal economies are predominant. Financial institutions in those contexts further fail to recognize women's economic contributions particularly in agriculture (Kabeer, 2015; Abdullahi, 2024). As a result, women are left unable to access business loans, financial literacy programmes or entrepreneurship opportunities. This continues to trap them in cycles of poverty.

In rural Africa, many women farmers are unable to secure loans because they don't own land. This is another typically owned and controlled by men. The limited access to financial resources experienced by women

severely limits their ability to invest in businesses or improve existing ones. It has also affected the agricultural productivity of those of them involved in farming. Without such capital or finance access, women are deprived of the resources they need to enhance their livelihoods and build economic resilience. Their exclusion from formal financial systems and the limited or lack of recognition in informal economies significantly weakens women's economic independence which limits their ability to contribute fully to their communities. This didn't only negatively affect their personal development but also sabotages their progress towards key goals like SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

ii. Discrimination in Employment and Job Opportunities

According to the International Labour Organization [ILO] (2016), occupational or employment segregation is among the major barriers that women experience in formal sectors which redirects them into low paying jobs or less secure jobs. This further excludes them from organizations or sectors considered as male dominated, creating additional gap between male and women presence in such sectors. These bias in the formal sector or workplaces make it difficult for women to attain leadership roles or positions, or even become senior authority or occupy higher status (ILO, 2016).

In fields such as engineering or technology, women are significantly under-represented and face additional barriers as lack of mentorship, limited career advancement and fewer opportunities for further education (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2017). For example, women working in agriculture where they are often the backbone of food production experience exclusion from higher-paying roles like managerial positions in agricultural cooperatives due to gender biases. These systemic barriers to equal employment opportunities lead to significant gender disparities in income and economic participation (Amin & Hart, 2015). This kind of discrimination not only limits women's access to equal pay and job security but also prevents them from fully engaging with or benefiting from the formal economy. The limited availability of opportunities for women hinders the creation of an inclusive economy that can drive growth and combat poverty. These workplace discrimination poses a serious obstacle to achieving SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality).

iii. Limited Access to Property and Land Rights

African women in many rural communities experience significant barriers to land ownership and property rights which severely limits their ability to generate income and secure a stable livelihood. Some African societies are patriarchal societies, which make it common for property rights to be typically controlled by men and leaving women in a vulnerable economic position (Doss & Meinzen-Dick, 2015). For example, in rural sub-Saharan Africa, women often work the land but are denied legal ownership, despite being crucial contributors to agricultural production (UN Women, 2023). This lack of land ownership prevents women from accessing loans that could help them invest in farming improvements or long-term agricultural growth.

Women are unable to secure financial supports such as agricultural loans that could have boosted their crop yields and diversify their income streams because of their inability to present worthy land as collateral. This economic exclusion keeps women in cycles of poverty and limits their ability to build sustainable livelihoods. Further, the absence of land ownership forces many women to depend on male relations for financial security thereby reducing their potential for economic independence. This lack of or limited control over land doesn't only affects women's personal well-being but also has broader implications for food security in communities. This is because women are key players in agriculture across many rural African societies. Addressing women's land rights is a step toward achieving SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).

iv. Barriers to Education

In spite of the progress made in the previous years, many girls in rural communities continue to face significant barriers to education. Cultural norms in many African societies often prioritizes boys' education over girls' education, and factors such as early marriage, unsafe transportation and a lack of proper or safer educational facilities further complicate access to schooling for girls. In some communities, girls are forced to leave school early due to early marriages or domestic responsibilities. In rural Africa, for example, many girls frequently miss school because they are expected to contribute to household chores which affects their academic performance and limits their future opportunities. These educational inequalities have long-lasting negative effects which restricts women's economic independence and future job prospects.

Over 28 million girls in Africa, between the ages of 6 and 15 are not in school (Costin et al, 2015). These children will never be in school for different reasons including poverty, cultural norms, poor governmental policies, or violence and fragility (Costin et al, 2015; Abdullahi, 2024). Yet, it is an established fact that when girls are unable to access education, they are unable to compete in the workforce on equal footing with boys. This differentiation further contributes to cycles of poverty, discrimination and gender inequality. This barrier to education undermines progress toward achieving SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality), all of which rely heavily on ensuring that girls and women have equal opportunities to learn and succeed.

v. Inequities in Accessing Healthcare

In rural and marginalized African communities, women often face limited access to healthcare services especially reproductive health services which causes series of deaths. Such women have very limited access to maternal healthcare, contraception and family planning services, which contribute to higher maternal mortality rates. In countries like Nigeria, where healthcare infrastructure is under-developed, many women give birth in unsafe conditions, leading to preventable deaths and complications (Abimbola, 2017). Additionally, the lack of preventive healthcare and gender-specific services leaves women vulnerable to diseases, while inadequate mental health services exacerbate issues related to domestic violence and depression. Without access to essential healthcare, women's physical and mental health suffers, which in turn affects their ability to participate fully in education, the workforce, and community leadership. Challenges in healthcare access for women are major barriers to attaining gender equality and economic empowerment because poor health outcomes among women impede their ability to contribute to the workforce and society. Addressing this is therefore essential to attaining or advancing SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality).

vi. Care Responsibilities versus Work-Life Balance

Women continue to bear a disproportionate share of unpaid care work which severely limits their ability to pursue education and employment opportunities. This care work includes looking after children, elderly relatives and other dependents. Yet this often goes unrecognized in economic terms. In many cultures, women are expected to prioritize family responsibilities over personal or professional development which can lead to career interruptions and lower economic output (ILO, 2016; OECD, 2017). For example, both in rural and urban areas, women frequently face the difficult choice between work and family due to the lack of affordable childcare or flexible work options. As a result, many women are forced to reduce their working hours or leave the workforce altogether to fulfill caregiving duties. This not only leads to lost wages but also contributes to career stagnation, as women often struggle to re-enter the workforce at the same level after taking time off. The unequal distribution of care work stifles women's economic participation and reinforces gender inequality in the workplace. It impacts their long-term career advancement, overall well-being and limits their potential for economic independence. This imbalance also reduces their capacity to contribute meaningfully to community

development. The strain caused by this unequal distribution of unpaid care work challenges the efforts towards achieving SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

vii. Cultural Norms and Gender Stereotypes

Cultural norms and gender stereotypes often restrict women's agency, limiting their involvement in public life and decision-making processes. In many societies, women are discouraged from participating in political leadership or high-status professional fields due to beliefs that these roles are meant for men (UN Women, 2022). In rural areas, women face societal expectations that prioritize their role as caregivers and homemakers, leaving little room for them to pursue careers or education (Kabeer, 2012). These stereotypes also fuel violence against women and perpetuate harmful practices like child marriage, which stifles their potential and reinforces gender inequality (Abdullahi, 2024). For example, in some communities, girls are married off at a young age, which limits their educational and economic opportunities. Such societal barriers prevent women from fully contributing to leadership roles or making decisions that affect their communities, impeding broader societal progress. Challenging these gender norms is essential to achieve true gender equality and empower women to drive sustainable development. These cultural norms hinder the achievement of SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality).

viii. Gender Based Violence

Gender-based violence such as domestic violence and sexual harassment is a pervasive issue that severely affects women's ability to fully participate in societal development (Audu, 2018). Women who experience violence often suffer from both physical and emotional harm, which hinders their ability to pursue education, work or engage in community activities. This violence against women remains widespread, with limited legal protections and inconsistent enforcement of laws. GBV continues to be a critical barrier to development in Africa with many women and girls significantly affected. In Southern and Eastern Africa, for instance 42% of women experiencing physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes (World Bank, 2023). The impact of these GBV extends far beyond individual survivors with implications for the productivity and well-being of families and communities, often across generations. GBV further impedes women's participation in education and the labour market and is costing economies up to 4% of GDP (World Bank, 2023). Because of these, many women are forced to remain in unsafe environments or withdraw from public life altogether, which severely restricts their opportunities for personal and professional development. The fear and trauma caused by violence make it difficult for women to contribute to their communities or the economy because their basic safety and well-being are compromised. Therefore, tackling this issue is necessary to attaining SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); all of which rely on the safety and empowerment of women.

ix. Under-representation of Women in Leadership Roles

In a typical African society, men dominate leadership positions in business, politics, administration, religion and community organizations, which makes the representation of women very minimal. This poor of representation limits the development of policies that address women's specific needs and concerns. The women participation in local governance and parliamentary representation is poor in African continent with Northern Africa having only 18% and sub-Saharan Africa having only 25% of total women representation (UN Women 2023). Only Rwanda has a surprising representation of 61%, as other countries have far less such as Nigeria (4%), The Gambia (9%), Guinea-Bissau (10%), Liberia and Botswana (11%), Congo [DRC] and Central African Republic (13%), Ghana, Congo, Gabon and Zambia (15%) (Statista, 2022; Fadipe, 2024).

The exclusion from leadership roles means that women's perspectives are often overlooked in policy-making, and gender-specific issues, such as maternal health or gender-based violence are not adequately addressed (Musami & Abdullahi, 2023). For example, women make up only a small fraction of national political officeholders, and their needs often go unrepresented in governmental decisions. The poor representation of women in African leadership positions or decision-making circle significantly limits the inclusivity and effectiveness of governance. The voices of women count in shaping public policies that address the inequalities they face and their exclusion from leadership results in policies that fail to address their unique challenges. Increasing women's participation in governance, decision-making and community service roles are crucial in achieving SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

The Integral Role of Women in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

There exist many roles associated to women which contributes in the attainment of SDGs, including serving as stakeholders, empowerment with opportunities, political participation, advocacy and stewardship. Some of these are discussed as follows:

i. Active Participation in Development and Leadership

For SDGs to be attained, women's active participation in decision-making processes is important in order to ensure that development projects in African continent are inclusive and address the diverse needs of communities. When women are involved in leadership roles, their opinions and insights help in shaping public policies that tackle the socio-economic challenges rural communities face. Women leaders often champion critical issues like education, healthcare, water and sanitation, and social protection which are areas that are crucial to fostering sustainable community development. Efforts to involve women in decision-making will not only ensures that SDG 5 (Gender Equality) is prioritized, but also guarantees that women's needs are incorporated into development initiatives. More than that is the fact that their involvement in local governance contributes to advancing SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). This helps promote sustainable practices, build resilience to climate change and improve infrastructure, especially in rural areas where development often lags behind. The empowerment of women in African, with opportunities for leadership roles, will lead to a balanced, inclusive and sustainable future and progress for all.

Abdullahi (2024) argued that the empowerment of women presents them with more opportunities to lead compared to women without adequate empowerment opportunities. Other studies further showed that women leaders help increase productivity, enhance collaboration, inspire organizational dedication and improve fairness (Musami & Abdullahi, 2023; UN Women, 2022; Novotney, 2024; Musami, 2024). Where women are opportune to serve as leaders, they often demonstrate more transformational leadership styles. This is evidenced in a landmark meta-analysis of 61 studies led by Eagly which showed that women naturally possess the traits of compassion, sensitivity, intelligence, and creativity more than men. In fact, the women are more likely to epitomize what is good in a particular organization as well as inspire people to practice in line with the mission of the organization compared with men (Novotney, 2024). In another poll conducted in the USA, 86% of respondents believed that men and women were equally intelligent, and only 9% believed women were more intelligent and another 5% believed men were more intelligent (Novotney, 2024).

ii. Empowerment and Opportunities

Education and economic empowerment opportunities constitute fundamental drivers of gender equality, which is an avenue through which women get empowered. When African women have access to education and economic opportunities, they are better positioned to contribute to key sectors like agriculture, technology and

businesses. Women's involvement in these areas has the potential to diversify Africa's economy, fosters innovation and create jobs that could benefit the communities at large. Moreover, women are known to reinvest their earnings into their families and communities which further creates a cycle of economic prosperity that strengthens local economies. Empowering women through education and economic participation presents a significant step in advancing SDG 4 (Quality Education) by increasing access to education for girls and women, serving as vital effort in building skilled workforce. It also supports SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) because women's economic participation boosts productivity and drives innovation, which in turn fuels the continent's economic growth and helps reduce poverty.

When women invest in their groups, families or communities, the positive effects ripple throughout society thereby improving overall community well-being. This reinforces the importance of SDG 1 (No Poverty) because women's empowerment leads to stronger and more resilient communities and a more equitable society. According to UN Women (2022) increasing women's educational attainment has the higher tendency of contributing to general economic empowerment, more inclusive societies, environmentally sustainable economic growth, and sustainable development at large. Education is therefore crucial in the life of women, and requires upskilling and re-skilling in order to keep pace with rapid transformations all over the world.

iii. Healthcare and Well-being

All healthy women have the prospect of promoting economic wellbeing, social progress and environmental protection materially and immaterially. This prospect further extend to how children are raised in both nuclear or extended families and communities (Remme, 2020). Maternal health during pregnancy, at birth or in childhood directly influences the health of children during pregnancy, at birth, in their childhood or into adulthood. The better maternal health reduces stunting and improves cognitive development and productivity (Onarheim, 2016). For instance, a study in Nigeria revealed that fetal exposure to acute maternal mal-nutrition had negative impacts on risks of hypertension, literacy and income in adulthood (Remme, 2020). Therefore, ensuring that women in Africa have access to adequate healthcare is critical not only for their own well-being but also for the overall health of their families and communities.

Where women have access to reproductive health services, they can make informed decisions about family planning, maternal health and their general well-being. Women who are known as primary caregivers in many households deserve to be in good health to be able to facilitate a healthy care-giving in the family or community. Healthier women are therefore in the better position to take care of their families by ensuring that everyone is healthy. Therefore, empowering women to advocate for better health services can lead to significant improvements in healthcare outcomes within communities. Nonetheless, it is safe to say that women's health and well-being has a direct role in achieving SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) which helps to reduce maternal mortality and improve the overall health of individuals, families and communities. Another strategy is to further empower women to take control of their own health in order to advocate for broader improvements in healthcare systems thereby benefiting society as a whole. Moreover, women's focus on nutrition and preventive health contributes to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) which improves food security and encouraging healthier diets in their households.

iv. Leadership and Political Participation

An effort to encourage African women to take on challenges and be represented adequately in politics, governance and other leadership roles is important in ensuring women's voices are included in the public policy making process. Women leaders are more likely to champion policies that address the peculiar needs of their fellow women, children and even other marginalized groups, which helps in ensuring that development is both equitable and sustainable. An opportunity for women to serve as leaders or participate in politics offers women

the opportunity to serve as mentors and role models, inspiring other individuals to become politically active and creating a powerful cycle of female participation in governance that strengthens democracy and representation. Many studies revealed that higher representation of women in politics and governance has a general tendency of contributing to stronger attention to women's issues in public policy and governance (UN Women, 2022; Musami & Abdullahi, 2023; Musami, 2024; Abdullahi, 2024). The political or leadership participation of women is therefore a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy as it facilitates the women's direct engagement in public decision-making and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women. Political accountability to women begins with increasing the number of women in decision-making positions and it is not expected to stop there. More required areas are gender-sensitive governance reforms that will make all elected officials more effective at promoting gender equality in public policy and ensuring their implementation. Their participation is therefore crucial for attaining SDG 5 (Gender Equality) as it ensures that policies reflect the concerns and aspirations of women. Additionally, women in positions of power contribute to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) by promoting more inclusive, transparent and accountable governance. The leadership of women not only strengthens democratic systems but also plays a key role in fostering peace and stability which are vital for the long-term well-being of Africa and its people.

v. Advocacy for Gender Equality

Women's advocacy for gender equality often leads to improvements in several other important development areas. Through the promotion of gender equality and justice, women often help reduce poverty, improve access to education, and ensured that resources are distributed more equitably within communities. For example, women in rural Africa who are empowered to run small businesses or engage in agriculture not only contribute to poverty reduction but also drive sustainable economic growth. As small as their capital or investment, it still contributes to the local economy by driving market through exchange of goods and services, and other forms of economic and financial transactions.

The advocates of gender equality and justice together with other civil society organizations, often also raise awareness about the importance of women's participation in politics and community development engagements at the community level, which serve as an encouragement for women to become members of civil society movements or political parties (Amanda, 2022). Additional practical ways to reduce the challenges women face is to strengthen female candidates' participation in decision making circle and frequently build their capacity around leadership skills, organizing skills and knowledge management in order to enhance their confidence and capacity to facilitate inclusive policy making.

As women achieve success in one aspect such as education or employment, they create a ripple effect that drives progress in other aspects. This fosters a more holistic approach to sustainable development. The women's advocacy and leadership in the pursuance of inter-connected SDGs plays important role in achieving SDG 1 (No Poverty) as it addresses the root causes of the poverty, including limited access to education and economic opportunities. These efforts also contribute to SDG 4 (Quality Education) by creating an environment where both girls and boys can access education inclusively. Additionally, the work supports SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by reducing gender disparities in sectors such as employment and healthcare.

vi. Partnerships for Sustainable Development

Women's organizations and networks are important entities in building partnerships that drive local development projects across Africa (Abdullahi, 2022). These organizations and networks often collaborate with governments, companies, NGOs, and other stakeholders in mobilizing resources, advocating for policy change, and implementing projects that tackle gender inequality, promoting sustainable practices and contribute to

attaining sustainable development goals. These partnerships and collaborations equip the women with the right tools and resources needed to lead development projects which in turn helps advance local communities and contributes to broader national development. The formation of such strategic alliances makes significant contributions to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), thereby ensuring that diverse stakeholders unite to address complex development challenges. These partnerships also directly promote SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) by addressing gender disparities and advocating for policies that support sustainable development.

Women or female led groups are known often for their roles in humanitarian and development engagements within crises affected communities, or communities with vulnerable population seeking for help. These groups are often among the first to respond to the needs of vulnerable populations across communities with people in need of support (UNICEF, 2022). The women groups and networks often provide essential services to vulnerable populations in partnership with fellow groups or in collaboration with other NGOs, government entities and organized private sector. To ensure the rights of fellow women are protected, they raise awareness around risks of women and girls and demand accountability where such rights are infringed. In spite of the numerous international commitments affirming the importance of partnering with women or female networks and groups, and a growing record of impact achieved in the process, the women groups and networks remain largely under-resourced and overlooked (UNICEF, 2022).

Conclusion and Recommendation

While significant progress has been made towards attaining the SDGs in Africa, achieving gender equality and empowering women remains a critical challenge. To drive systemic change, there is an urgent need for increased funding for evidence-based interventions, greater political and leadership representation of women, and stronger engagement with women's rights organizations. The SDG 5 that focuses on gender equality is especially important as it calls for the elimination of disparities and the empowerment of women. The communities that actively promote gender equality through education, access to resources and leadership opportunities do more than just uplift women. Such communities also fosters a collective sense of responsibility and create shared opportunities for everyone.

As a recommendation therefore, international organizations, governments and civil society actors must prioritize women inclusion in decision making and gender equality principles in all community development efforts in order to ensure that women are not only beneficiaries, but also active contributors to sustainable development. Further efforts to recognize and dismantle the barriers that hinder women's contributions to attaining the SDGs will assist African communities to create more equitable and sustainable world. This is the only way one can safely conclude that women in African communities are pivotal to achieving sustainable development. As such, it is high time one realizes that the participation of such women in all sectors like governance, education and economic activities can facilitate progress across all the SDGs.

References

- Abdullahi, M. (2022). Women, peacebuilding and sustainable development. In E. Spiegel, G. Mutalemwa, C. Liu & L. R. Kurtz (Eds), *Peace Studies and Sustainable Development in Africa* [199-205]. Springer.
- Abdullahi, M. (2024). Gender inequality and sustainability development in Africa. In E. AlAali, M. Masmoudi & G. AlSaffar (Eds.) *Transformative Roles of Women in Public and Private Sectors* [160-174]. IGI Global.

- Abimbola, S. (2017). Primary healthcare in Nigeria: A case study of the health system's weaknesses and opportunities for reform. *The Lancet*, 389(10066), 1011-1016.
- Amanda, C. (2022). *A guide to being an effective advocate for gender equality*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).
- Amin, S., & Hart, A. (2015). Gender and agriculture: Women's roles in agricultural development in Africa. *Agricultural Economics*, 46(3), 315-326.
- Audu, R. A. (2018). *Understanding issues of empowerment, gender and poverty alleviation strategies in Nigeria*. Mike-B Press and Publication Co.
- Bennett, L. (2017). Women and environmental sustainability in Asia: The role of women in environmental movements. *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, 23(4), 490-507.
- Costin, C., Montoya, S. & Mundy, K. (2015). *No girl left behind - education in Africa*. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/education/no-girl-left-behind-education-africa>
- Doss, C., & Meinzen-Dick, R. (2015). Collective action and women's land rights in Sub-Saharan Africa. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 51(7), 904-919.
- European Commission. (2020). *Gender equality and the green deal*. European Commission.
- Fadipe, A. (2024). *Women's representation in parliament: An unfavourable political system and social barriers keep women from politics*. Global Voices.
- International Labour Organization [ILO]. (2016). *Women in Labour Markets: Measuring Progress and Identifying Challenges*. ILO.
- Kabeer, N. (2012).** *Women's empowerment and economic development*. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 50(4), 1051-1079.
- Kabeer, N. (2015). Gender, poverty, and inequality: A brief history of the development of gender analysis in the international development agenda. *Development and Change*, 46(2), 489-513.
- Manpaa, A. M., Liberty, F. S. & Abdullahi, M. (2024). Attaining sustainable development in post-conflict societies. A conceptual and theoretical perspective from North-East Nigeria. *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*, 2(1), 56-72.
- Mastorillo, M., et al. (2016). Gender and sustainable development: Current challenges and opportunities. *Journal of International Development*, 28(4), 519-533.
- Musami, H. B. & Abdullahi, M. (2023). Women participation in governance: Prospects and challenges. *6th International Conference on Empirical Social Sciences, Economy, Management and Education Researches*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 16th – 18th June, 2023.
- Musami, H. B. (2024). *Contributions of Plan International to women empowerment in Borno State*. [MSc Dissertation, University of Maiduguri].
- Novotney, A. (2024). *Women leaders make work better*. American Psychological Association (APA).
- Onarheim, K. H., Iversen, J. H., & Bloom, D. E. (2016). Economic benefits of investing in women's health: A systematic review. *PLOS ONE*, 11(3), e0150120. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0150120>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. (2017). *The pursuit of gender equality: An uphill battle*. OECD Publishing.
- Remme, M., Vassall, A., Fernando, G., & Bloom, D. E. (2020). Investing in the health of girls and women: A best buy for sustainable development. *BMJ*, 369, m1175. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m1175>
- Statista (2022). *Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments in Africa as of 2022 by country*. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1248493/percentage-of-women-in-national-parliaments-in-african-countries/>
- UN Women (2023). *Facts and figures: Women's leadership and political participation*. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures>
- UN Women. (2022). *Progress of the world's women 2019-2020: Families in a changing world*. UN Women.
- United Nations [UN]. (2015). *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. United Nations.
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. [UNICEF]. (2022). *Partnering with women- and girl-led organizations: Action learning brief and checklist for gender equality in humanitarian action*.

<https://www.unicef.org/documents/partnering-women-and-girl-led-organizations#>

World Bank. (2023). *Standing up against gender based violence (GBV) in Africa: A conversation with activists*. World Bank Group. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2023/11/30/standing-up-against-gender-based-violence-gbv-in-africa-afe-1123#>

ROLE OF GREEN SPACES IN ENHANCING URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY IN MAIDUGURI METROPOLIS, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

Mike Bonny Charles and Chinedu Josiah Charles

Department of Public Administration,
Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Maiduguri, Borno State,
Nigeria

Abstract

Green spaces play a vital role in enhancing urban environmental quality, contributing to sustainability and well-being. Employing a desk review methodology, this paper examines the current state of green spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis, Nigeria, highlighting importance such as environmental sustainability, public health benefits, social cohesion and community engagement, and economic development opportunities alongside challenges like rapid urbanization, insufficient funding, insecurity, inadequate urban planning and governance, poor management, and lopsided distribution. Despite these obstacles, there are opportunities for improvement, including increased investment, enhanced accessibility and inclusivity, equitable urban planning and zoning policies, institutional reforms and capacity building, community-led stewardship and awareness programs, technology-driven solutions, and leveraging partnerships and global best practices. Addressing these issues are crucial for realizing the full potential of green spaces in enhancing urban environmental quality and fostering resilience in Maiduguri Metropolis.

Keywords:

Green, spaces, urban,
environmental, quality,
Maiduguri, Metropolis,
Borno, Nigeria

1.0. Introduction

Green spaces, encompassing parks, gardens, and other vegetated areas, are increasingly recognized as vital components of urban ecosystems, contributing significantly to environmental sustainability and human well-being. In the context of Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria, green spaces assume an even more crucial role given the region's unique socio-economic and climatic conditions. Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno State, is situated in the northeastern part of Nigeria. This city, like many others in sub-Saharan Africa, faces significant environmental challenges exacerbated by rapid population growth, urban sprawl, and socio-political instability. The city's urban fabric is characterized by a mixture of traditional and modern structures, with green spaces often being overlooked in the planning and development processes. Yet, the presence and quality of these green spaces are indispensable for enhancing urban environmental quality.

Urban green spaces play a multifaceted role in enhancing environmental quality. They contribute to the improvement of air quality by absorbing pollutants and producing oxygen through photosynthesis. Additionally, green spaces help in regulating urban temperatures, mitigating the urban heat island effect, and providing shade, which is particularly crucial in hot climates like that of Maiduguri (Akbari, 2002). Furthermore, these spaces serve as habitats for urban biodiversity, offering refuge and resources for various plant and animal species, thus promoting ecological balance within the city (Tzoulas et al., 2007).

The importance of green spaces extends beyond environmental benefits to encompass social and

psychological well-being. Green spaces provide residents with areas for recreation, relaxation, and social interaction, which are essential for fostering community cohesion and improving the quality of life (Chiesura, 2004). For a city like Maiduguri, which has experienced significant socio-political unrest and insecurity, the role of green spaces in promoting mental health and social stability cannot be overstated. Despite the recognized benefits, the integration of green spaces into the urban planning of Maiduguri has been limited. Several factors contribute to this, including inadequate urban planning policies, lack of public awareness, and insufficient funding for green space development and maintenance. Additionally, the ongoing conflict in the region has led to the displacement of populations and increased pressure on existing urban infrastructure, further complicating efforts to enhance green spaces (Aliyu, 2015).

Research on urban green spaces in African cities, particularly in conflict-affected areas, remains sparse. This paper aims to bridge this gap by examining the role of green spaces in enhancing urban environmental quality in Maiduguri Metropolis. By assessing the current state of green spaces, understanding the challenges to their development, and exploring potential strategies for improvement, this paper seeks to provide valuable insights that can inform urban planning and policy-making in Maiduguri and similar contexts.

2.0. Conceptual Clarification

2.1. Conceptualizing Green Spaces

Green spaces are integral components of urban landscapes, offering numerous benefits ranging from environmental and health to social and economic. Recent scholarly definitions provide a nuanced understanding of green spaces, their functions, and their significance in urban settings. Jennings, Johnson Gaither, and Gragg (2012) highlight the socio-environmental aspect of green spaces, defining them as public or private areas within urban regions that support ecological health and provide residents with recreational and aesthetic benefits. This definition highlights the importance of accessibility and equity in the distribution of green spaces. Wolch, Byrne, and Newell (2014) define green spaces as areas of urban land that are partially or completely covered with grass, trees, shrubs, or other vegetation. These spaces include parks, gardens, cemeteries, sports fields, and nature reserves and serve as critical areas for recreation, ecological sustainability, and public health. Hartig, Mitchell, Vries, and Frumkin (2014) describe green spaces as natural environments in urban contexts that provide ecosystem services and promote human well-being. They emphasize the role of these areas in enhancing environmental quality, fostering social interaction, and contributing to mental and physical health.

Across these definitions, there are some commonalities. Firstly, all definitions agree that green spaces are characterized by the presence of vegetation, whether grass, trees, or shrubs. Secondly, Green spaces are situated within urban areas, providing essential ecological and recreational functions amidst built environments. Lastly, a critical aspect of green spaces is their contribution to human health and well-being, including physical, mental, and social benefits.

While the core concept remains consistent, there are subtle differences in emphasis. Wolch et al. (2014) and Hartig et al. (2014) emphasize the ecological functions of green spaces, including ecosystem services such as air purification, temperature regulation, and biodiversity support. Jennings et al. (2012) on the other hand focus more on the socio-environmental justice aspect, highlighting the need for equitable access to green spaces and their role in promoting environmental justice.

The modern understanding of green spaces reflects a holistic view, recognizing their multifaceted role in urban sustainability. These areas are not merely recreational amenities but are essential for ecological balance, social cohesion, and public health. The integration of green spaces into urban planning is crucial for fostering sustainable cities.

2.2. Understanding the Meaning of Urban

Schneider, Achilles and Merbitz (2014) notes that the term “urban” has its roots in ancient Greece and comes from the Latin word “*urbs*” meaning “the city”. It also, predictably, refers to a lifestyle that is only found in cities. Irby (2015) posit that urban is a characteristic of a city. Similarly, Machek (2020) asserts that urban is a synonym of city. To Sayer (1984), urban is a synonym for a city, however, it adds a social construct to it. Kim (2002) points out that an urban area is a densely populated place with a sizeable number of inhabitants. McComas (2014) points out that urban areas are typically distinguished from non-urban areas based on high population density, diverse economic activity that is largely non-agricultural, and increased home to work commuting patterns. Lawhon and Pierce (2016) opine that the functional qualities of population density, economic activity intensity and variety, and/or formal local government borders, such as in a city, are what are meant by the term urban. Veckalne and Tambovceva (2023) notes that the term “urban” refers to a city or town, particularly in terms of its atmosphere, culture, and way of life, entailing traits such as a diverse population, a high density of buildings and people, and a focus on commerce, entertainment, and other forms of cultural expression. Urban areas frequently have a reputation for invention, inventiveness, and a fast-paced way of life, but they also struggle with issues like pollution, crime, and social injustice.

Within the context of this paper, urban areas are typically cities or towns characterized by high population density, a fast-paced lifestyle, diverse economic activities, innovation, and a concentration of infrastructure, services, and cultural diversity. Cities like Lagos, Kano, Jos, Port Harcourt, Uyo, and Onitsha, among others, exemplify urban areas in Nigeria, where diverse populations coexist while grappling with challenges such as ethnic tensions, economic disparities, and infrastructural inadequacies.

2.3. Unpacking the Concept of Urbanization

Vlahov and Galea (2002) assert that urbanization refers to the change in size, density, and heterogeneity of cities. Factors such as population mobility, segregation, and industrialization frequently accompany urbanization. More simply stated, urbanization is the process that involves the emergence and growth (or decrease in size) of cities. Thus, the process of urbanization is not dependent on definition of urban per se, but rather on the dynamics of agglomeration of individuals. Although the pace of urbanization is independent of the base size of the population, the population size/density of surrounding areas may shape the pace of urbanization. For example, urbanization may include the establishment (or destruction) of new buildings or neighbourhoods, development (or removal) of transportation routes, and the in-migration and out-migration of people, which changes racial/ethnic composition. The process of urbanization gives rise to unique features of urban areas that merit separate study.

According to Satterthwaite, McGranahan, and Tacoli (2010), the precise demographic definition of urbanization is the increasing share of a nation's population living in urban areas (and thus a declining share living in rural areas). Most urbanization is the result of net rural to urban migration. The level of urbanization is the share itself, and the rate of urbanization is the rate at which that share is changing. This definition makes the implications of urbanization distinct from those of urban population growth or those of the physical expansion of urban areas, both of which are often treated as synonymous with urbanization.

Kuddus, Tynan, and McBryde (2020) posit that urbanization is the mass movement of populations from rural to urban settings and the consequent physical changes to urban areas. This definition highlights urbanization as a dual process, encompassing both demographic shifts and infrastructural transformations. It implies that beyond population growth, urbanization reshapes the spatial, economic, and social landscapes of cities, influencing housing demand, transportation systems, and public services while also posing challenges such as overcrowding, environmental degradation, and socio-economic inequalities.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA] (2024), defined urbanization as the concentration of human populations into discrete areas, leading to the transformation of land for residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation purposes. It can include densely populated centres, as well as their adjacent periurban or suburban fringes.

Urbanization is a dynamic and complex process that cannot be fully understood through a single lens. It requires a multi-disciplinary approach to grasp its implications on demographic, spatial, and socio-economic dimensions. The foregoing definitions collectively offer a comprehensive picture of the multifaceted nature of urbanization in the contemporary world. In the context of this paper, urbanization is defined as the dynamic process of population concentration in urban areas, driven primarily by rural-to-urban migration. This process also involves physical and socio-economic transformations, such as the development of residential, commercial, and industrial infrastructure. In Nigeria, urbanization is a rapid and ongoing process, fuelled by factors such as economic opportunities, rural insecurity, and industrialization. However, it has also resulted in the proliferation of informal settlements, strained public services, and governance challenges, as seen in many Nigerian cities.

3.0. Methodology

A desk review methodology was employed to consolidate findings from secondary sources, including scholarly articles, government reports, policy documents, organizational publications, and credible online resources. This approach allows for a comprehensive assessment of the importance of green spaces in Maiduguri, current state of green spaces in Maiduguri, identification of barriers to their development and maintenance, and exploration of potential solutions.

4.0. Literature Review

4.1. Importance of Green Spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis

Green spaces play a multifaceted role in enhancing the livability and sustainability of urban environments. From mitigating environmental challenges to promoting public health, social cohesion, and economic development, the importance of green areas cannot be understated. As urbanization continues to reshape Maiduguri's landscape, policymakers, urban planners, and community stakeholders must prioritize the preservation and expansion of green spaces to ensure a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous future for the city and its residents.

i. Environmental Sustainability

Green spaces contribute significantly to environmental sustainability by mitigating the adverse effects of urbanization, pollution, and climate change. According to Yuan (2024), the presence of greenery in urban areas helps to reduce the urban heat island effect by providing shade and cooling the surrounding environment. In Maiduguri, where temperatures can soar during the hot season, green spaces serve as vital cooling agents, helping to moderate temperatures and improve overall thermal comfort for residents.

Furthermore, green spaces play a crucial role in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem preservation. They serve as habitats for various flora and fauna species, contributing to the city's ecological balance. The presence of trees, shrubs, and other vegetation in Maiduguri Metropolis not only enhances the city's aesthetic appeal but also supports biodiversity, promoting ecological resilience in the face of environmental challenges.

ii. Public Health Benefits

The availability of green spaces in urban areas is closely linked to public health outcomes. Wang'ombe (2023) notes that access to green spaces is associated with numerous health benefits, including improved mental well-being, reduced stress levels, and increased physical activity. A study conducted by Saha and Atiqul Haq

(2024) among university students in Sylhet, Bangladesh, found that 87.9% of respondents believed urban green spaces positively affect psychological well-being, with benefits such as stress reduction and improved concentration. This suggests that access to green spaces is perceived to enhance mental health among young adults in urban areas.

In Maiduguri Metropolis, where the population is exposed to various stressors, including the aftermath of conflict and displacement, green spaces serve as sanctuaries for relaxation and recreation. The presence of parks and gardens provides residents with opportunities for leisure activities, such as picnics, jogging, and social gatherings, which contribute to overall well-being and social cohesion. Additionally, the aesthetic beauty of green spaces in Maiduguri has a calming effect on residents, offering respite from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

iii. Social Cohesion and Community Engagement

Green spaces play a pivotal role in fostering social cohesion and community engagement within urban neighbourhoods. According to a study by Jennings and Bamkole (2019), green spaces serve as common ground where residents from diverse backgrounds come together, interact, and form social connections. In Maiduguri, where social cohesion is crucial for post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding efforts, green spaces act as inclusive public spaces where individuals from different ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds can converge and bond over shared experiences.

Moreover, green spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis serve as venues for community events, cultural celebrations, and recreational activities, further strengthening social ties and promoting a sense of belonging among residents. By providing accessible and inclusive spaces for social interaction, green areas contribute to the development of vibrant and resilient communities in Maiduguri.

iv. Economic Development Opportunities

Beyond their environmental and social benefits, green spaces also offer significant economic opportunities for Maiduguri Metropolis. According to a report by the World Bank (2018), investments in green infrastructure, including parks, urban forests, and green corridors, can generate economic returns through job creation, tourism development, and increased property values. In Maiduguri, where economic recovery and livelihood restoration are paramount, the development and maintenance of green spaces can stimulate local economies and create employment opportunities in landscaping, horticulture, and eco-tourism sectors.

Furthermore, green spaces enhance the attractiveness of urban areas, making them more desirable places to live, work, and invest. The presence of well-maintained parks and green corridors can increase property values in surrounding neighbourhoods, thereby stimulating real estate development and investment. Additionally, eco-tourism initiatives centered around Maiduguri's natural attractions, such as Lake Alau and the Chad Basin National Park, can bolster tourism revenues and support local businesses, contributing to overall economic growth and prosperity.

4.2. The Current State of Green Spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis

Despite their significance, the current state of green spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis presents a mixed picture characterized by both strengths and challenges. On one hand, the city boasts several parks and gardens, such as the zoo and amusement parks, University of Maiduguri Botanical Garden and Ramat Polytechnic Park etc., which serve as popular recreational destinations for residents. These green spaces offer amenities like walking trails, playgrounds, and picnic areas, catering to the diverse needs of the urban population. There are also several well-maintained sport centres in the metropolis where residents go to play many different kinds of sports including football, table tennis, basketball, volleyball, handball and badminton.

However, a closer examination reveals several shortcomings in the management and accessibility of green

spaces across Maiduguri Metropolis. Limited funding and institutional support pose significant barriers to the maintenance and expansion of green infrastructure, resulting in neglect and deterioration of existing parks, gardens and sports centres. Moreover, the ongoing security concerns in Borno State restrict public access to certain areas, limiting the utilization of green spaces and exacerbating social isolation among residents.

A study by Ibrahim and Mohammed (2020) corroborates these findings, highlighting the inadequate infrastructure and lack of amenities in many of Maiduguri's green spaces. The researchers point out issues such as poor sanitation, insufficient lighting, and inadequate seating facilities, which diminish the overall appeal and safety of these recreational areas. Furthermore, the study underscores the unequal distribution of green spaces within the city, with marginalized communities often lacking access to quality parks and recreational facilities.

4.3. Challenges Facing Green Spaces

Several interconnected factors contribute to the challenges facing green spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis, exacerbating the already complex urban dynamics in the region.

i. Rapid Urbanization and Population Growth

Rapid urbanization and population growth place immense pressure on available land resources, leading to encroachment and fragmentation of green spaces. The expansion of informal settlements and unplanned development further diminishes the area allocated for parks and recreational areas, perpetuating a cycle of environmental degradation and urban sprawl.

ii. Insufficient Funding

Limited funding presents a multifaceted challenge to green spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis, affecting their maintenance, development, security, and conservation. The socio-political instability in Borno State, characterized by the Boko Haram insurgency and subsequent humanitarian crisis, diverts financial resources away from environmental initiatives. This financial shortfall undermines efforts to upgrade amenities, hire skilled personnel, and implement sustainable conservation practices.

iii. Insecurity

The persistent insecurity in Maiduguri hampers efforts to maintain public infrastructure and ensure the safety of residents. Fear of violence deters people from visiting parks and gardens, particularly in high-risk areas, while displacement and disrupted livelihoods exacerbate social inequalities, disproportionately excluding vulnerable communities from accessing green spaces.

iv. Inadequate Urban Planning and Governance

The absence of comprehensive land-use policies and zoning regulations results in haphazard development and ad-hoc allocation of green areas, undermining their functionality. Poor coordination among government agencies, civil society organizations, and community groups further impedes effective management and equitable distribution of green infrastructure (Ibrahim & Mohammed, 2020).

v. Poor Management Practices

Institutional weaknesses and bureaucratic inefficiencies significantly hinder the upkeep of green spaces. Many parks and gardens suffer from neglect due to fragmented oversight, lack of skilled personnel, and inconsistent maintenance schedules. Corruption and mismanagement of allocated funds exacerbate these issues, leading to deteriorating facilities, overgrown vegetation, and inadequate waste management systems. For instance, the University of Maiduguri Botanical Garden and Ramat Polytechnic Park, though vital assets, often lack routine care, diminishing their ecological and recreational value.

vi. Lopsided Distribution of Green Space Facilities

Green spaces in Maiduguri are unevenly distributed, with affluent neighbourhoods and institutional areas (e.g., university campuses) enjoying better access compared to marginalized communities. This inequity stems from historical urban planning biases that prioritized commercial and residential developments over inclusive

green infrastructure. As noted by Ibrahim and Mohammed (2020), informal settlements and peri-urban zones face acute shortages of recreational areas, perpetuating socio-environmental disparities. The concentration of green spaces in central districts also limits accessibility for displaced populations resettling on the city's outskirts due to conflict.

4.4. Potential for Improvement

To address the multifaceted challenges facing green spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis, the following strategies are proposed for the Borno State Government:

i. Increased Green Infrastructure Investments

There is a need for increased investment in green infrastructure, including the establishment of new parks and gardens and the revitalization of existing ones. Public-private partnerships can play a crucial role in mobilizing resources and expertise for the sustainable development and management of green spaces, ensuring their long-term viability and resilience to environmental pressures.

ii. Accessibility and inclusivity

Accessibility and inclusivity of green spaces must be prioritized, particularly in underserved communities and conflict-affected areas. This entails the adoption of participatory approaches in urban planning and design, involving local residents in decision-making processes and incorporating their perspectives into the development of green infrastructure. Additionally, measures such as improved signage, public transportation, and security arrangements can facilitate equitable access to green spaces for all segments of the population.

iii. Equitable Urban Planning and Zoning Policies

Adopt per-capita green space standards (e.g., 9m² per resident, as recommended by the WHO) in urban planning laws to ensure equitable distribution. Underserved neighbourhoods, informal settlements, and peri-urban areas (e.g., displaced communities on the city's outskirts) should be prioritized. Also, designate green corridors connecting existing parks to improve accessibility and ecological connectivity.

iv. Institutional Reforms and Capacity Building

Establish a Green Space Management Unit under the Borno State Urban Planning and Development Board (BUPDB) to centralize oversight, streamline maintenance schedules, and combat bureaucratic inefficiencies. This unit should employ skilled horticulturists, ecologists, and urban planners to ensure evidence-based management. Also, implement transparent budgeting and anti-corruption measures, such as public audits of green space funds and community-led monitoring committees, to address mismanagement and fund diversion.

v. Community-Led Stewardship and Awareness Programs

Launch “Green Champion” initiatives to train local volunteers in basic park maintenance, tree planting, and waste management. This would foster ownership, reduce reliance on under-resourced government agencies, and empower marginalized communities. Furthermore, conduct participatory mapping exercises with residents to identify gaps in green space access and co-design solutions.

vi. Technology-Driven Solutions

Deploy GIS mapping to analyse spatial inequities and optimize green space distribution. For example, mapping could reveal “green deserts” in districts like Gwange or Bolori, guiding targeted interventions. Additionally, develop a public reporting platform (e.g., a mobile app) for residents to flag maintenance issues like broken benches, illegal encroachment, or overgrown vegetation, enabling swift government response.

vii. Leverage Partnerships and Global Best Practices

Partner with organizations like the North East Development Commission (NEDC) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Nigeria to fund conflict-sensitive green projects. In addition, draw inspiration from successful models like Medellín's “Green Corridors” (Colombia), which transformed

inequitable urban areas through participatory greening, and Nairobi's Karura Forest, which combined community stewardship with ecotourism.

5.0. Conclusion

Green spaces are indispensable to enhancing Maiduguri Metropolis' environmental quality, social cohesion, and post-conflict resilience. However, their potential remains unrealized due to systemic challenges such as rapid urbanization, insufficient funding, insecurity, inadequate urban planning and governance, poor management, and lopsided distribution. Addressing these issues demands more than ad-hoc fixes; it requires a transformative approach centred on governance reform, spatial justice, and community empowerment.

The Borno State government must prioritize institutional overhauls, such as establishing a dedicated Green Space Management Unit, to combat corruption and bureaucratic neglect. Equitable zoning policies, guided by per-capita green space standards, can redress historical imbalances and ensure marginalized communities (particularly displaced populations in peri-urban zones) benefit from inclusive urban planning. Meanwhile, community-led initiatives like “Green Champion” programs and participatory mapping can democratize green space governance, fostering local ownership and accountability.

Critically, green spaces should be reframed as tools for social justice and conflict recovery. By integrating parks and gardens into peacebuilding strategies, for example, creating shared recreational spaces in religiously and ethnically divided neighbourhoods, Maiduguri can heal religious and communal divides and strengthen resilience. Agencies like Borno State Ministry of Environment, the Borno State Environmental Protection Agency (BOSEPA), the Borno State Urban Planning and Development Board (BUPDB) and the North East Development Commission (NEDC) must collaborate with NGOs, academic institutions, and residents to adopt data-driven solutions (e.g., GIS mapping) and replicate global best practices tailored to local needs.

Ultimately, the revitalization of Maiduguri's green spaces is not merely an environmental imperative but a moral one. Investing in equitable, well-managed green infrastructure will not only mitigate pollution and urban heat but also restore dignity, hope, and unity to a city grappling with the legacies of conflict. By embracing these strategies, stakeholders can transform Maiduguri into a model of sustainable urban renewal in Nigeria's Northeast.

References

- Akbari, H. (2002). Shade trees reduce building energy use and CO₂ emissions from power plants. *Environmental Pollution*, 116, S119-S126. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0269-7491\(01\)00264-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0269-7491(01)00264-0) Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Aliyu, A. A. (2015). Urbanization, cities, and health: The challenges to Nigeria - A review. *Annals of African Medicine*, 14(4), 149-156. <https://doi.org/10.4103/1596-3519.149896> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Chiesura, A. (2004). The role of urban parks for the sustainable city. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 68(1), 129-138. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2003.08.003>
- Hartig, T., Mitchell, R., de Vries, S., & Frumkin, H. (2014). Nature and Health. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 35, 207-228.
- Ibrahim, A., & Mohammed, A. (2020). Assessment of Green Spaces in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*, 11(4), 359-366.
- Irby, J. D. (2015). *Urban sociology: A systems approach*. Prentice Hall.

- Jennings, V., & Bamkole, O. (2019). The relationship between social cohesion and urban green space: Evidence from urban neighbourhoods in the United States. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(3), 452. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16030452> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Jennings, V., Johnson Gaither, C., & Gragg, R. S. (2012). Promoting Environmental Justice through Urban Green Space Access: A Synopsis. *Environmental Justice*, 5(1), 1-7.
- Kim, S. (2002). *Urban sociology: A global introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Kuddus, M. A., Tynan, E. & McBryde, E. (2020). Urbanization: a problem for the rich and the poor? *Public Health Reviews*. 41(1) (2020). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40985-019-0116-0> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Lawhon, M., & Pierce, J. (2016). *Urban sociology: A global introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Machek, J. (2020). *Urban sociology: Foundations, theories, and contemporary issues*. Cambridge University Press.
- McComas, W. F. (2014). *Urban sociology: A comparative approach*. Prentice-Hall.
- Saha B, Atiqul Haq SM (2024) Perception of urban green space among university students in Bangladesh. *PLoS ONE* 19(9): e0311033. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0311033> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Satterthwaite, D., McGranahan, G., & Tacoli, C. (2010). *Urbanization and its implications for food and farming*. Available at: <https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/epdf/10.1098/rstb.2010.0136> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Sayer, A. (1984). *Method in social science: A realist approach*. Hutchinson & Co.
- Schneider, C., Achilles, B., & Merbitz, H. (2014). *Introduction to urban sociology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tzoulas, K., Korpela, K., Venn, S., Yli-Pelkonen, V., Kaźmierczak, A., Niemela, J., & James, P. (2007). Promoting ecosystem and human health in urban areas using Green Infrastructure: A literature review. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 81(3), 167-178. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2007.02.001> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA] (2024). *Urbanization – Overview*. Definition was last updated on February 29, 2024. Available at: https://www.epa.gov/caddis/urbanization-overview?utm_source=chatgpt.com Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Veckalne, R. & Tambovceva, T. (2023). *Unpacking urban: Towards common definition*. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/113939922/Unpacking_urban_towards_common_definition?utm_source=chatgpt.com Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Vlahov, D. & Galea, S. (2002). Urbanization, urbanicity, and health. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*. 79(4). Available at: https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1093/jurban/79.suppl_1.S1.pdf Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Wang'ombe, G. (2023). The impact of urban green spaces on community health and well-being. *International Journal of Arts, Recreation and Sports*. 3(3). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.47941/ijars.1941> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.
- Wolch, J. R., Byrne, J., & Newell, J. P. (2014). Urban Green Space, Public Health, and Environmental Justice: The Challenge of Making Cities 'Just Green Enough'. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 125, 234-244.
- World Bank. (2018). *Green Infrastructure: Nature-Based Solutions for Sustainable and Resilient Cities*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.
- Yuan, T. (2024). The role of green infrastructure in mitigating the urban heat island effect. *Open Journal of Applied Sciences*. 14(11). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojapps.2024.1411207> Retrieval date: 16/01/25.

E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY: AN OVERVIEW OF ONLINE SERVICES BY BORNO STATE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SERVICE.

¹Mustapha Bello, ²Murjanatu Ibrahim and ³Hamza Abore

Department of Public Administration

Borno State University, Maiduguri.

*Corresponding Author's email: Mbello@Bosu.edu.ng

Abstract

Provision of services by government can be enhanced by government using e-services, this also aid in strengthening government institutions, which relates to goal 16 of sustainable development goal which is peace, justice and strong institutions as well. This has come to be a global reform in public administration. Nigeria has also adopted this approach through the establishment of NITDA and a ministry dedicated to institutionalizing e-government. Similar reform has been adopted by the Borno State Government through various achievements in respect to ICT. Using EGSQUAL for measuring the quality of BOGIS services combined with Simple Integrated Model for the purpose of measuring the growth stage of BOGIS online services, while Technology Organization Environment Model (TOE) served as a guide to explain rationale for the embracing of e-government services by BOGIS. The study found that the website was able to meet four of the six EGSQUAL scale and the website is at the interaction level of e-government growth stage. The study concluded that BOGIS embracing of e-government services has upgraded service delivery. Additionally, based on the TOE model the institution can adopt more complex technology which will improve government services so as to attain other EGSQUAL criteria and other e-government growth stages which can be mirrors of qualitative services delivery and improved governance in the state.

Keywords:

E-Government, Service Delivery, Online Services

INTRODUCTION

The provision of services to the general public is one important aspect of governmental functions, as societies evolve so does the services provided by government and the ways such services are delivered also evolve. This mutual relationship has led to government all over seeking the best way possible to provide services to the citizens in a way that will reduce cost, time, corruption and ultimately improving quality. One can rightly express that public administration in itself has at its core the delivery of services to the citizen in the best manner possible that brings about holistic development.

In other to achieve the aforementioned, government have opted for the adoption of information technology which can be referred to as e-government, this implies government using information communication technology for public administration. It is seen as a major change in public administration due to its important function in reforming the relationship between government and citizens as regards to service delivery (Teicher & Dow, 2020). The infusion of information communication technology into public administration is not seen as an end, but a means to increase efficiency, lower red tape, improve ease and accessibility, promotion of ethical practices and also to block channels for fraud and corruption (Vilfan, 2018). This simply enhances government

institutions and at the same time leading to good governance.

E-government services or government online services is one of the main domains of e-government identified by Heeks (2001), Ojo (2014) and Madon (2009). E-government services as a growth stage in e-government entails digitalizing traditional government services for the purpose citizen to access services at their comfort using information communication technology. Government e- services is a long-term process which has a large impact, where it is effectively introduced it can increase efficiency, improve speed and accuracy of communication and positively impact the entire organization (Kvasnicova et al. 2015).

Inherent in the benefits of these online services are certain risk that affects the efficiency and effectiveness of such services. In other words, despite moving to online services to eliminates challenges from using traditional means of providing services. It cannot be said that online services can be delivered without any problem. Online risk can be categorized according to the factor that causes them, these risks include social risk, reputation risk, grounded risk are caused by environmental factors; security risk, and technical risk are caused by environmental factors; legal risk, functional risk, process risk emanates from operational factors; resource risk, financial risk, time risk are functions of organizational factors (Hejazinia, 2021).

Various countries have keyed into e-government with countries like Republic of Korea, Denmark and Estonia topping the list of Online Service Index (OSI) with 1.0000, 0.9992 and 0.9954 respectively. Leading countries in Africa with regards to OSI ranking are South Africa, Rwanda and Kenya with an Online Service Index of 0.8872, 0.8207 and 0.7770 accordingly. The OSI is an indicator of e-government that tries to measure the capability and willingness of government to communicate and provide online services to the general public using electronic means (United Nation, 2024).

In 2001, Nigeria formulated the National IT Policy along with the establishment of National Information Technology Development Agency. In 2019 the Federal Ministry of Communication was renamed Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy, similarly to further infuse innovation the Ministry in 2023 was renamed Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy to oversee all aspects information technology including e-governance and e-government for the whole country. These efforts partly contributed to Nigeria been ranked high with regards to OSI standing at a position of 101 of out 196 countries with an index of 0.525 in The United Nations 2022 e-government index.

The Borno State Government in its search for providing qualitative services to the general public and private organization has made various efforts to digitalize government services for shorter time in provision of services that are qualitative and conveniently accessible and also developing its ICT manpower. Specifically, services relating to the administration and management of land matters which is carried out by Borno Geographic Information Service (BOGIS) established in 2019 are now digitalized and citizens can initiate various process online as opposed to physical interaction, in 2024 Borno joined the list of state in Nigeria to establish an agency for information and communication technology. Moreso, the state has signed a number memorandums with private organizations to training civil servants and students alike on certain aspects relating to ICT.

Furthermore, despite these efforts by the State, researches on e-governance, e-government, e-government services in Borno State remain scanty. Additionally, since the creation of BOGIS in 2019 with its establishing act emphasizing ICT as its bedrock for executing its functions, there exist the need for a study to assess the service delivery provided. To this end, this study seeks to asses e-government services provided online by BOGIS and at the same time broadening the scope for other e-government researches in Borno State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CONCEPT OF E-GOVERNMENT

Understanding the application of ICT gave birth to its use in government settings for the purpose of quality service delivery in government institutions in Nigeria. Applying ICT in civil service tends to improve delivery of services (Nnamani, Asomba & Ekwuagu, 2023). According to Firman, et al. (2023) "...displaying government information through website services and transforming the relationship between the government and all stakeholders, which initially used conventional media to use information technology." This conceptualization only sees e-government from the e-service perspective which is a domain, section or growth stage of e-government (Heeks (2001), Ojo (2014) and Madon (2009). Simply put, e-government can be understood to be the use of information and communication technology by government in carrying out its various activities both internally or externally for the sole purpose of becoming more efficient and effective which will lead to attaining good governance. This implies that at the core of e-government is good governance.

Although e-government provides an alternative means of government activities, it should not be seen as an addition to government, rather a tool for improving the efficacy of public services through taking advantages of various aspects of information and communication technology. Some of the central idea of e-government entails optimization of government services to the citizens, increase self-service opportunities to citizens, lowering cost, improving efficiency and bringing about effectiveness in public administration (Murodullaevich & Sharifjanovna, 2023; Turner et al., 2022)

CONCEPT OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

The primary responsibility of any government is that of delivering services that is needed by the citizen, this forms the basis of representative government and in a broader sense the social contract theory. Where the people agree to select a few that will carry out the provision of these needed services on their behalf. Service delivery has been ascribed as the main essence of public administration Olowu (2002) as cited in (Egugbo, 2020). This is attributed to the fact that public administration is the machinery that carries out the will of the state, the will here entails provision of what is demanded by the citizens through its representatives through formulating and implementing of policies.

FROM THE CONCEPT OF E-SERVICE TO E-GOVERNMENT SERVICE

As a concept, e-services first emerged within the private sector domain and has received various attention and interpretation partly due to its wide applicability also in the public sector. E-service, is a broader concept that entails services rendered to the need audience online through the internet. Despite the divergence in conceptualization there exist commonalities that e-service entails using information and communication technology for delivery of services to public and private sector (Scupola et al., 2009), which makes e-services more "user-orientated," than traditional means of providing services, these come with benefits such as ease, openness, and efficiency, which solidifies citizens engagement with government (Reddick & Zheng, 2017).

E-services among other things includes information services provided to the user online in addition to the services carried out at the background which the user of the service have no knowledge about. It further encompasses all services delivered digitally be it the end-user of the service is an individual "citizen" or business "organization" (Shahzad et al, 2024). As such e-services also include the back-end administrative services that are used to generate the electronic services enjoyed by an end-user. The application of e-government is projected to expand services provided by the government (Firman et al, 2023).

The term e-service has many applications and can be found in both public and private sector. The two dominant application areas of e-services are E-business (or e-commerce) and E-government (or non-commerce) (Kvasnicova et al., 2015). E-business (E-commerce) is basically concerned with the private sector enabling the

buying and selling of goods and services using electronic means basically online. On the other hand, e-government services is government rendering services to citizens online, this could be to an individual or to an organization. Computer Language Company (2009) in line with this, argued that the term e-services is a broad term for services provided on the internet. This could be by the government or private sector, for proper distinction between e-services provided by the government and also the private sector the latter could be referred to as e-government services.

Eneanya (2009) argued that e-government has transformed public administration to a means of providing modern and qualitative services which should be applied in all public sectors. This has brought a shift from the traditional way to an electronic method using e-services. Simply put, e-government have revolutionized the way people get access to their need provided by the government using information and communication technology. This is in line with the opinion of Oloyede (2024) when he expressed, e-government allows for government information and services to be at the reach of citizens and private sector online, which implies e-government services.

E-SERVICES AND EFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY

Traditional public administration has struggled to meet the growing demand and complexities of modern societies partly attributed to administrative bottle neck, red tape, individual presence before service is provided and also paper and pen. E-government particularly e-government services tends to bridge this gap by allowing for services to be rendered virtually. In developing countries, Khamis and Van Der Weide (2017) what can be provided online such as basic information, collection of form, submission and services that can be paid online needs to be done in government offices in person.

The advent of e-government services allows for public good and information to be provided to citizenry 24 hours a day, 7 days a week while at the same time reducing human physical contacts, this gives room for government to restructure its operations and organizational settings. The restructuring of this government operations from offline to online through e-government services can improve public service delivery (Sharma et al., 2021), which conversely leads to good governance. This is partly because online services have become an essential tool for bringing up-to date and enhancing service delivery as well as public governance through electronic data collection and analysis, identifying problems, formulation of policies, governments can easily obtain large data and extract useful insights via advanced analytical tools to better meet public needs and address challenges (Chen & Chen, 2024).

E-government, particularly e-government services go beyond the mere automation of services to be accessible online through electronic means but also include the backend configuration which is the foundation or back bone of the entire system and also the inter-connection of various government units, departments and agencies in order to form a system which tends to improve efficiency in administration and the delivery of public good. An attempt to change how government provides public good from the traditional to modern is among the very core of why government adopts e-government services. The successfulness of e-government and e-government services in particular is not automatically assured due to government adopting e-government, but largely depends on the nature of the public service orientation (Aritonang, 2017).

Chen et al (2009) express what can be understood to be the benefits of e-government services these are:

1. **Removed Boundaries:** e-government services remove boundaries and allow for the integration of governmental institution as well as the services they provide. This will further ensure the improvement

of not only services but also the enhancing the agencies.

2. **Enhanced Accessibility:** traditional form of government providing services has come to be difficult for the citizens to access. As there is the need to be physically present before the service can be initiated, with the emergence of e-government services this has bridge the gap between the rural and the urban, services can be utilized irrespective of time or the citizens location.
3. **Improved Service Quality:** The underlying goal of the electronic government is to improve service quality for all citizens. It represents convenient and reliable services with lower compliance costs as well as higher quality and value.
4. **Integrated Agencies:** the integration of government institutions leads to proficient benefits to not only government but also the citizens. Additionally, the integration of government institution or agency become useful when such agencies have similar as such it becomes a one stop shop for government services.
5. **Improved Reputation:** e-government services increase the reputation of government, as governments that have adopted e-government services are seen to be modern and even attract tourist, this is prevalent in smart cities.
6. **Greater Citizen Participation:** citizens contribution to government is made easier with e-government services, this can be done at the comfort of the citizen with the need to be present at any government office.

E-government services improve services provided by the government through the utilization of ICT particularly the internet and other related computer devices. These allows for the bridging of various factors that might negatively affect the quality of services provided, as Alzahrani et al (2018) argued that services are efficiently delivered to citizens, businesses and government when e-services are adopted.

QUALITY OF E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The effectiveness of governmental services is affected by both internal and external factors, similarly the quality of e-government services depends on the system design, caliber of employees, organizational leadership and also the nature of the citizens towards ICT. To buttress this, Zheng (2015) opined that the success depends on government political will, availability of resources, education, peer pressure and general internet usage of the citizens.

Assessing services provided by government has come to be a means of knowing the efficiency and effectiveness of government institutions in relation to meeting the needs of the public. Given this, quality service simply means identifying and scoring the service that was intended to be provided by the government and also how the users of such services i.e. citizen expect for it to be provided as well as what was provided. Quality service represents the comparison between customers' expectations of how a company or organization should perform and the service performance that customers perceive (Chinenye, 2017). In this context quality of service at its core is concerned with improving the ability and capacity of government online services, so as to provide the needed service to citizens in the best manner that is efficient and effective which then creates satisfaction on the path of the citizen.

Chinenye (2017) expresses that SERVQUAL which was proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithami and Berry in 1985 has come to be a popular criteria for gauging service quality, although initially designed for marketing environment in the private sector it has come to be used in e-commerce (Ellitan & Suhartatik, 2023), Others include E-Service Quality Collier and Bienstock (2006), E-S-Qual Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Malhotra

(2005), Quality of Electronic Services by Fassnacht and Koese (2006) to name a few. Given that the core functions of the public and private sector cannot properly align, Papadomichelaki and Mentzas (2012) saw the need to design E-GovQual as a service quality scale in the public sector within the purview of e-government services. Particularly, Aljukhadar et al (2022) using 21 items from 7 dimension for measuring government websites developed (EGSQUAL) which is an acronym for E-Government Service Quality.

These 7 dimension that are used for measurement are *Interactivity & Personalization*: The privileges given to the website user to modify the appearance, and feel as well as provide interaction with the website user; *Information quality*: entails that information provided on the website is correct, relevant and recent; *Quality of Assistance*: this dimension deals with supporting and solving problems that might encounter; *Ease of Use*: the level at which user find it simple to navigate the website and lacks errors; *Website Functionality*: the speed at which the website responds to command; *Privacy & Security*: degree to which users data are protected and free from secured; *Aesthetics*: the design of the website, such as how appealing are the font style colours, pictures and other elements that beautify the website (Aljukhadar et al, 2022).

ICT IN BORNO

Kim (2007) explained factors that affects e-government performance as educational status of the citizens, level of economic development and wellbeing, penetration and usage of internet, protection of individual freedom and civil liberties and government effectiveness. Putting this in mind, the success of e-government services is attributed to not only the ability and capacity of the e-government service system itself, but also the ICT literacy level of the citizens, government perspectives to ICT and good governance.

The Borno State government while understanding the above factors for the success of e-government services and e-government at large, in March 2024 established the Borno State Information Communication Development Agency (BICTDA) to oversee the integration of ICT into the state by enhancing the state's digital infrastructure and economy. To this end, the agency will intensify internet connection, making ICT tools more accessible, creating opportunity for all citizens to be educated in ICT. Particularly, it will serve as a driver towards integrating Borno State into Nigeria's Digital economy, manage and enhance digitalization in the state public service, promote ICT innovation and enterprise, establish and maintain secure ICT infrastructure and systems, as well as supervising critical ICT projects across the state public service. Since its inception BICTDA has organized various workshops aimed at training civil servants and students with regards to e-government and ICT in general (Adeyemi, 2024; Muhammad, 2024).

Despite its establishment after other states ICT agencies such as Plateau Information Communication Development Agency, Anambra Information Communication Development Agency, Edo Information Communication Development Agency to name a few and been 8 months old, BICTDA in 2024 emerged the first runner among 23 states in the 12th National Council on Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy (NCCIDE) with the category of Digital Technology Human Capital Development (Umar, 2024).

For the purpose of save guarding government information and improving communication process in Borno State Civil Service, the state government in 2024 launched its e-staff WebApp. The application is expected to improve information safety against breach, make government communication easier and improve the image of government (Matazu, 2024). Furthermore, the Borno state government is currently establishing ICT learning centers in all 27 local government in its bid to deepen digital skills for enhancing the capacity and capabilities of the citizens. This is to make citizen of Borno State to be equipped with the necessary skills needed to compete in a global world digital space. Additionally, the state government has signed different partnership and collaborated

with various ICT firms to ensure the state benefits from the experiences in the private sector.

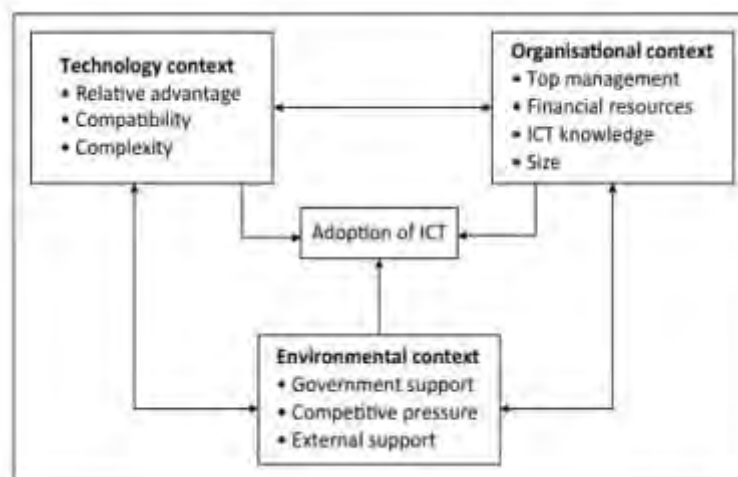
BORNO STATE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SERVICE AND E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The Borno State Geographic Information Service (BOGIS) was established in 2019 by the Borno State Government to replace the defunct Ministry of Land and Survey, with the core objective of computerizing all land transactions, record and information for a robust and effective land administration system throughout the state (Borno State Gazette, 2019). Some of the specific responsibilities of the service is to ensure that efficient and reliable services and secured products are made available to all stake holders and to advance good governance and transparency of land management in the State, to introduce, implement, and sustain best practices for land tenure ship and title certification in the state, the administration and management of land matters in the State such as title, registration, searches among others. All these will be carried out utilizing the best possible ICT resources.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Despite scholars like Heeks and Bailur (2007) arguing the field of e-government only provides various growth stage models and yet to generate a theory of its own, theories and models within the field of information system such as TAM, Extended TAM, UTAUT, Diffusion of Innovation Theory, to name a few can be applied in explaining various domains of e-government including e- government services. This paper will be guided by Technology, Organization and Environment Framework (TOE) to understand the adoption of e-government services and Simple Integrated Model by Jayashree and Marthandan (2010) to determine the growth level of BOGIS website as a guide.

TOE was propounded by Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990) consisting of three core variables that are suitable for this study as depicted in figure 1.



Source: Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990).

TOE attempts to describes factors affecting the adoption of technology at organizational level in relation to the technology itself, the organization and the environment where the firm exist.

Technological Context: this refers to the already existing technology that is been used by the firm and also those technologies in the market that the firm is yet to utilize. Already existing technologies used by a firm gives foundation for the kind of technology the firm can adopt in the future and also the pace at which it adopts such

new innovations (Baker, 2011).

Organizational Context: the organizational context here entails the characteristics of the firm i.e. organization such as its size, scope management structure, leadership (Oliveira & Martins, 2011). Baker (2011) observed that slack and size are the most considered factors in the organization context that mostly affects the adoption of innovation. There appear to be two divergent views with regards to the influence of slack on firm adoption of technology, researches like that of March and Simon (1958) observed that slack do affects the adoption by affirms. On the contrary the work of Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990), have both expressed that the size of a firm is more likely to influences its adoption of technology than slack.

Environment Context: the environment aspect looks at the surrounding in which the firm i.e. organization carries out its activities, it simply entails the dynamics within the environment the firm operates. Increase in competition have been proven to enhance the adoption of technology, additionally, firms that are doing better within the environment tend to use technology more than their counterparts and are also capable of influencing other firms into using technology (Kamath and Liker, 1994).

Oliveira & Martins (2011) argued that TOE gives researchers analytical guide that can be used to explaining the assimilation and adoption of various information and technology innovation

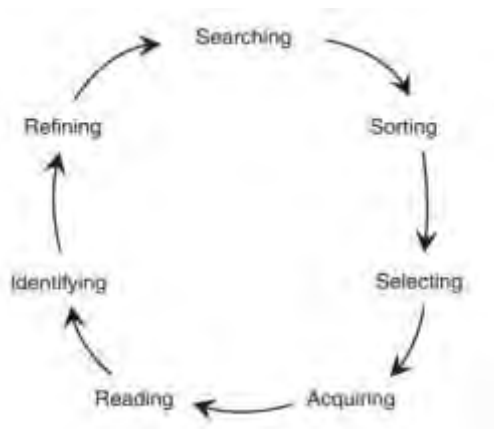
Simple Integrated Model

Jayashree and Marthandan (2010) proposed their Simple Integrated Model which expressed that e-government services have four growth stages which are:

- i. **First Stage (Web Presence):** This is the first stage where the government comes online offering information to the citizens, which was before now only available at certain offices and during working hours. Now the citizens can gain certain information anytime irrespective of their location, although citizens are seen as mere consumer of information and can't respond to the government as information is one way which is from the government to the user.
- ii. **Second Stage (Interaction):** Here at this second stage the government enters into a dynamic phase, as simple interaction between the government and the citizen starts at this stage. From mere consumers of government information, the citizen can now respond to the government via the system, communication becomes two ways from both sides.
- iii. **Third Stage (Transaction):** In this third stage, the users are matured enough to transact with the government in the form of paying taxes and duties, filing of returns, obtaining license etc. the security and privacy part of the government and citizens are taken care at this stage as during the cause of transaction sensitive information are used and exchanged.
- iv. **Fourth Stage (Integration):** This fourth stage involves both internal and external integration. For external interfaces, governments build a single and unified portal providing integrated and seamless services instead of separate and distributed services. Jayashree and Marthandan explained that in other for the government to achieve this it should begin an internal integration to reengineer existing processes by reducing bottlenecks and intermediaries.
- v. **Fifth Stage (E Society):** The fifth stage is the e society stage, the integration process when it is reaching its maturity leads to the emergence of e society. The e society includes all elements in the society that is social, economic, legal, political, demographic, global and technological factors that are seen in every day environment.

METHODOLOGY

The study uses a qualitative method of analyzing documents, social medias and also online services provided through the website of Borno State Geographic Information Service. Literatures reviewed followed the hermeneutic circle for understanding literature proposed by Boell and Cezec-Kecmanovic (2011) in figure 2. Below:



The above ensured that related empirical, conceptual and reliable documents were given consideration for the research.

The paper uses Simple Integrated Model by Jayashree and Marthandan (2010) for identifying the growth stage of the website, similarly for assessing the website quality the EGSQUAL seven dimension proposed by Aljukhadar et al (2022) was used as a scale. Additionally, TOE model was used as a guide for the adoption of e-government services by BOGIS.

DISCUSSION

The online presence of BOGIS include its website, email, helpline, an official Facebook page, and also an official X (Twitter) account where enquiry could easily be made saving citizen the time and resources of visiting their physical office. The website also has various forms that can be downloaded online, although after making payment for the needed services which cannot be done online on the website but through direct bank deposit. Citizens are then required to take back the hard copy of the filled form along with proof of payment and other hard copies of relevant document such as identification card, structural drawings and calculations, architectural design, mechanical/electrical drawing, site analysis report, BOGIS sketch plan, soil investigation report and service approval such as fire and police report. Depending on the need of the citizen about three copies of the mentioned documents are required to be submitted. It was realized that registration of a landed property at BOGIS take averagely 1 month and 8 days from the end of the institution, other factors that determines the duration of the registration depends on the citizen's effort to the process. Going by the e-services growth stage by Jayashree and Marthandan (2010) the BOGIS website can be categorized under the second stage of interaction as communication on the website is two ways through giving room for citizens to interact via filling of enquiry form online.

S/N	GROWTH STAGE	BOGIS
1.	Web Presence	√
2.	Interaction	√
3.	Transaction	x
4.	Integration	x
5.	E-society	x

Figure 3. the growth stage of e-government service in Borno State Geographic Information Service, Bello et al (2025)

With regards to service quality, using Aljukhadar et al (2020) EGSQUAL six dimensions (interactivity and personalization, information quality, quality of assistance, ease of use, website functionality and aesthetics) were able to be measured due to the nature of the study with the website scoring four (information quality, ease of use, website functionality and aesthetics) out of the six dimensions. A survey of the website indicates that there was the absence of interactivity and personalization feature; information provided was of high quality as will be expected by citizens; there was no quality of assistance via the website, although users can send enquiry through the website none of the enquiry sent by the researchers was responded to during the cause of the study; the website was easy to use and free from errors; pages within the website loaded fast and documents properly named for citizens to download which indicates website functionality, although hyperlink from the website to the institution's social media pages were inactive; the website has good design layout and easy to find menus with motion pictures showing activities of the institution.

S/N	EGSQUAL DIMENSIONS	BOGIS
1.	Interactivity and Personalization	x
2.	Information Quality	√
3.	Quality Assistance	x
4.	Ease of Use	√
5.	Website Functionality	√
6.	Privacy and Security	-
7.	Aesthetics	√

Figure 4. The state of EGSQUAL in Borno State Geographic Information Service, Bello et al (2025).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the foregoing, Borno State has come to embrace ICT and has achieved various miles stones. The creation of ICT Hubs in its 27 LGAs is a foundation towards making the citizens having a high e-readiness to match the activities of BICTDA in the digital economy of the State and Nigeria as a whole. The adoption of e-government services by BOGIS has improved their services and has made it easy for citizens to engage more with the institution at their comfort, the website can be improved to further reduce human physical contact. This rightly aligns with the SGD goal of improving government institutions, peace and justice. Additionally, within this context, the TOE frameworks implies that BOGIS and Borno State government can easily adopt complex technological innovations given that they both are already adopting ICT, Nigeria as an environment where Borno state exist is encircled with opportunities and competition for ICT such as the Federal government policies on ICT and other states establishing their agencies for ICT has been partly contributing factors for Borno State imbibing what exist in its environment.

This study hereby, recommends that the Borno State government through BICTDA should institutionalize e-government including e-administration and e-services in all its ministries, departments and agencies while aiming to improve service delivery to the citizens. The Borno State Geographic information system should improve the already existing e-government services provided to ensure citizens can create their portals which will allow for payment, upload of relevant documents, download and printing of certificate via the website. This feature will improve service quality and reduce visit to the physical office. It is also recommended that an empirical study should be carried out with users of the e-government services as respondents to further understand the service quality of BOGIS.

References

- Adeyemi, Z. (2024). BICTDA: Borno state to bolster digital literacy. Retrieved from <https://technologytimes.ng/bictda-borno-state-to-bolster-digital-literacy/> on 12 January, 2025
- Aljukhadar, M., Belisle, J. F., Dantas, D. C., Sénécal, S., & Titah, R. (2022). Measuring the Service Quality of Governmental Sites: Development and Validation of the e-Government Service Quality (EGSQUAL) Scale . *Electronic Commerce Research and Application*, 1-44.
- Alzahrani, L., Al-Karaghoul, W., & Weerakkody, V (2018). Investigating the impact of citizens' trust toward the successful adoption of e-government: A multigroup analysis of gender, age, and internet experience. *Information System Management*. 35 (2), 124–146.
- Aritonang, D. M. (2017). The Impact of E-Government System on Public Service Quality in Indonesia. *European Scientific Journal*, 13(35), 99-111.
- Baker, J. (2011). The Technology Organization Environment Framework. In Y.K. Dwivedi et al. (eds.), *Information Systems Theory: Explaining and Predicting Our Digital Society*, Vol. 1, Integrated Series in Information Systems 28.
- Boell, S., & Cezec-Kecmanovic, D. (2011). Are systematic reviews better, less biased and of higher quality? ECIS 2011 Proceedings. Paper 223 (<http://aisel.aisnet.org/ecis2011/> 223)
- Borno State Government. (2019). Borno State Government of Nigeria Gazette. No. 49, Vol44, 5th December, 2019. Retrieved from [https://bogis.bornostate.gov.ng/assets/web/docx/1.%20Borno%20Geographic%20Infoatio%20Service%20\(BOGIS\)%20Law%202019.pdf](https://bogis.bornostate.gov.ng/assets/web/docx/1.%20Borno%20Geographic%20Infoatio%20Service%20(BOGIS)%20Law%202019.pdf) on 21th January, 2025.
- Chen, Y., et al. (2009). Electronic Government Implementation: A Comparison between Developed and Developing Countries. In Mehdi Khosrow-Pour. *E-Government Diffusion, Policy, and Impact: Advanced Issues and Practices* (p. 89-105). New York, NY: Information Science Reference
- Chen, Y., & Chen, Z. (2024). Can e-government online services offer enhanced governance support? A national-level anaysis based on fsQCA and NCA. *Journal of Innovation and Knowledge*, 1-15.
- Chinenye, O. G. (2017). E –Governance and Public Service Delivery: A study of the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board [JAMB] in the South- East, Nigeria. . *Unpublished Ph.D Thesis* .
- Collier, Joel E. & Carol C. Bienstock. (2006). Measuring service quality in e-retailing. *Journal of Service Research*, 8(3), 260-275.
- Computer Language Company. 2009. Computer Desktop Encyclopedia. 2009. Retrieved from <http://lookup.computerlanguage.com/hostapp/search?cid=C999999&def=52d7365727669636573.htm>
- Egugbo, C. C. (2020). Public Service Delivery in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: Issues, Challenges and Prospects for Socio-Economic Development. *Journal of Public Administration, Finance and Law*(17/2020), 72-80.
- Eneanya, A. N. (2009). Public administration in Nigeria: principles, techniques and applications. Lagos: Concept Publishers.
- Fassnacht, Martin & Ibrahim Koese. (2006). Quality of electronic services conceptualizing and testing a hierarchical model. *Journal of Service Research*, 9(1), 19-37.
- Firman, F., Sahrul, S., & Ramadoan, S. (2023). Analysis of Efforts in the Development of Local Government: E-Government and Public Service Management. *Jurnal Studi Ilmu Pemerintahan*, 4(2), 24-36.
- Heeks, R. (2001). Understanding e governance for development. Manchester, London: Institute for Development Policy and Management.
- Heeks, R., & Bailur, S. (2007). Analyzing e-government research: Perspectives, philosophies, theories, methods, and practice. *Government Information Quarterly*, 24, 243-265.
- Hejazinia, R. (2021). Electronic service risk pattern and ranking by using fuzzy TOPSIS technique. *International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economics*, 8(3), 143-155.
- Kamath, R. R., & Liker, J. K. (1994). A second look at japanese product development. Harvard Business

Review, 72(6), 154–170

Khamis, M. M. & Van Der Weide, T. P. (2017). Conceptual Diagram Development for Sustainable e Government Implementation. *Electronic Journal of E-Government*, 15 (1), 33-43.

Kim, C.-K. (2007). A cross-national analysis of global e-government. *Public Organization Review*, 7(4), 317–329

Kvasnicova, T., Kremenova, I., & Fabus, J. (2016). From an Analysis of E-services Definitions and Classifications to the Proposal of New E-service Classification. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 192-196.

Madon, S. (2009). *E governnace for development: A focus on rural India*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1958). *Organizations*. New York: Wiley

Matazu, H., K. (2024). Borno launches App to tackle information leakage, others. Retrieved on 21 January, 2025 from <https://dailytrust.com/orno-launches-app-to-tackle-information-leakage-others/>

Muhammad, H, A. (2024) Borno set to launch ICT training for secondary school students Retrieved from <https://yen.ng/yen2/2024/12/orno-set-to-launch-ict-training-for-secondary-school-students> on 12 January, 2025

Murodullaevich, M. N., & Sharifjanovna, Q. M. (2023). Stages of Introduction of Electronic Government. *International Journal of Research in Commerce, IT, Engineering, and Social Sciences*, 17(1), 15-17.

Nnamani, D., Asomba, I. U., & Egbuagu, U. B. (2023). E-governance and Service Delivery in Nigeria Public Sector: An Overview. *Journal of Policy and Development*, 13(4), 22-33.

Ojo, J. S. (2014). E-governance: An imperative for sustainable grass root development in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 6 (4), 77-83.

Oliveira, T & Martins, M, F. (2011). Literature Review of Information Technology Adoption Models at Firm Level. *The Electronic Journal Information Systems Evaluation*. 14 (1), pp110- 121

Oloyede, F. (2024). Electronic Governnace: Improving Service Delivery in Nigeria. *PERSPEKTIF*, 13(2), 609-616.

Papadomichelaki, X., & Mentzas, G. (2012). E-GovQual: A multiple-item scale for assessing e government service quality. *Government information quarterly*, 29(1), 98-109

Parasuraman, A., Valarie A. Zeithaml, & Arvind Malhotra. (2005). E-S-Qual: A multiple-Item scale for assessing electronic service quality. *Journal of Service Research*, 7(3), 213-233.

Reddick C & Zheng Y (2017) Determinants of citizens' mobile apps future use in Chinese local governments: An analysis of survey data. *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy* 11(2): 213–23

Scupola, A., Henten, A., & Nicolajsen, W. H. (2009, July-September). E-Services: Characteristics, scope and conceptual strengths. *International Journal of E-Services and Mobile Applications*, 1(3), 1-16.

Shahzad, K., Tahir, Z., Cheema, U. A., & Ahmad, M. A. (2024). Barriers Towards Adoption of E-Government Services. *Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies*, 10(2), 143-154.

Sharma, S. K., Metri, B., Dwivedi, Y. K., & Rana, N. P. (2021). Challenges common service centers (CSCs) face in delivering e-government services in rural India. *Government Information Quarterly*, 38,(2) 1-14

Teicher, O. Hughes, & N. Dow. (2002). "E-government: a new route to public sector quality," *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, vol. 12, no. 6, pp. 384-393

Tornatzky, L. G., & Fleischer, M. (1990). *Processes of technological innovation*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books..

Turner, M., Prasajo, E., & Sumarwono, R. (2022). The Challenge of Beforming Big Bureaucracy in Indonesia. *Policy Studies*, 42(2), 333–351.

Umar, I. (2024) Borno ICT Agency Receives National Recognition for Digital Human Capital Development Retrieved from <https://kanempress.org/orno-ict-agency-receivesnational-recognition-fordigital-human-capital-development/> on 12 January, 2025

United Nations . (2024). *E-government survey 2024*. New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Retrieved from <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/>

Vilfan, M., Thijs, N., Karadaža, E., Drita, K. S., Puzic, T., Gjorgjievski, J., & Milectic, J. (2018).

Comparative Study on Service Delivery. Montenegro: Regional School of Public Administration.

Zheng, Y., & Manoharan, A. (2015). Does External Environment Affect E-Government? A Cross-Country Analysis. In Christopher G. Reddick, & Leonidas Anthopoulos. (2015). *Information and Communication Technologies in Public Administration: Innovations from Developed Countries*(p. 62-76). Boca Raton, Florida: CRC Press.

AN EXPLORATION STUDY OF INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR ON TAX REFORM AMONG STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI

Falmata Abdulkarim Galtimari¹

Department of Public Administration,
Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

Emmanuel Amiel Usman²

Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

Maryam Bomo Zarma³

Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

Bilkisu Mahdi Abubakar⁴

Department of Public Administration,
Faculty of Art and Social Sciences,
Gombe State University, Gombe, Nigeria

Corresponding Author:

Falmata Abdulkarim Galtimari,

Falmii26@gmail.com/08037701097

Abstract

The study examines information seeking behavior on tax reform among students in university of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. The objective of the study is to determine sources and channels of information on tax reform among University of Maiduguri students. the population of the study was 48,017. Using mixed method approach, data were collected and analyzed from various sources, including questionnaire, interviews and secondary data. Proportionate Stratified Sampling Technique was used to select beneficiaries. In an effort to understand how students seek information relevant to their research in today's environment of universal electronic access, a correlation framework is built and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was applied to the survey results from 748 students cutting across faculty engineering, Science, management science, social sciences, and faculty of education. This was necessitated by the debate on current tax reform, which requires individuals, especially students to seek and understand information before engaging any discussion with relation to changes in tax policies. the study revealed that there is need for more target, transparent, and accessible communication strategies regarding tax reforms. It is thus recommended that Government and Policy makers should utilize Social media platforms to ensure that wide range of students are reached out to and issues related to tax reforms are addressed.

Keywords:

Nigeria, Federal System of
Government, budget
system

Introduction

Information is described as processed of structured data. It is one of the essential commodities needed by the mankind in all walks of life. Information means the communication of knowledge about an event of a given condition or the spread of knowledge derived from observations, study or experience. The need for information

tax policy reforms in Nigeria such as the 2024 tax reform is a compelling need to diversify the revenue portfolio for the country in order to complement the volatility of crude oil prices and also to promote fiscal sustainability as well as economic viability at lower tiers of government.

Nigeria is governed by a Federal System of Government; hence its fiscal operations also adhere to the same principle. This has serious implications on how the tax system is managed in the country. The government's fiscal power is based on a three-tiered tax structure divided between the federal, state and local governments, each of which has different tax jurisdictions. Today, there are more than 40 different taxes and levies are shared by all the three tiers of government. According to Odusola (2006) Nigeria operates on a cash budget system, where proposals for expenditure are always anchored to revenue estimate proposals and projections. This facilitates determining the optimal tax rate for a given level of expenditure.

Also, the accuracy in revenue projection is vital for devising an appropriate framework for sustainable fiscal management, and this can be realized only if information on tax reforms are undertaken on existing tax policies in order to achieve some improvement. However, Information-seeking behavior which refers to the action's individuals take to search for and obtain information to fulfill specific needs or address particular issues has been mean especially among students in university of Maiduguri.

The current tax reform requires individuals, especially students to seek and understand information before engaging any debate on any need for changes in tax policies. This is because the tax reform is so crucial for economic development, as it influences government revenue generation, social services, and public trust in the administration. For example, the 2024 tax reform may be aimed at enhancing tax collection systems, improving transparency, and increasing public awareness about tax responsibilities. Unfortunately, understanding how the students, particularly in conflict-affected regions such as Maiduguri, Borno State, to engage with and seek information about the tax reforms remain under-explored (Bird, 2015). Conversely Nigeria, information on tax reforms more especially, its generation, management and utilization have become increasingly important as the government seeks to diversify its revenue sources and reduce over-reliance on oil exports (Bello, 2018). However, for these reforms to succeed, the public—particularly the community leaders, industrialists, manufacturers, traditional institutions, students etc must be well-informed and educated. The students in university of Maiduguri, represent a critical demographic that must be engaged in tax reform processes, especially considering the state's challenges, such as the prolonged insurgency and high levels of poverty (Adebayo & Oloruntoba, 2020). Similarly, the students who are directly or indirectly impacted by these reforms, play a key role in shaping the future of tax administration in the region. Information-seeking behavior therefore is the ways and manners in which individuals search for, access, and use information becomes crucial in understanding how young people form opinions and act on tax matters. Factors such as access to modern communication technologies, education, and social networks significantly influence their information-seeking patterns (Stern, 2008).

Thus, insecurity and displacement faced by the students which might have affected their access to information as most of the institutions remained closed and this resulted to dearth of research materials, under funding of public institutions, poor governance etc. These challenges could limit their ability to seek information on important matters such as tax reforms. Consequently, understanding the information-seeking behavior of the students in this context will allow policymakers to design more effective strategies to reach this group, promote tax literacy, and foster engagement with the reforms (Ojo, 2019). More so, analyzing the sources, channels, and methods of communication that resonate with the students can assist in improving awareness and participation in the tax system.

Information is used attributively for objects like documents that are referred to as information. Information is regarded as having the imparting knowledge or communicating information that is instructive. However, in spite of the need for information on the importance of tax policy reform towards enhancing economic and social development, it often lead to confusion and misunderstanding among taxpayers. This is especially in Borno State, where numerous challenges, attributed due to insecurity, unemployment, poverty and economic hardship, compound the issue of tax compliance among the tax payers. Many students lack access to clear and accessible information about tax reforms, its implications, and its obligations. Also, the complexity of tax laws and dearth of literature further hinder understanding. Furthermore, government is also too economical of the truth particularly about the tax generation, management and distributions. Additionally, ineffective information dissemination methods, such as reliance on traditional channels, fail to reach the tech-savvy students. Mistrust and distrust in government institutions, stemming from past experiences, also deter the student's people from seeking clarification or agreeing with tax laws. However, economic constraints, such as poverty, unemployment, inflation, and financial hardship contributed to challenges in assessing the channels through which students seek information about tax reforms. The students perception of information about tax reforms and factors influencing the information-seeking behavior on tax reforms may force them to prioritize basic needs over tax obligations. Therefore, to address these challenges apparently there is need to educate the student and community in general on the importance of the reform. For example, to improve tax compliance, through revenue collection, and ultimately would contribute to the development of Borno State and Nigeria in general. Although, the call for tax policy reforms dated back to 1991 and 2003, as well as the yearly amendments given in the annual budget, were all geared towards addressing this issue. However, not much has been achieved. It is against this backdrop that this research attempt to address.

Objective of the Study

- i. To identify the channels through which students seek information about tax reforms in university of Maiduguri.
- ii. To assess the perception of information about tax reforms among the students in university of Maiduguri.
- iii. To investigate the factors influencing the information-seeking behavior on tax reforms in university of Maiduguri.
- iv. To analyze the respond on receiving information about tax reforms among student in university of Maiduguri.

Hypotheses

- Ho¹: There is no significant relationship between perception and respond tax reforms among student in university of Maiduguri.
- Ho²: There is no significant relationship between perception and factors influencing the information-seeking behavior on tax reforms in university of Maiduguri.

Literature Review

Conceptual clarification

A Tax is mandatory *financial* contributions, *charges or levy* imposed on a taxpayer levied on individuals or corporations by a government entity whether local, regional, or national. It can also be regarded as revenues financing government activities, including public works and services such as roads and schools, or programs such as Social Security and Medicare to support government spending and public expenditures. However, in economics, taxes fall on whoever pays the burden of the tax, whether this is the entity being taxed, such as a

business, or the end consumers of the business's goods. While in accounting perspective, there are various taxes to consider, including payroll taxes, federal and state income taxes, and sales taxes. Income tax is a percentage of generated income that is relinquished to the state or federal government. Payroll tax includes percentage withheld from an employee's pay by an employer, who pays it to the government on the employee's behalf to fund Medicare and Social Security programs. Corporate tax is a percentage of corporate profits taken as tax by the government to fund federal programs. Sales tax also are Taxes levied on certain goods and services; varies by jurisdiction, as Property tax is Based on the value of land and property assets. Tariff is Taxes on imported goods; imposed with the aim of strengthening domestic businesses. Estate tax—Rate applied to the fair market value (FMV) of property in a person's estate at the time of death; the total estate must exceed thresholds set by state and federal governments.

Revenue

Revenue is the money generated from normal business operations, calculated as the average sales price times the number of units sold. It is the top line (or gross income) figure from which costs are subtracted to determine net income. Revenue is also known as sales on the income statement. In accounting, revenue is the total amount of income generated by the sale of goods and services related to the primary operations of the business. While commercial revenue may also be referred to as sales or as turnover. Some companies receive revenue from interest, royalties, or other fees. "Revenue" may refer to income in general, or it may refer to the amount, in a monetary unit, earned during a period of time.

Revenue management

Management is the process of organizing people and resources to achieve organizational goals. It can also be regarded as a skill that is used in businesses and other social organizations. While, revenue management is when you use data and analytic to plan and optimize your pricing. It helps you predict customer behavior so you can maximize product availability and pricing. When you understand your customers, you can sell to them at the right time, at the right price, and through the right sales channels. The revenue management process involves a series of steps to determine customer behaviors. It then uses this information to set and adjust pricing.

Information-Seeking Behavior

Information-seeking behavior refers to the processes through which individuals identify, acquire, and use information to meet their needs (Wilson, 2000). This behavior can be influenced by a variety of factors, including personal needs, the perceived relevance of the information, available resources, and external influences (Kuhlthau, 2004). Studies have shown that information-seeking behavior can be intentional or spontaneous, depending on the individual's motivation and the perceived importance of the information (Dervin, 1992). The rapid technological advancements and the prevalence of social media used by the youths have transformed how they seek information. A study by Madden et al. (2013) found that young people are more likely to seek information through digital platforms, such as social media, search engines, and websites, compared to traditional media like newspapers and TV. This change in information-seeking behavior is particularly relevant when discussing tax reforms, as information dissemination via digital platforms can significantly affect the youth's understanding of complex issues like taxation (Liu et al., 2015).

Factors Influencing Information-Seeking Behavior on Tax Reforms

The factors that influence information-seeking behavior on tax reforms among youth include personal, social, and technological factors. Personal Factors Personal motivation and relevance of the information are key drivers of information-seeking behavior. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), individuals are

more likely to seek information when they believe it will benefit them directly. For the youth, understanding the implications of tax reforms on their future economic well-being or career prospects may motivate them to seek information (Miller et al., 2018). Additionally, educational background has been identified as a crucial factor in information-seeking behavior. The higher the level of education, the more likely individuals are to actively seek out information on complex subjects like tax reforms (Herman, 2016). **Social Influence** Social networks, including family, friends, and peer groups, play a significant role in the information-seeking behavior of youth. A study by Johnson (2011) found that young people are more likely to engage in discussions about public policy issues, such as tax reforms, when encouraged by their social circles. Furthermore, group dynamics within educational or community settings often influence youths' decisions to seek information on such topics (Bennet & Segerberg, 2013). **Technological Influence** The rise of digital technologies, particularly social media, has revolutionized information-seeking behavior. Youth, who are typically tech-savvy, are more likely to access information through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube (Prensky, 2001). These platforms enable instant access to a wide range of content, from news articles to opinion pieces and official government communications. However, the challenge lies in ensuring the credibility and reliability of the information accessed through these channels (Liu et al., 2015).

The Role of Government and Media

Governments play a pivotal role in shaping public understanding of tax reforms. Through public campaigns and educational initiatives, the youth can be engaged to better understand the reforms' significance. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2019), effective communication of tax reforms through media and public engagement increases the likelihood of public support and compliance. Furthermore, traditional media channels, such as radio, TV, and print media, continue to play a role in shaping the youth's understanding of policy changes (Fischer, 2014). However, the challenge lies in ensuring that these messages are tailored to the specific needs and preferences of younger audiences, who are more inclined to seek information via digital platforms.

Student Engagement on Tax Reform

Student's engagement in tax reforms is critical for the successful implementation of such policies. As future taxpayers and potential influences of policy, it is essential that the students are not only informed but also motivated to take an active role in discussions surrounding tax reforms. According to a study by Perri (2017), students' involvement in policy discussions can lead to greater understanding and more favorable attitudes toward reforms. Programs that incorporate interactive methods of information dissemination, such as online forums, debates, and workshops, can increase engagement and participation among young people (Herman, 2016).

Research Methodology

This study adopted mixed method approach, using a survey research design. 748 students cutting across faculty engineering, Science, management science, social sciences, and faculty of education were the respondents of the study. A purposive sampling technique was used. Descriptive statistics using frequency tables and percentage scores as well as mean and standard deviation were used in analyzing the data while The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the two-null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance, using the statistics Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	261	35
	Female	487	65
	Total	748	100
Age	18- 25	503	67
	26- 30	245	33
	Total	748	100
Category of the Student Respondents		748	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 1: Provides detailed information of the breakdown of demographic characteristics of the respondents in this research study, it provides an insight into the work of the study sample population. This table gives the categories of respondents based on the key variables: gender, age and category of respondents. The table above shows that the sample population is divided into two categories: male and female. A total of 261 male respondents, constituting 35% of the total, while 487 female respondents which is 65% responded. This gender distribution shows that the study has more representation of female respondents than male. Researchers must take this gender disparity into account when analyzing the data because it may impact how broadly the findings may be applied and how much they apply to both sexes.

Response Rate

Out of the 880(100%) questionnaires distributed to the respondents in the libraries included in the study, 748 (85%) were completed, returned, and considered valid for analysis, whereas 132 (15%) were not returned. To carry out analytical study of user's awareness, utilization, and perception of artificial intelligence, the results were presented in the tables below:

Research Question 1: What is the channels through which students seek information about tax reforms in university of Maiduguri?

Table 1: The channels through which students seek information about tax reforms

Items	Frequency/%
Whatsapp	271 (36.2%)
Twitter	32 (4.3%)
Instagram	77 (10.3%)
Telegram	11 (1.5%)
Facebook	165 (22.1%)
Radio	26 (3.5%)
Television	150 (20%)
News paper	7 (0.9%)
Tiktok	9 (1.2%)
Total	748 (100%)

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 1. shows the channels through which students seek information about tax reforms in university of Maiduguri. It was revealed that whatsapp 271 (36.2%), Facebook 165 (22.1%), Instagram 77 (10.3%), telegram

11 (1.5%), twitter 32 (4.3%), radio 26 (3.5%), television 150 (20%), newspaper 7 (0.9%) and tiktok 9 (1.2%). It was revealed that majority of the respondents use Facebook, Whatsapp, Television, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram and Tiktok this has corroborated with the study of **Olumide and Adeyemi (2020)** examined social media usage and political engagement among Nigerian youth, noting that platforms like Facebook, whatsapp, and Twitter have become crucial tools for sharing opinions and engaging with government policies. The study also found a significant preference for WhatsApp for group discussions and information sharing, which aligns with the finding that WhatsApp had the highest usage rate 271 (36.2%) among respondents (Olumide & Adeyemi, 2020).

Research Question 2: What is the perception of information about tax reforms among the students in university of Maiduguri?

Table 2: The perception of information about tax reforms among the students

ITEMS	Responds				Total	Mean	SD
	SA	A	SD	D			
I feel the information provided on tax reforms is like am cheated	234 (31.3%)	402 (53.7%)	54 (7.2%)	58 (7.8%)	748(100%)	3.09	Agree
I loss hope for Nigeria always things are becoming worst	511 (68.3%)	194 (26.0%)	12 (1.6%)	31 (4.1%)	748(100%)	3.61	Agree
I am confident that the tax reforms will stimulate economic growth in Nigeria	45 (5.8%)	65 (8.7%)	510 (68.2%)	128 (17.1%)	748(100%)	1.53	Disagree
I think there is an imbalance in the distribution of resources and benefits resulting from the tax reforms	627 (83.9%)	104 (13.9%)	13 (1.7%)	4 (0.5%)	748(100%)	3.91	Agree
I believe the tax reforms are fair and equitable.	71 (9.5%)	55 (7.4%)	522 (69.8%)	100 (13.4%)	748(100%)	1.68	Disagree
I feel that there is a lack of communication and transparency from the government regarding tax reforms.	156 (20.9%)	412 (55.1%)	75 (10.0%)	105 (14.0%)	748(100%)	2.96	Agree
I feel that the tax reforms Is to the masses disadvantaged.	296 (39.6%)	276 (36.9%)	102 (13.6%)	74 (9.9%)	748(100%)	3.53	Agree
I believe the tax reforms will lead to increased poverty and inequality in Nigeria	521 (69.7%)	121 (16.2%)	102 (15.6%)	4 (0.5%)	748(100%)	3.51	Agree
I feel that the tax reforms in Nigeria primarily benefit the rich.	441 (59.0%)	117 (15.7%)	113 (15.1%)	77 (10.3%)	748(100%)	3.36	Agree
Implementing tax reform is good but now.	397 (53.1%)	285 (38.1%)	21 (2.8%)	45 (6.0%)	748(100%)	3.31	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 2. Perception of information about tax reforms among the students in university of Maiduguri, Nigeria. It was revealed that majority of the respondents affirmed that they felt the information provided on tax reforms is like a cheat to them (mean = 3.09). A participant stated that:

“I felt cheated by this reform, because government always comes with one policy or the other which does not favor me and others, so they are cheating on us Nigerians” (KII, 23th October, 2024)

The students testified that they loss hope of the country because thing are becoming difficult and as such there is no solution to it (mean = 3.61). A respondent argued that:

“Things are becoming be coming worst, our generation will definitely suffer, our leaders do not have us at heart, I pity myself and our generation”. (FGD, 23th October,

2024)

However, some students affirm that there is an imbalance in the distribution of resources and benefit with regards to the new tax reform (mean = 3.91), this was confirmed during the FGD with the students where the participants expressed dismay with regards to the new tax reform. A testimony from a participant stated thus,

“I think there is an imbalance in the distribution of resources and benefits resulting from the tax reforms, I said this because some states were favored more than other states, like Lagos was given much upper hand compared to the northern part of the country. (FGD, 23th October, 2024)

In fact, there are students who felt that, there is lack of communication and transparency from government on tax reform, in an effort to strengthen the country and build a peaceful society and resilience the government needs to consult leaders and stakeholders before taking some major reform like this. According to a participant:

“I feel that there is a lack of communication and transparency from the government regarding tax reforms, because our leaders and kings has to be consulted be for taking drastic majors like tax reform, the government has failed us, I don't know this Nigeria, there is problem”. (FGD, 23th October, 2024)

Data from the FGD is in compliance with the questionnaire findings about perception of information about tax reforms among the students, this has corroborated with the work of **Babatunde and Olatunji (2019)**, who explore the public's perception of Nigeria's tax policies and highlight significant concerns regarding the distribution of resources and benefits from these reforms. Their findings suggest that many Nigerians feel a sense of injustice and believe that tax policies disproportionately benefit the rich, aligning with the findings where respondents perceive tax reforms as disadvantageous to the masses and benefiting the wealthy.

Research Question 3: What is the factor influencing the information-seeking behavior on tax reforms in university of Maiduguri?

Table 3: The factors influencing the information-seeking behavior on tax reforms.

ITEMS	Responds				Total	Mean	SD
	SA	A	SD	D			
Lamenting all over the campus encourages me to seek more information about tax reforms	432 (57.8%)	174 (23.3%)	85 (11.4%)	57 (7.6%)	748(100%)	3.28	Agree
I am more likely to seek information about tax reforms if I perceive it has a positive or negative impact our economic well-being.	321 (42.9%)	265 (35.4%)	101 (13.5%)	61 (8.2%)	748(100%)	3.08	Agree
Actively seek information about tax reforms when I feel it will improve my understanding of government policies	386 (51.6%)	195 (26.1%)	53 (7.1%)	114 (15.3%)	748(100%)	3.22	Agree
I am more likely to seek information about tax reforms if I perceive them as relevant to my future economic well-being.	455 (60.8%)	179 (23.9%)	48 (6.4%)	66 (8.8%)	748(100%)	3.35	Agree
The trustworthiness of the sources of information affects my decision to seek information on tax reforms.	312 (41.7%)	168 (22.5%)	104 (13.9%)	64 (8.6%)	748(100%)	3.08	Agree

Discussions with friends and family influence my decision to seek information about tax reforms.	187 (25.0%)	325 (43.5%)	115 (15.4%)	121 (16.2%)	748(100%)	2.91	Agree
Still I don't understand the issue of tax reform	28 (3.7%)	61 (8.2%)	456 (60.9%)	203 (27.1%)	748(100%)	1.55	Disagree
Since our leaders are lamenting publicly on tax reform it means there is problem	508 (67.9%)	176 (23.5%)	16 (2.1%)	48 (6.4%)	748(100%)	3.57	Agree
I will find time to read more about this tax reform	57 (7.6%)	35 (4.7%)	521 (69.6%)	135 (18.0%)	748(100%)	1.50	Disagree

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 3. shows the result on the extent of factors influencing the information-seeking behavior on tax reforms in university of Maiduguri, Nigeria. It was revealed that majority of the respondents affirmed they lamented all over the campus. A participant confirmed that:

"when I heard my fellow students lamenting on the issue of tax reform it encouraged me to seek more information about tax reforms, but the reform from the way I look at it will make us suffer more, even now as a student I am suffering" (FGD, 23th October, 2024)

And another participant confessed that:

"I am more likely to seek information about tax reforms if i perceive it has a positive impact on my economic well-being and will improve my understanding of government policies". (FGD, 23th October, 2024).

It was further revealed during the FGD from a respondent that:

"I am more likely to seek information about tax reforms if I perceive them as relevant to my future economic well-being, and the trustworthiness of the sources of information affects my decision to seek information on tax reforms" and sometimes discussions with friends and family influence my decision to seek information about tax reforms" (FGD, 23th October, 2024)

The role played by our leaders with on tax reform has made some students lament and have negative thought on the reform. A participant stated that:

"Since our leaders are lamenting publicly on tax reform it means there is problem, where ever I go in the mosque, like Friday, you will hear our religious leaders condemning the tax reform, even among our community leaders they don't like it" (FGD, 23th October, 2024)

This is connected with the work of **Akinboade and Kinfack (2017)** explored how public discourse and discussions around economic reforms in Nigeria, particularly those related to taxes, stimulate individuals to seek more information. Similarly, **Kwon and Lee (2019)** carried out a study on how the perceived relevance of information impacts people's decision to seek more information, particularly when individuals believe the information will directly affect their economic well-being. The study demonstrated that people are more likely to actively seek out information when they view it as important for their personal or future financial stability. This is echoed in this study, where respondents indicated that the perceived relevance of tax reforms to their future economic well-being influences their information-seeking behavior.

Research Question 4: What is the respond on receiving information about tax reforms among student in university of Maiduguri?

Table 4: The respond on receiving information about tax reforms.

ITEMS .	Responds				Total	Mean	SD
	SA	A	SD	D			
We plan for peaceful protest	2 (0.3%)	5 (0.7%)	634 (84.7%)	107 (14.3%)	748(100%)	1.16	Disagree
I use social media platform to vent out my frustration	511 (68.3%)	134 (17.9%)	17 (2.3%)	86 (11.5%)	748(100%)	3.52	Agree
Am just speechless about the whole information	297 (39.7%)	176 (23.5%)	149 (2.3%)	126 (16.8%)	748(100%)	2.83	Agree
Am thinking of living the country	523 (69.9%)	87 (11.6%)	101 (13.5%)	37 (4.9%)	748(100%)	3.58	Agree
We just talk about it, in group insult the government and live	563 (75.3%)	109 (14.6%)	23 (3.1%)	53 (7.1%)	748(100%)	3.72	Agree
I use social media platform to express my joy over tax reform	12 (1.6%)	47 (6.3%)	563 (75.3%)	126 (16.8%)	748(100%)	1.63	Disagree
						2.74	

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 4. shows the result on the respond on receiving information about tax reforms among student in university of Maiduguri Nigerian. It was revealed that majority of the respondents affirmed that they use social media platform to vent out their frustration (mean = 3.52),

“Am just speechless about the whole information on the tax reform, I am thinking of living the country after my studies, We just talk about it, in group insult the government and leave” (FGD, 23th October, 2024).

This has corroborate with the work of **Adebayo and Yusuf (2021)** examined the emotional reactions of Nigerians toward economic and political information, noting that feelings of helplessness and disillusionment often lead to public expressions of frustration, as indicated by the findings that many respondents feel "speechless" about the situation. In similar vein **Ogunyemi and Olorunfemi (2019)** explored migration intentions among Nigerian youth, noting that political and economic instability often drive many young people to contemplate leaving the country in search of better opportunities.

H₀. There is no significant relationship between perception and respond on tax reforms among student in university of Maiduguri.

Variable	N 748	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Perception		2.77	1.12	747	.846	.003	S
Respond		2.50	0.83				

Source: Field survey, 2024

S=Significant at P<0.05 level

Table 5. The analysis aimed to examine the relationship between students' perceptions of tax reforms and their responses to those reforms at the University of Maiduguri. The results show a significant positive correlation between perception and response, as indicated by a correlation coefficient (r-value) of 0.846. This suggests that as students' perception of tax reforms increases, their responses to those reforms also tend to be more positive. The p-value of 0.003 is well below the common significance level of 0.05, further supporting the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between perception and response. With a sample size of 748 participants, the

findings are robust and provide strong evidence of the connection between these two variables. Therefore, it can be concluded that the perceptions of students on tax reforms have a significant impact on their responses to those reforms at the University of Maiduguri.

H₀₂. There is no significant relationship between perception and factors influencing the information-seeking behavior on tax reforms in university of Maiduguri.

Variable	N 748	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Respond		2.77	1.13	747	.724	.004	S
Seeking behavior		2.50	0.71				

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 6. The hypothesis tested shows that there is no significant relationship between perception and the factors influencing information-seeking behavior regarding tax reforms at the University of Maiduguri. Based on the data provided, the mean value for the response variable (perception) is 2.77 with a standard deviation of 1.13, and the mean for the factor influencing seeking behavior is 2.50 with a standard deviation of 0.71. The correlation coefficient (r-value) is 0.724, which indicates a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. The p-value is 0.004, which is below the typical significance level of 0.05, meaning the result is statistically significant. Therefore, despite the hypothesis suggesting no significant relationship, the data shows that there is indeed a significant relationship between perception and the factors influencing information-seeking behavior regarding tax reforms at the University of Maiduguri. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the finding of this study, the need for more target, transparent, and accessible communication strategies regarding tax reforms is required. Policymakers should focus on leveraging social media platforms, addressing concerns directly, and providing clear, relevant information that resonates with students' economic realities. By aligning information dissemination with students' preferences and concerns, government bodies can foster greater engagement, trust, and ultimately, positive behavior change regarding tax reforms. The students' perceptions of tax reforms reveal a sense of skepticism and disillusionment towards the government's tax policies. Many students expressed concerns about the fairness and effectiveness of tax reforms, which underscores the need for more transparent and relatable communication from authorities. The factors influencing information-seeking behavior further revealed that students are motivated by the perceived relevance of information to their economic well-being, the trustworthiness of sources, and social influences.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. Government and Policy makers should utilize Social media platforms while ensuring they remain effective in reaching the student body and addressing concerns related to tax reforms.
- ii. The policy makers should understand the emotional and cognitive responses of young people to such reforms and government to better tailor its communication strategies and foster trust among the student population.
- iii. The government agencies and educators should shape targeted information campaigns that cater to these motivations and ultimately enhance the effectiveness of communication around tax reforms.
- iv. The policy makers should ensure that responds of the students about tax reforms is not only received but also understood and acted upon.

References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179-211.
- Akpoyibo Akpobome Gregory , Okolo Marvis Ndu (2023)See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/Tax_Collection_Utilization_Systems_and_the_Performance_of_Small_and_Medium
- Bennet, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2013). The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics. *Information, Communication & Society*, 16(5), 739-768.
- Dervin, B. (1992). *From the mind's eye of the user: The sense-making qualitative-quantitative methodology*. In J. D. Glazier & R. R. Powell (Eds.), *Qualitative research in information management* (pp. 61-84). Libraries Unlimited.
- Fischer, F. (2014). *Public policy analysis: A political economy approach*. 3rd edition. Longman.
- Herman, E. (2016). Understanding youth political engagement: The role of education and media. *Youth & Society*, 48(1), 63-85.
- Johnson, J. A. (2011). Social influence and political engagement in youth: Family, peers, and the media. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 40(9), 1160-1170.
- Kuhlthau, C. C. (2004). *Seeking meaning: A process approach to library and information services*. Libraries Unlimited.
- Liu, X., Zhang, Z., & Zhang, W. (2015). Social media and political information-seeking behavior among youth: A systematic review. *Journal of Communication Studies*, 67(1), 85-106.
- Madden, M., Lenhart, A., Duggan, M., Cortesi, S., & Gasser, U. (2013). *Teens and technology 2013*. Pew Research Center.
- Maiduguri Youth Development Center. (2022). *Youth access to information in conflict zones: A case study of Maiduguri, Borno State*. Maiduguri, Nigeria.
- Miller, C. M., Bell, J., & McKinnon, R. (2018). Tax reform and young people's perspectives: An exploratory study. *Journal of Public Policy*, 34(2), 157-175.
- Mitchell, A., Gottfried, J., & Matsa, K. E. (2016). *The Role of Social Media in the Political Information Environment*. Pew Research Center.
- Nigerian Federal Ministry of Finance. (2021). *Tax reforms in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects*. Federal Ministry of Finance, Nigeria.
- Odozi, A. I. (2023). *Youth engagement and tax reform awareness in conflict-prone regions of Nigeria*. *Journal of Public Policy*, 49(2), 157-174.
- Odusola, A. F. (2003). 'Internally Generated Revenue at the Local Government: Issues and Challenges'. Paper presented at the Workshop on Revenue Generation at the State Government Level, October. Ibadan: University of Ibadan.
- OECD. (2019). *Tax administration 2019: Comparative information on OECD and other advanced and emerging economies*. OECD Publishing.
- Perri, P. (2017). Youth and democratic engagement: The role of social media in political participation. *Democracy & Policy Studies*, 22(4), 321-338.
- Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 9(5), 1-6.
- Wilson, T. D. (2000). *Human information behavior*. Informing Science.

CONTRIBUTION OF PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S INTERVENTIONS ON WOMEN EDUCATION IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

Hauwa Baba Musami¹, Mudi Bashir (PhD)² & Halima Abdullahi Godowoli (PhD)³

^{1&2}Department of Public Administration,
University of Maiduguri, Borno State
Email: hauwamusami@gmail.com
mudibashir111@gmail.com

³Department of Political Sciences,
University of Maiduguri, Borno State
Email: halimahaabs@gmail.com

Abstract

The empowerment of women is a key driver for sustainable development across nations, yet the increasing poverty rate among women in Borno State is a critical issue that demands attention. This challenge has prompted Plan International to implement women empowerment programs aimed at addressing this concern. This study assesses the contributions of Plan International in advancing women's education in Borno State. Grounded in the Development Approach Theory, the study employs a survey research design, utilizing both primary and secondary data. Content analysis and regression analysis were applied to interpret the data. A sample of 353 women, drawn from a population of 3,002 beneficiaries across the local governments of Monguno, Kaga, Damboa, MMC, Jere, and Gwoza, were selected through multi-stage sampling methods. The findings reveal that Plan International has made significant contributions to promoting women's education in these areas, including both formal education and vocational training. Furthermore, Plan International's initiatives have significantly improved women's access to education in this region. The study concludes that Plan International's efforts have substantially provided education for women in the selected local governments of Borno State. Based on the findings, the study recommends that Plan International collaborate with local governments to employ qualified teaching staff to address the shortage of educators in basic schools. Additionally, expanding the scope of skills acquisition programs for women's education should be prioritized to foster greater economic independence and development in Borno State.

Introduction

Global discussions around gender issues have surged in recent years, focusing on women's empowerment and their sustained development. A significant factor driving this conversation is the large population of women, many of whom live in rural areas plagued by illiteracy, malnutrition, and poor health. This has led scholars like Hermann Baumann and Ester Boserup to advocate for integrating women's issues into development projects, aiming to improve their status and support broader societal development. Women in emerging economies are increasingly seen as crucial to achieving development, with events like the 1975 First World Conference on Women in Mexico City placing emphasis on the active participation of women in development programs, rather than simply as recipients of aid (United Nations, 1995).

Women's participation in sustainable development became a focal point at the 1992 Rio Summit and the 1995 Beijing Conference. Both events underscored the importance of including women in decision-making processes

related to development and environmental management. The Beijing conference, in particular, highlighted the need for empowerment, full participation, and gender equality as critical to peace and sustainable development. However, despite the recognition of their role, women still face severe economic disparities compared to their male counterparts. As of 2023, women continue to face significant economic disparities. Asset ownership among women remains low; a study across 18 developing countries found that women who owned assets were significantly more empowered than those who did not (Gupta et al., 2023). Additionally, women perform over 76% of unpaid care work globally, with this labor valued at nearly \$11 trillion annually—about 9% of global GDP (ILO, 2023; UNDP, 2023). Unpaid care responsibilities excluded approximately 708 million women from the labor force in 2023 alone (ILO, 2023). Moreover, many women live on less than \$2 a day, especially in regions like the Middle East, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, significantly impacting sustainable development efforts (Wamboye, 2023).

Incorporating women's empowerment is essential for achieving sustainable development, as evidenced by organizations like Plan International, which has worked in Nigeria's North-East to address humanitarian crises exacerbated by conflict. In Borno State, for instance, the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Borno State, Nigeria, exacerbated by the Boko Haram insurgency, has had a devastating impact on women and girls, particularly in terms of access to education. Many women in the region face significant barriers to receiving quality education, including the destruction of schools, displacement, and societal restrictions. Plan International has implemented various initiatives aimed at improving women's education in Borno, yet the extent and effectiveness of these efforts remain unclear. While the organization has been involved in rebuilding educational infrastructure, providing learning materials, and promoting female enrollment, the specific contribution of these programs to improving women's access to education in the state requires further examination. This study aims to explore the role of Plan International in enhancing women's education in Borno State and assess whether its interventions have led to meaningful progress in overcoming the educational challenges faced by women in the region (United Nations, 1995; Plan International, 2018;).

By focusing on Plan International's contributions to women's education in Borno State, the research assessed the impact of the organization's initiatives, such as school rebuilding efforts and the provision of educational resources, on increasing access to education for women. The study also explored whether these efforts have contributed to changing attitudes towards female education in a region deeply affected by conflict and cultural barriers. Understanding the scope of Plan International's impact in this area will provide valuable insights into the role of international organizations in supporting women's education in conflict-affected regions and inform future strategies aimed at promoting gender equality in education (Wamboye, 2023; Lohani & Aburaida, 2017).

Concept of Women Empowerment

Women empowerment, a term that emerged in the 1920s but gained widespread usage in the 1970s, refers to the process of enhancing the power of marginalized groups, particularly women, to achieve equality with more privileged groups. Empowerment involves providing individuals with the tools, resources, and environments necessary to develop their abilities and effectively pursue personal goals (Haddad & Toney-Butler, 2023). Sahay (1998) defines empowerment as a dynamic and multifaceted process that allows women to fully realize their identities and potential across all areas of life. It requires a redistribution of power and authority, enabling those historically excluded from societal and policy-making processes to participate meaningfully in governance and development (Chattopadhyaya, 2005). Empowerment is not just a social necessity but also a key element for the overall progress of any nation.

Empowerment, as viewed by the World Bank, involves increasing individuals' or groups' capabilities to make decisions and act on them, thereby fostering both individual and collective growth. It also includes improving the fairness and effectiveness of institutional frameworks that regulate these assets. Mukhopadhyaya (2023) further expands on empowerment as liberation from deprivation, providing equitable access to knowledge, and fostering awareness of one's identity within their community. In a similar vein, Bhasin (1998) emphasizes that women's empowerment involves overcoming personal feelings of inadequacy and inferiority, boosting self-respect, and promoting economic independence. It also means ensuring women's access to resources such as land, property, and the ability to make decisions regarding their bodies. Empowerment, therefore, aims to alleviate domestic burdens and enhance women's autonomy in both public and private spheres.

Women's empowerment can be categorized into five key domains: social, educational, economic, political, and psychological. Each of these areas is crucial to enabling women to take control over their lives and make decisions that impact their well-being and the well-being of their communities. Antony (2006) adds that women's empowerment involves gaining equal access to freedoms, rights, and societal standing that are typically enjoyed by men, emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach to empowerment. Gangrade (2001) highlights that women's empowerment also involves achieving social equity, access to opportunities, and the autonomy to foster personal growth. Societal exploitation of women makes their empowerment vital to challenging male dominance and achieving gender equality in all aspects of life (Srivastava, 2001).

Empowerment is often seen as a process through which women can participate as active agents in development, planning, and decision-making activities (Dugbahaz, 2012). Maimusa and Mbaya (2013) discuss women's empowerment in the context of economic independence, particularly through small and medium enterprises (SMEs), where women can generate income and control economic activities. Shiva (2001) defines women's empowerment as ensuring women have the resources to meet their survival needs and the needs of their families, while also living in a secure and supportive environment. In this view, empowerment encompasses physical, emotional, social, and economic dimensions of growth. Aspy and Sandhu (year) further elaborate that empowerment involves a transformative process where marginalized groups, especially women, become aware of their societal power dynamics and gain the skills necessary to exert control over their lives, respecting the rights of others while working to empower their communities.

Literature Review

Education has become a fundamental necessity in the modern world, essential for personal development and socio-economic progress. In the 21st century, knowledge has emerged as a key determinant of socio-economic development, where both formal and informal education contribute significantly to achieving development goals (Pokrzywa, 2018). However, education remains a privilege for many, especially for women in underdeveloped and rural areas. Approximately 565 million women worldwide are uneducated, often due to barriers such as domestic labor, cultural attitudes that devalue girls' education, safety concerns, and lack of funding for education (Fritschel & Mohan, 2001). In some regions, such as Southeast Nigeria, the belief that educating girls is a waste due to their eventual marriage further exacerbates these challenges.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a crucial role in addressing these educational barriers for women. A significant number of NGOs actively promote gender equality and support women's access to education and other resources (Pokrzywa, 2018). Education for girls is not only critical for their personal empowerment but also for societal growth. Educated women tend to marry later, have fewer unintended pregnancies, and provide better care for their children, contributing to improved child health and reduced fertility rates. According to a

World Bank study (2019), educating girls positively influences economic growth, especially in middle-income countries, as societies that invest in girls' education experience faster development and higher income levels.

Despite global improvements in female enrollment in primary and secondary schools, challenges remain, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where female secondary school enrollment rates have been historically low. For instance, in 1995, female secondary school enrollment in the region was only 14%, while primary enrollment rates have leveled off at about 54% (King & Alderman, 2001). In Nigeria, many women are still limited by their education, with a significant portion of the population of food vendors in Imo State having only completed primary school. Efforts to improve female education in these regions, including government programs that offer free education and incentives for girls to attend school, have been commendable steps toward closing the gender gap in education and achieving sustainable development.

Plan International has been instrumental in addressing these educational challenges in conflict-affected regions like Borno State, Nigeria. The ongoing conflict has led to the destruction of hundreds of schools, leaving many children, particularly girls, without access to education. The World Bank estimates the cost of the damage to schools at approximately 249 million USD, exacerbating the education crisis (Plan International, 2017). Plan International's initiatives focus on providing education in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, despite overcrowded conditions and lack of essential resources. While the challenges remain significant, such as the absence of basic facilities like WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), and the psychological toll on both students and teachers, Plan International's efforts to rebuild the education system offer a critical pathway for girls in Borno State to access education and secure a brighter future.

Materials and Methods

The study is survey research that heavily relied on data collected from both primary and secondary sources. Content analysis and regression analysis were utilised for the study. A sample size of 353 was drawn from a population of 3002 consisting of beneficiaries in communities of Monguno, Kaga, Damboa, MMC, Jere, and Gwoza Local Government Areas. Multi-stage sampling was used in selecting the women beneficiaries and staff of the plan international.

Results and Discussion

The study sought to ascertain the categories of Plan International education services intervention, the years, location and the quantity of educational facilities provided to women beneficiaries in the selected local government in Borno State.

Table 1: Plan International Contribution on Educational Facilities

Years of intervention	Categories of intervention	Location	Quantity	
2016	Constructions	Kaga	Construction of 4 temporary learning spaces and class room	
2017	Renovations	Jere	2 rehabilitated equipped with basic furniture such as bench, table, blackboard and chairs for teachers and learner	
2018	Constructions	MMC	Undertook the renovations of 22 blocks of classrooms, office and VIP toilets	
2019	Instructional Materials	Gwoza	36 sets of teaching materials	

2020	Construction	Monguno	Provision of learning materials and dignity kids to 2000 students
2021	School Furniture & Training	1 & 2 Damboa 1. 3. MMC	Trained 59 Local Education Authority Teachers on lesson plan, Psychosocial support, child safeguarding policy, Safe School Declaration (SSD), Explosive and Ordnance Risk Education (EORE). 1. Enrolled 7000 children among which 3800 girls and 3200 boys 2. 36 deliveries of school furniture
2022	Training	Jere and Kaga	Training of 10 school-based teachers
2023	Rehabilitation of Viewing Centre to digital Library	Jere and Kaga Damboa	a. 15 computers, a projector, an internet facility, a board and solar-powered electricity b. provide quality formal and nonformal education to 8,865 children in Damboa

Source: Plan International, 2024

Tables 1 show the educational facilities Micro-Projects executed by Plan International from 2016 to 2023. The tables show that Plan International has constructed 4 temporary learning spaces and class room in Kaga, 2 rehabilitated equipped with basic furniture such as bench, table, blackboard and chairs for teachers and learner in Jere, renovated of 22 blocks of classrooms, office and VIP toilets in MMC, provided 36 sets of teaching materials in Gwoza and learning materials and dignity kids to 2000 students in Monguno, provided 36 deliveries of school furniture in Damboa.

Plan International and promotion of women education

This study was designed to solicit information from the respondents on the contribution of Plan International on promoting women education. The study enquires to know whether Plan International has provided adequate educational facilities to enhance the education of women in the selected local government and also to know whether Plan International has provided incentives like scholarship in the area of education.

Table 2: Plan International and promotion of women education in Borno State

Statement	Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	%
Plan International has provided adequate educational facilities to facilitate the education of women in your community	92 [31%]	110 [37%]	27 [9%]	45 [15%]	24 [8%]	297 [100%]

Plan International has help in building and enhancing your self-awareness and self esteem	65 [22%]	128 [43%]	15 [5%]	56 [19%]	33 [11%]	297 [100%]
Plan International has provided you with incentives like scholarship in the area of education	98 [33%]	125 [42%]	33 [11%]	27 [9%]	15 [5%]	297 [100%]
Mechanism has been put in place by Plan International for continuous sensitization of women on the need to remain educated in your community	68 [23%]	107 [36%]	48 [16%]	21 [7%]	53 [18%]	297 [100%]

Source: Field work, 2023

The table 2 shows that 31 % and 37% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that Plan International has provided adequate educational facilities to enhance the education of women in the selected local government. While 9% are undecided, 15% and 32 8% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that Plan International has provided adequate educational facilities to enhance the education of women in the selected local government. Table 4.3 showed that there is strong indication that Plan International has provided adequate educational facilities to enhance the education of women in the selected local government.

The Table also shows that 22% and 43% strongly agreed and agreed that Plan International has help in building and enhancing self-awareness and self- esteem of the women in the selected local government. 25% of the respondents are undecided. However, 19% and 11% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that Plan International has help in building and enhancing self-awareness and self esteem of women of the selected local government. Analysis of the table shows that contribution of Plan International has impacted positively in increasing access and retention, improved quality of education and strengthened capacities of young women. This outcome is in consonance with the assessment of Interviewee E: that Plan International project has successfully achieved improved teaching and learning outcomes in the intervention areas of the selected local government.

The Table represents that 33% and 42% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that Plan International has provided women in the selected local government with incentives like scholarship in the area of education. The Table also portrays that 11% of the respondents were undecided that Plan International has provided women in the selected local government with incentives like scholarship in the area of education. However, 9% and 5% strongly disagree and disagree that Plan International has provided women in the selected local government with incentives like scholarship in the area of education. The analysis of the table 4.3 showed that, Plan International has provided women in the selected local government with incentives like scholarship in the area of education. It is also acknowledged that women with special needs were supported with assistive learning devices, including hearing aids, wheelchairs and optical devices.

The Table further shows that 23% and 36% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that Mechanism has been put in place by Plan International for continuous sensitization of women on the need to remain educated in the selected local government while 16% of the respondents are undecided. However, 7% and 18% are strongly

disagreed and disagreed that mechanism has been put in place by Plan International for continuous sensitization of women on the need to remain educated in the selected local government. The analysis of the table shows that plan intervention has led to increase access to quality and inclusive women education in a safe and protective environment through adoption of a whole school approach. To corroborate this, during Interview session in Monguno, one of the community leaders is of the view that:

After the insurgency crisis, we returned and met a nearly empty community. We began teaching under a tree shade. We had just a few children attending because it was not an easy task convincing parents to allow children to come; some were just at home playing," Maina stated. He said the AECID project implemented by Plan International, Nigeria has provided 30 vulnerable household with multi-purpose cash grants conditional to school attendance to meet basic needs.

In addition to this, a participant from Plan International during an interview mentioned the following as part of the women empowerment activities they engaged in, the interviewee A:

Increase access to quality and inclusive education for children and young people in a safe and protective environment through adoption of a whole school approach, more so, Plan International contribute to improve the quality of the education in emergency implemented by strengthening the existing system to effectively monitor the quality and protective element.

One of the staff of Plan International further highlighted the contribution of Plan International to women education in Borno State under the following taxonomy:

i. Program to Promote Women's Participation in Education:

The Spanish Cooperation Agency and Canadian-funded projects in Borno State, implemented by Plan International, have specific components aimed at ensuring sustainable means of access and retention through transition for girls' participation in education. For instance, the "Education in Emergencies in Complex Context in Borno State" project includes initiatives to support girls' education, EdTech integration, empower young women through life skills training, and provide start-up grants for a sustainable means of income.

ii. Educational Aid to Displaced Persons in Borno State:

Indeed, the Spanish Cooperation Agency (AECID)-funded projects have provided educational aid to displaced persons in Borno State, facilitating women's education. These initiatives encompass setting up temporary learning spaces, providing educational materials, and supporting access to quality education for girls.

iii. Activities Supporting Women's Education:

The educational activities implemented by Plan International include establishing temporary learning spaces, rehabilitating classrooms, establishing ICT resource centers in schools, empowering youths through skills training, and supporting girls' education with gender-sensitive materials (such as separate latrines for girls, sanitary pads, cash support for vulnerable families with a priority on girls), and providing scholastic materials.

iv. Building Self-awareness and Self-esteem of Displaced Persons:

Plan International's activities, funded by various donors including the European Union, Canadian Government, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), have played a crucial role in

building and enhancing the self-awareness and self-esteem of displaced persons in the northeast (Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe State). These initiatives involve skills training, education, and empowerment, providing opportunities for education and skills development to empower participants to improve their living conditions and regain resilience.

v. Provision for Incentives like Scholarships:

Currently, there are no child sponsorship programs in the country, except for other countries. However, Plan International provides complementary services to education, including classroom rehabilitations/improvements, temporary learning spaces, teaching and learning materials, cash for education, recruitment of community-based volunteer teachers, and training teachers on classroom management, context-sensitive pedagogy, and inclusivity.

vi. Mechanisms to Sensitize Women on the Importance of Education:

Plan International employs a gender-transformative approach to programming that promotes women and girls' access to education through grassroots engagement with stakeholders from the national to community level. This involves community-led advocacy, campaigns, and targeted outreach programs through mediums such as radio houses, phone-in sessions, and jingles to promote women and girls' participation in education.

Plates of Some Educational Facilities Provided by Plan International



Plate 4.1: Temporary Classrooms Erected at Monguno LGA, before intervention by Plan International in 2019



Plate 4.2: A block of classroom at Monguno LGA after intervention by Plan International in 2020



Plate 4.3: School children at 505 Housing Estate Pri. sch. Received learning materials.



Plate 4.4: Distribution of disability assistive devices to a schools

H_{01} : Plan International has not significantly contributed towards promoting women education in Selected Local Government in Borno State

Table 4.10: Pearson's Product moment Correlation Coefficient Results of Hypothesis one

X	Y	X ²	Y ²	XY
384	16	147, 456	256	6, 144
392	8	153, 664	64	3, 136
400	0	160, 000	0	0
348	52	121, 104	2, 704	18, 096
376	24	141, 376	576	9, 024
1, 900 =380	100 =20	723, 600	3, 600	36, 400

$$r = \frac{\sum xy - n \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 - n \bar{x}^2)(\sum y^2 - n \bar{y}^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{21,614 - 5 \times 312.6 \times 14.6}{\sqrt{(490,325 - 5 \times 312.6^2)(21,614 - 22,819.8)}}$$

$$r = \frac{-1,205.8}{\sqrt{1,731.2}}$$

$$r = -0.7$$

Decision: Base on the result of hypothesis one, the direction of relationship between the contribution of Plan International and promotion of women education is inversely related. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and therefore means that Plan International has significantly contributed towards promoting women education in selected local government in Borno State.

Discussion

The analysis in the second part of table 2 shows that majority of respondents' view 98 (27.8%) and 144 (40.8 %) agreed and strongly agreed that Plan International has provided adequate educational facilities to enhance the education of women in the selected local government. The outcome of this investigation is in consonance with the views of focus group discussion, who is quoted to have said that “considerable number of the communities that participated in the projects are experiencing improved economic transformation. As a corollary also, the project implemented by Plan International has provided 30 vulnerable household with multi-purpose cash grants condition to school attendance to meet their basic need, this has further empowered the women in the selected local government. This corroborates with Pokrzywa, (2018), that says that in the modern world, education has become an integral part of everyone's life. Lifelong learning is no longer a voluntary educational activity undertaken by a privileged part of society, but rather the necessity and precondition for adequate functioning in the surrounding world.

In the 21st century, knowledge has become a determinant of socio-economic development, and formal and informal (non-formal) education undoubtedly contributes to the realization of this goal. The higher the level of education of the population, the lesser will be the number of poor persons, because education imparts knowledge and skills which is supportive in high wages. The direct effect of promoting women education is through increasing the earnings/income or wages. The education indirectly helps in the fulfilment of basic needs like water and sanitation, utilization of health facilities, shelter, and it also affects the women's behavior in fertility

decisions and family planning. It is understood that the satisfaction of such basic human needs increases the productivity and wages, consequently putting women to become self-reliance and less dependable. The study is also in agreement with Sohail (2020) which reiterated the importance of women education through the intervention of Plan International, this organisation has donated 800 desks to schools to support their return to education and to support a positive learning environment for school starters. This is an indication that there has been an increase in the availability of educational facilities in the treated communities as compared to the baseline findings and the current situations in the controlled communities.

According to Plan International Micro-Projects Outcome (2023), intervention in educational facilities have resulted in increase in enrolment of 1700 children, 950 females, and 750 males were enrolled in into formal basic education; 300 (170 females and 130 males) children and young people in Jere and Kaga LGAs were enrolled into the Accelerated Basic Education Programme (ABEP). Also, average distance to schools has reduced from 5km to 1.7km and average time taken to reach schools has been reduced from 2 hours to 27 minutes as a result of intervention in terms of establishment of educational facilities Micro-projects by plan international. This is an improvement on the baseline findings and situations in non-beneficiary communities. It has been observed that these achievements in terms of rehabilitation of dilapidating infrastructure and provision of instructional materials, have impacts on the reduction of women among the disadvantaged communities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, this study concludes that Plan International has made significant contributions to women's education in Borno State. Despite challenges such as limited resources and infrastructural setbacks due to the ongoing conflict, Plan International has played a pivotal role in improving access to education for girls and women in the region. Through their educational programs, the organization has worked to mitigate barriers such as school destruction, lack of facilities, and security concerns, ensuring that women have opportunities to access learning. Their initiatives have provided essential support, including the construction and renovation of schools, provision of learning materials, and psychosocial support for both students and teachers.

Furthermore, Plan International has fostered an environment that emphasizes the importance of education for girls, addressing community perceptions and encouraging greater female enrollment. Their efforts have contributed to the overall educational development of women, with a focus on empowering them through knowledge, which has broader socio-economic impacts. This study therefore concludes that Plan International has been effective in advancing women's education in Borno State, ultimately contributing to the region's sustainable development by enhancing women's access to education, improving their life prospects, and promoting long-term societal change.

Recommendations

The study therefore recommends a further need for Plan International to support the beneficiary communities by employing qualified teaching staff in order to supplement the short fall of teachers in the basic school. Plan International can recruit qualified female teaching staff with a specialised skill to better the educational service of those communities. Plan International and governments should collaborate to increase the scope of the skills acquisition programmes for women empowerment to be implemented in Borno States by giving more attention to ladies willing to acquire such skill. This is in order to ensure wider participation and greater impacts.

References

- Aspy, C. B., & Sandhu, D. S. (1999). Empowering women for equity: A counseling approach. American Counseling Association.
- Bhasin, K. (1998). Why empowering women. In Sushama Sahay (ed.), *Women and Empowerment: Approaches and Strategies*, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi.
- Chattopadhyay, A. (2005). Women and entrepreneurship. *Yojana*, a Monthly Journal of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 5(1), New Delhi.
- Fritschel, H., & Mohan, G. (2001). Barriers to girls' education: The case of Southeast Nigeria. *Education and Development*, 32(2), 120-135.
- Gangrade, K.D. (2001). Gandhi and empowerment of women: Miles to go” in Promilla Kapur (ed.), *Empowering the Indian Women*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.
- King, E. M., & Alderman, H. (2001). Schooling and gender inequality: The role of schooling in the gender gap. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16(3), 265-282.
- Lohani, M., & Aburaida, L. (2017). Women empowerment: A key to sustainable development. *The Social ION*, 6(2), 26-29.
- Plan International. (2017). Education in emergencies: A report on the situation in Borno State, Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://www.planinternational.org/nigeria>
- Plan International. (2018). Addressing Humanitarian Crisis in Nigeria's North-East.
- Pokrzywa, P. (2018). The role of non-governmental organizations in promoting gender equality in education. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 8(1), 45-60.
- United Nations. (1995). *The First World Conference on Women*.
- Wamboye, E. F. (2023). *The Paradox of Gender Equality and Economic Outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Land Rights*. Cambridge University Press.
- Women Policy Studies. (2013). *Women's Contribution to the Global Economy*.
- World Bank. (2019). The economic impact of girls' education on national development. World Bank Report.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN RAMAT POLYTECHNIC MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA

Malam Malah¹, Mudi Bashir (PhD)² & Sulaiman Sanyaolu²

¹Human Resource Unit, University of Maiduguri, Borno State

²Department of Public Administration,

University of Maiduguri, Borno State

Email: mudibashir111@gmail.com

Abstract

This study assesses the relationship between workplace environment and organizational performance in Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, focusing on how the physical, psychological, and organizational factors affect employee effectiveness and job satisfaction. Data were collected through a survey of 308 staff members, and secondary sources such as institutional reports. The findings revealed that the physical environment, including well-equipped engineering workshops, has positively influenced technical development and employees training. However, the study also reveals that the lack of recreational facilities has negatively impacted staff well-being and performance. Despite significant government investments, further improvements in staff welfare facilities are recommended to enhance productivity and organizational outcomes. The study concludes that the adequacy of the workplace environment plays a critical role in fostering employee motivation, skill development, and overall organizational success.

Keywords:

Workplace environment,
performance, Staff welfare,
Technical development,
Employee satisfaction

Introduction

Workplace environments in both public and private are designed to be attractive and conducive, ensuring employees can stay and perform efficiently. The workplace environment encompasses all conditions that affect an organization's operations, including the physical, economic, cultural, and psychological factors. Scholars such as Opperman (2002) and Briner (2000) categorize these influences into three key areas: the technical environment (physical), the humanistic environment (psychological), and the organizational environment (policy). These environments affect the overall performance and satisfaction of employees, as a decent working environment enables individuals to showcase their skills and contribute effectively to organizational goals.

An organization's success depends on how well it integrates these environmental factors. Physical aspects like workshops, staff clubs, canteens, and recreational facilities have a direct impact on employees' senses, interpersonal interactions, and, consequently, organizational performance. For example, an adequately equipped engineering workshop or a recreational facility helps improve employee morale, which enhances productivity and cooperation. A supportive and well-structured physical and social environment encourages the workforce to align with the organization's objectives and strive toward excellence in their roles.

In the context of Ramat Polytechnic, the study aims to evaluate how its workplace environment affects its performance in fulfilling its educational and developmental mandate. The institution is responsible for training skilled technicians and technologists, in line with the goals of the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004).

Ramat Polytechnic offers programs leading to National Diplomas (ND), Higher National Diplomas (HND), and post-HND certifications. The institution's goals include providing specialized training, promoting self-reliance, developing appropriate technology, and offering staff welfare programs like recreational facilities to motivate staff and enhance their performance. However, the lack of necessary resources and facilities at Ramat Polytechnic has created a toxic work environment, hindering staff effectiveness and job satisfaction.

The importance of staff welfare cannot be overstated in any organization, particularly in educational institutions like Ramat Polytechnic. The Borno State government has made substantial investments in the institution, providing infrastructural facilities such as classrooms, staff accommodation, laboratories, and modern healthcare services. These interventions are vital as they directly influence the institution's ability to provide high-quality training and foster employee well-being. The physical environment, coupled with proper training and development, is essential for improving staff motivation and organizational performance. As Akinyele (2007) notes, a conducive workplace environment boosts employee well-being and leads to increased productivity, making it clear that organizations cannot achieve optimal performance without investing in both the physical and psychological aspects of the workplace.

Statement of the Problem

The workplace environment in many public institutions across Asia and Africa is often unsafe and unhealthy (Chandrasekhar, 2011). Contributing factors include poorly designed workstations and an unconducive work atmosphere, characterized by inadequate office spaces, insufficient access to potable water and electricity, poor lighting, lack of staff housing and recreational facilities, under-equipped laboratories and workshops, inadequate thermal comfort, limited exposure to natural light, insufficient fire safety measures, and the absence of personal protective equipment. Akinyele (2007) asserts that up to 80% of organizational performance issues are attributable to workplace environmental factors. Such environmental impediments are particularly relevant in academic institutions like Ramat Polytechnic, highlighting the need to assess the workplace environment and its impact on staff performance.

Previous studies have explored various aspects of the workplace environment and its influence on organizational performance. For instance, Chandrasekhar (2011) examined the general relationship between workplace conditions and performance in public sector organizations. Akila and Priyadarshini (2018) investigated how workplace friendships affect organizational outcomes. Eruemegbe (2015) studied the influence of the business environment on the performance of Union Bank of Nigeria, while Emeka and Eyuche (2014) analyzed environmental factors affecting Juhel Company's operations. Babagana and Dungus (2015) focused on the relationship between staff remuneration and performance at Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri.

Despite these contributions, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the specific impact of workplace environmental factors on organizational performance within Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri. This study therefore aims to fill that gap by examining key workplace environment variables, including the availability of essential equipment, the adequacy of engineering workshops for on-the-job staff training and development, and the provision of recreational facilities, to assess their impact on the institution's overall performance.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to exploring the relationship between workplace environment and organizational performance at Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. examine the adequacy of engineering workshop and development of techniques in appropriate technologies; and
- ii. assess the availability of recreational facilities on staff performance at Ramat Polytechnic.

Conceptual Issues**Workplace Environment**

The workplace environment plays a crucial role in determining employee performance and organizational success. It encompasses the physical, psychological, and organizational factors that influence how employees interact with their work, colleagues, and employers. According to Briner (2000), the workplace environment includes the setting, conditions, and circumstances under which employees work to meet organizational objectives. These factors range from physical elements, such as temperature and equipment, to broader organizational aspects, including culture, leadership, and work-life balance. Opperman (2002) suggests that the workplace environment is composed of three sub-environments: technical, humanistic, and organizational. The technical environment involves tools and infrastructure, while the humanistic environment focuses on interpersonal relationships, leadership, and workgroup dynamics. A positive workplace environment can enhance employee morale, fostering productivity and organizational success.

Kyko (2005) and Akinyele (2010) highlight the importance of a favorable work environment in shaping employee attitudes and performance. A positive work environment encourages employees to develop self-actualizing behaviors, which can lead to higher satisfaction and improved productivity. Conversely, a toxic work environment, characterized by inadequate resources, poor interpersonal relationships, and a lack of support, can have detrimental effects on morale and performance. Akinyele (2010) suggests that toxic work environments lead to low productivity, dissatisfaction, and high turnover rates. Furthermore, Onuka (2012) emphasizes that a conducive work environment, including clear communication, manageable workloads, and adequate benefits, significantly enhances organizational performance. These factors motivate employees to perform at their best, contributing to the achievement of organizational goals.

However, a poor work environment can lead to negative outcomes, such as job dissatisfaction, reduced efficiency, and even physical and mental health issues. As Ribelin (2003) notes, a toxic environment results in absenteeism, high turnover, and a decrease in employee commitment. Employees who feel unsupported or undervalued in such environments may leave the organization or become disengaged. Factors like poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, and overcrowded spaces can lead to health problems and accidents, further reducing performance (Chandrasekhar, 2011). It is clear that an organization must prioritize creating a positive work environment to attract, retain, and motivate employees, ultimately driving organizational success.

Organisations of work are created and equipped to achieve a certain objective or goal. To achieve this objective, the organisation must perform, thus effective and efficient performance is based on how sound the organisation is allowed to interact with those factors of the workplace environment. As illustrated below, the adequacy of workplace environment factors will mingle well with the relevant and knowledgeable employees in the organisation, thus conducive workplace shall prevail:

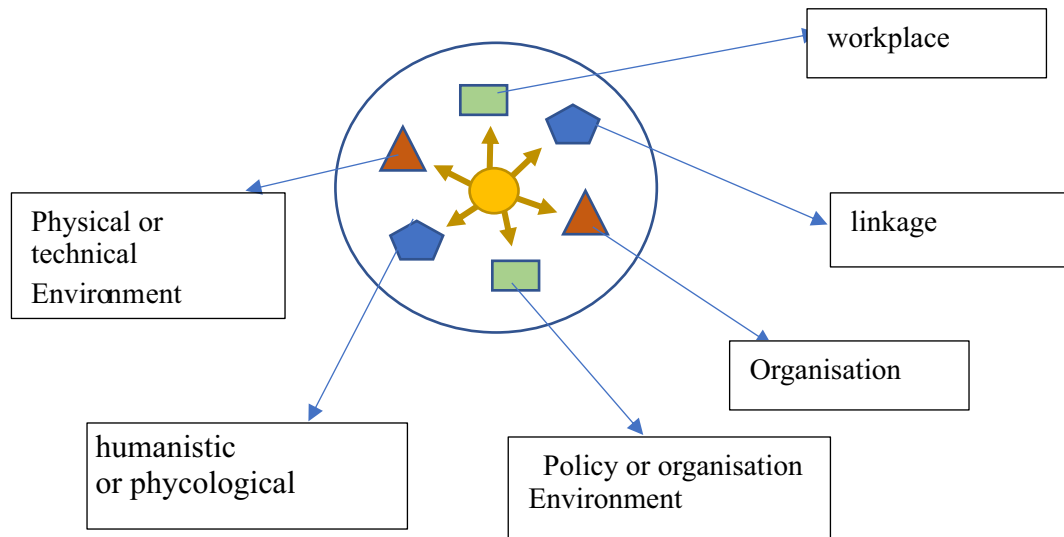


Figure 1: Organisations of the study

Source: Research Deign, 2024

However, where there is inadequate workplace environment factors or no relevant skills and knowledgeable employee on the ground, the mingling of the organisation with the workplace environment would not be sound. Thus, the workplace would be toxic and not favourable enough to attract and retain employees to put their best which in turn trickled down as low or poor organisational performance due to lack of commitment or determination to work by an employee. Such can be illustrated as follows

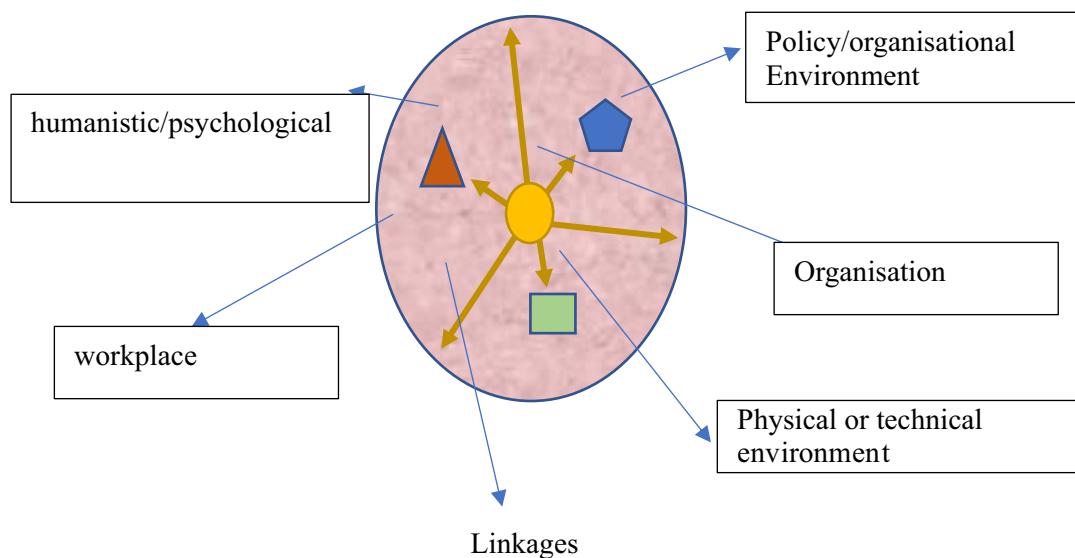


Figure 2: Provide title and briefly discuss the figure and its usefulness in this paper

Source: Research Design, 2024

Literature Review

Engineering Workshop and Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies

Engineering workshops play a vital role in the development of practical skills and technical know-how, particularly in polytechnics and technical institutions. These workshops serve as the backbone for training in appropriate technologies—those designed with consideration for environmental, cultural, and economic contexts. A functional engineering workshop allows students and staff to translate theoretical concepts into practical solutions, fostering innovation, problem-solving, and adaptability. According to Olaitan et al. (2014), the acquisition of hands-on technical skills through workshops is essential for the development of competencies that align with community and industrial needs. In the context of Ramat Polytechnic, the adequacy of engineering workshop facilities significantly affects the capacity of staff to deliver effective training, and the students' ability to acquire and apply appropriate technologies.

Moreover, the development of techniques in appropriate technologies is hindered when institutions lack properly equipped workshops. Inadequate tools, obsolete machines, insufficient safety equipment, and poor maintenance can lead to substandard training outcomes and reduced staff morale. Akomolafe and Adesua (2016) argue that investment in engineering infrastructure directly influences staff development and institutional performance. Without sufficient support for workshop development, staff are unable to engage in continuous professional development or update their knowledge in line with technological trends. Therefore, the evaluation and enhancement of engineering workshops are essential for building a skilled workforce capable of addressing local technological challenges.

Recreational Facilities and Staff Welfare

Recreational facilities are a critical yet often overlooked component of workplace infrastructure that directly affects staff welfare and organizational productivity. These facilities—such as sports centers, rest areas, gyms, and social clubs—contribute to the physical and psychological well-being of employees. According to Armstrong (2009), recreational opportunities at the workplace reduce stress, enhance job satisfaction, and increase overall staff commitment. In educational institutions like Ramat Polytechnic, the availability and quality of recreational facilities influence not only staff retention but also professional enthusiasm and performance.

Inadequate recreational infrastructure may result in increased stress, fatigue, and diminished motivation among staff. This, in turn, can lead to lower productivity, absenteeism, and poor workplace morale. Uzonwanne (2015) posits that workplace wellness programs, including recreational initiatives, are essential in fostering a healthy and engaged workforce. In academic environments, where intellectual and emotional demands are high, providing adequate recreational outlets can significantly improve institutional performance. Therefore, investing in staff recreational facilities should be seen not as a luxury, but as a strategic necessity for enhancing organizational well-being and efficiency.

Methodology

This study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected from the responses of staff at Ramat Polytechnic, while secondary data were sourced from official reports, the Ramat Polytechnic Academic Brief, equipment procurement documents, and staff training schedules. These secondary sources provided essential background information and complemented the primary data in assessing the workplace environment and its impact on organizational performance.

The target population for the study consisted of 1,351 staff members at Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, including 6 management staff, 10 directors, 34 heads of departments, and 1,301 other staff members (academic staff, non-academic staff, technologists, and technicians). This information was obtained from the Registry. A sample size of 308 was determined using the Taro Yamane formula for sample size calculation. The study, , gathered data through a questionnaire distributed to both teaching and senior non-teaching staff. The questionnaire was designed to gather relevant information on the workplace environment and its impact on organizational performance. A research assistant assisted with distributing and collecting the completed questionnaires. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools, including percentages and frequency distribution tables, as well as inferential statistical tools, specifically Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the hypotheses.

Data Analysis

Adequacy of Engineering Workshop and Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies

This section sought to ascertain whether Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri has the capacity to developed techniques in appropriate technology to tally with the challenging environment, looking at its workshops such as in Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering and Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

Table 1: Checklist of Adequacy Engineering Workshop and Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies

Table 1: Checklist of Adequacy of Engineering Workshop and Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies

S/N	Department	Types of Machine Fabricated	Use	Year of Fabrication
1	Department of Mechanical Engineering	i. Pit Furnace ii. Small-scale Waste Incinerator Plant iii. Charcoal Evaporation Cooler iv. Automated Irrigation System v. Biomass Briquette Machine	i. For melting metal ii. For burning refuse iii. For cooling iv. For irrigation v. For converting biomass into fuel	2009 2012 2015 2017 2023
2	Department of Civil Engineering	i. Teaching Aid Wind Tunnel ii. Laboratory Water Treatment Plant iii. Solar-Powered Water Pumping System	i. Airflow test facility ii. For water purification iii. Sustainable water supply for rural areas	2010 2012 2024
3	Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering	i. Field Strength Meter ii. Inductance & Capacitance Meter with Digital Display iii. Automatic Car Park System with Capacity Control iv. Smart Energy Metering System	i. To determine signal strength ii. To measure electrical properties iii. Automated car parking iv. Real-time monitoring of energy usage	2010 2015 2017 2024

2024Source: School of Engineering, Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, (2024).

The Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri has the capacity to developed techniques in appropriate technology to tally with the challenging environment. The production/fabrication of machine, machine parts and tools such as block molding machine, Pit Furnace. This situation indicates that the adequacy of Workplace Environment factors can boost production in the workshop. in the year under review, the workshops such as in Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering and Electrical and Electronic Engineering have so far fabricated machine.

Adequacy of Engineering Workshop and Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies

This section sought to examine the adequacy of the Engineering Workshop and Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies. This is to determine whether the adequacy of the Engineering Workshop has enhanced the Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies in Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri.

Table 2: Adequacy of Engineering Workshop and Development of Techniques in Appropriate Technologies

Statement	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	Total
Your polytechnic has enabling environment for technical development and training	132 43%	128 42%	16 5%	24 8%	8 2%	308 100%
Your Polytechnic avail learners' access and application of specialized knowledge from various fields to solve problems	68 22%	172 56%	36 12%	20 6%	12 4%	308 100%
Program in your polytechnic has enhanced employee's employability and sustained their productive working skills	72 23%	168 55%	48 16%	12 4%	8 2%	308 100%
Your polytechnic can Impact appropriate skills and practical knowledge needed for the production of goods and services	87 28%	163 53%	37 12%	15 5%	6 2%	308 100%

Sources: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 reveals that 132 respondents, representing 43%, strongly agreed that Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri provides an enabling environment for technical development and training. Additionally, 128 respondents, or

42%, agreed, while 16 respondents (5%) were undecided. In contrast, 24 respondents (8%) disagreed, and only 8 respondents (2%) strongly disagreed. This indicates that a combined 85% of respondents (43% strongly agreed and 42% agreed) believe Ramat Polytechnic offers an environment conducive to technical development and training.

The table further shows that 68 respondents (22%) strongly agreed that Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri enables learners to access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields to solve problems. A majority of 172 respondents (56%) agreed, while 36 respondents (12%) were undecided. On the other hand, 20 respondents (6%) disagreed, and 12 respondents (4%) strongly disagreed. This suggests that 78% of respondents (22% strongly agreed and 56% agreed) acknowledge the institution's role in providing learners with the necessary knowledge and skills to address real-world problems.

In addition, 72 respondents (23%) strongly agreed that the programs at Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri have enhanced employees' employability and sustained their productive working skills, while 168 respondents (55%) agreed. However, 48 respondents (16%) were undecided, 12 respondents (4%) disagreed, and 8 respondents (2%) strongly disagreed. This data suggests that 78% of respondents (23% strongly agreed and 55% agreed) believe the programs at the institution positively impact employability and help maintain employees' productivity.

Lastly, the table indicates that 87 respondents (28%) strongly agreed that Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri imparts the appropriate skills and practical knowledge necessary for the production of goods and services, with 163 respondents (53%) agreeing. There were 37 undecided respondents (12%), while 16 respondents (5%) disagreed, and 6 respondents (2%) strongly disagreed. This implies that 81% of respondents (28% strongly agreed and 53% agreed) recognize the institution's capacity to equip learners with the essential skills and knowledge required for productive work in the goods and services sector.

Test of Hypothesis

ANOVA Summary on the adequacy of workshop and development of techniques in appropriate technology

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
Between	3,932.8	3	1,310.9	3.24
Within	23,454	16	1,465.9	
Total	27,386.8	19		

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Decision: The calculated value is 3.24, while the critical (table) value is 0.894. Since the calculated value is greater than the critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected. This conclusion suggests that there is significant impact between the adequacy of workshops and the development of techniques in appropriate technology at Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri. Therefore, it can be inferred that the adequacy of workshops and the development of techniques have, to a large extent, contributed to the advancement of appropriate technology at the institution.

Findings

The findings from the hypothesis indicate that the adequacy of workshops and the development of techniques have, to a large extent, contributed to the advancement of appropriate technology at Ramat Polytechnic

Maiduguri. This concord with the descriptive analysis, which suggests that Ramat Polytechnic has created an enabling environment for technical development and training. The institution provides staff with access to specialized knowledge across various fields, enabling them to solve problems and, consequently, enhancing their employability and maintaining their productive working skills. This aligns with the findings of Abdullahi and Dungus (2015), who identified a strong, positive relationship between staff working conditions and the performance of Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri.

Conclusion

This study examines the workplace environment and its impact on organizational performance at Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri. The findings indicate that the availability of equipment has significantly enhanced on-the-job training for staff, with 57 staff members trained in engineering during the study period. Additionally, equipment worth N260 million was procured by the Federal Government through TET fund. The study also concludes that the adequacy of engineering workshops has positively influenced the development of techniques in appropriate technologies within the institution. Moreover, both the state government and the management of Ramat Polytechnic have made efforts to renovate existing structures and construct new ones. However, the study finds that recreational facilities, such as a staff canteen, have not had a positive impact on staff well-being. The results affirm that the availability of equipment at Ramat Polytechnic has had a positive effect on staff on-the-job training. It also supports the view that the adequacy of engineering workshops has played a crucial role in advancing techniques in appropriate technology. Additionally, the study highlights that the lack of recreational facilities, such as a staff canteen, has had a negative impact on staff well-being and performance. This, in turn, has directly affected the overall performance of Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, suggesting that further investment in staff welfare facilities is essential for improving organizational outcomes.

Recommendation

First, Ramat Polytechnic Management should prioritize the procurement of modern equipment and facilities across all key engineering and technical departments. This investment will significantly improve the development of employees' skills and contribute to the institution's growth. The Government can support this initiative by allocating additional funds to upgrade technical education infrastructure, with a focus on state-of-the-art equipment and resources. To execute this, the management should first conduct a needs assessment, then establish a budget and timeline for procurement while ensuring regular evaluation of progress.

Second, Ramat Polytechnic Management should establish partnerships with technologically advanced countries such as Japan and China. These collaborations would facilitate technology transfer and create opportunities for student and staff exchange programs. The Government should support these partnerships by fostering favorable policies and facilitating negotiations between Ramat Polytechnic and potential international partners. The implementation of this recommendation would involve reaching out to embassies and trade offices, organizing bilateral meetings, and formalizing agreements through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).

Third, to further enhance technological skills, Ramat Polytechnic should implement technology exchange programs. These programs would enable both staff and students to gain exposure to advanced technological environments abroad. The Government should assist by promoting international educational collaborations, and external partners should contribute to the organization of these programs. Ramat Polytechnic can execute this by creating exchange opportunities, offering scholarships, and facilitating international internships.

Fourth, Ramat Polytechnic Management should invest in continuous professional development (CPD) programs for staff to keep them updated on the latest technological advancements and teaching methods. This

can be achieved by organizing workshops, seminars, and online courses in collaboration with international institutions. These initiatives will ensure faculty remain at the forefront of their fields and bring cutting-edge knowledge into the classroom.

Fifth, the Polytechnic Management should prioritize the renovation and upgrading of workshop facilities to ensure they are equipped with modern tools for practical, hands-on learning. The Government should provide the necessary financial support for these infrastructural improvements. The management can start by conducting a thorough audit of current facilities and establishing a phased roadmap for upgrading the workshops.

Lastly, Ramat Polytechnic Management should strengthen industry-academic collaborations to provide students with real-world experience. Partnerships with local and international industries will enable students to gain practical exposure through internships, joint research, and industry visits. This can be achieved by formalizing industry relationships, establishing internship programs, and organizing collaborative events such as conferences and workshops.

References

- Akinyele, S. T. (2007). The impact of workplace environment on organizational performance. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 22(3), 230-244.
- Akinyele, S. T. (2010). Impact of the work environment on employee performance: A case study of Nigerian organizations. *Journal of Applied Management Research*, 9(3), 42-55.
- Akomolafe, C. O., & Adesua, V. O. (2016). The impact of physical facilities on staff job performance in selected schools. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 6(4), 1-6.
- Ali, S., & Zia, S. (2010). The influence of work environment on organizational performance. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 1(2), 15-22.
- Armstrong, M. (2009). *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice* (11th ed.). London: Kogan Page.
- Briner, R. B. (2000). The role of workplace environment in employee performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21(3), 65-76.
- Chandrasekhar, M. (2011). The impact of workplace environment on the health of employees. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8(3), 1-18.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN). (2004). National Policy on Education. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Kyko, M. (2005). Workplace environment and its effect on employee motivation. *Journal of Human Resource Development*, 17(1), 10-24.
- Maicibe, F. (2002). Workplace environment and employee performance: The role of organizational culture. *Management Science Review*, 6(2), 23-34.
- Okoh, F. (2003). Organizational performance: The role of work environment in Nigerian organizations. *Business Review*, 15(4), 45-59.
- Olaitan, S. O., Nwachukwu, C. E., Igbo, C. A., Onyemachi, G. A., & Ekong, A. O. (2014). *Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Concepts and Issues*. Onitsha: Cape Publishers.
- Onogori, D. (2007). The role of work environment in improving employee satisfaction. *Human Resource Management Review*, 10(3), 33-47.
- Opperman, C. (2002). Workplace environments and organizational performance: A review of theoretical frameworks. *Journal of Business Research*, 6(4), 314-330.
- Opperman, M. (2002). The relationship between work environment and productivity: A comprehensive model. *Journal of Work Psychology*, 19(2), 45-56.

- Ribelin, B. (2003). Toxic work environment and its effects on employees' performance. *International Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 12(4), 78-92.
- Uzonwanne, F. C. (2015). Employees' participation in decision making and organizational commitment among university academic staff in South-South Nigeria. *Journal of Management and Sustainability*, 5(1), 136–144.

CONTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY IN COMBATING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AMONG INTERNALLY DISPLACED WOMEN IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

¹ Falmata Abdulkarim Galtimari, ² Fodio Garba Ph.D, ³ Sa'idu Idris Ph.D

1. Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

2. Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria

3. Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria

Corresponding Author:

Falmata Abdulkarim Galtimari, Falmii26@gmail.com/08037701097

Abstract

The study investigates the role of Public Bureaucracy in combating Gender Based Violence (GBV) among internally displaced women in Borno State, Nigeria. The study employs secondary research approach and feminist theory. Finding reveals that despite the severity of GBV, law enforcement agencies require innovative strategies to effectively address GBV. It was thus, concluded that there is need for increased financial support from Government and Agencies to enhance healthcare professionals' capacity to respond appropriately to survivors. The study recommends establishing comprehensive GBV services during crises to provide protection and support.

Keywords:

Public, Bureaucracy, Gender-based, Violence, Internally Displaced

Introduction

Decades ago, the escalating issue of Gender-based violence (GBV) has been on the increase around the globe and Nigeria inclusive, GVB is a violation of human rights and all acts of violence which is gender-based and results from physical, sexual, psychological, economic harm and or sufferings. It can also include violence against men or children. Though, women and girls are the main victims of GBV, but yet families and communities are also victims of the menace, reports have been on the alarming from various States in Nigeria on the issue regarding the female child. Intimate relationship either within or outside GBV in physical and sexual form has impact on an estimation of one in every three women globally (World Health Organization, 2021). The female suffers various and so many forms of violence at different stages regarding inequality in the society on daily basis. Perhaps, Gender-based violence is amongst the popular human right violation around the globe and is currently a catastrophe that has resulted in negative impact of the life of the girl child, creating real pervasiveness that has elevated, particularly in some identified groups (World Health Organization, 2021). During crises the menace of GBV experience increases (United Nations, 2021), even though, women and girls are the most vulnerable of GBV, it is a brutality targeted against a person because of the person's gender. This menace causes severe harm to families and communities, as it can be either domestic violence which may be physical that results from injuries, distress and health problems and in some cases lead to death, the most

common of it is beating, strangling, use of weapons and so on, while Sexual violence happens from unwarranted sexual attempt, however, psychological violence occurs from an abusive behavior like controlling and blackmailing, hence, economic violence, occurs within the family and between intimate partners. On another part is Sex-based harassment which includes undesirable physical, verbal or other forms of sexual character with the basis of violating the self-respect of a person. However, Bureaucracy is an instrument of government that carries on the conduct of government business. It is a neutral and professional component of the decision-making wing of the government, which comprises of skilled individuals, specifically trained in the area of public service. It operates in accordance to policies and governing laws enacted. As a social instrument it bridges the gaps that exist between legislative purpose and its achievement, its activities are on the bases of effectiveness, efficiency and rationalization. Public bureaucrats assist the government in designing and implementation of social policies aimed at addressing social issues which are the course of concerns of every administration. Nevertheless, social policies are however, enacted and implemented by officials and government institutions that are authorized to do so on the bases of directive and in accordance to defined policies. It is a policy concerned with the traditions of societies in and around the globe to meet human needs for security, education, work, health and wellbeing, as it inscribes how states and societies respond to global challenges of social, demographic and economic changes, and of poverty and globalization. It also analyses the different roles of national governments, the family, civil society, the market, and international organizations in providing services and support from childhood to old age. These services and support include child and family support, schooling and education, housing, income maintenance and poverty reduction, unemployment support and training, pensions, Religion, health and social care. As its target is to identify and find ways of reducing inequalities in access to services and support between social groups, defined by socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, migration status, gender, sexual orientation, disability amongst age, and between countries.

Gender-based violence is any form of violence that is targeted at women or against any person's gender, the prevention of GBV needs serious attention. The three tiers of government at various levels to some certain extent have implemented social policy programme to mitigate the issues of Gender-based violence at its domain. However, inefficiency, mismanagement, unsuccessful and noncooperation has made the mechanism to deflect and affect the progress of the policy in place. This has being a major course of concern to academics and public bureaucrats. Consequently, social policy programme have generated a number of positive results, if more intensive measures have been put in place by the policy, there could have been greater achievements and positive outcomes. This paper therefore, identifies the roles public bureaucrats play in tackling the menace of Gender-based violence (GBV) in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a widespread, historical form of patriarchal oppression that puts women's health at danger. It is more common in underdeveloped nations of the world (Msughter, et al. 2020). GBV has had a direct impact on the social position and respect accorded to women in contemporary society as a result of its numerous magnitudes and manifestations in diverse nations throughout the world Garcia-Moreno & Pallitto (2013). Although, it is discrimination widely perceived against women but is also violence aimed against someone for the reason of the person's gender and is widely perceived as a form of discrimination. The term "gender-based violence" (GBV) refers to destructive acts of abuse that are committed against the victim's will and have their origins in a system of unequal power distribution between men and women. According to the

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women (CEDAW), GBV is a violence aimed mainly against women for the mere fact that they are feminine. 35% of women experienced GBV during their active years of life, whether it was caused by an intimate spouse or by others WHO (2018). Furthermore, this menace against women is known as a gender discrimination that stems from traditionally unequal supremacy relations that exist between the men and women, and that has deprived women from having equal freedom and privileges in the society as the male counterpart does. National Population Commission (NPC) and ICF International (2014), reports that, one in every three women in Nigeria have had some type of GBV, which disproportionately affects women and girls. Similarly, CEDAW perceives gender-based violence against feminine Gender as one of the measure essential economic, cultural social and political system which sustained women enslavement. According to a global statistics, GBV appeared and peaked during the COVID-19 pandemic, (Peterman et al. 2020). A research by WHO shows that 30% of feminine Gender worldwide has suffered intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lives as women and 37% of women in Africa alone have statistically been confirmed to that. A research conducted across Nigeria shows that the incidence and prevalence of GBV ranges from 42% in the north (Tanimu, 2018), to 29% in the south (Okenwa, 2009), 78.8% in the southeast, and 41% in the south-south region (Dienye & Okemgbo, 2018). Gender-based violence has various forms which includes;

Psychological Violence: *It is an abusive practice that happens in homes, churches, schools, and even the workplace. Chioma (2021) asserts that "in homes, many children grow up as the victims of domesticated emotional abuse from their parents, guardians, and siblings; regrettably, only a small number of people understand that emotional abuse from parent/family members is not a family law issue but a criminal offence." this menace comprises abusive behaviors like blackmail, coercion, control and so on.*

Physical: *this happens as a result of injuries, distress, and health issues, and in some circumstances results to death. This abuse commonly takes the form of beating, strangulation, pushing, and the use of weapons. Since the age of 15, 31% of women in the EU have been the victim of one or the other form of physical assaults.*

Sexual Violence: *comprises unwanted sexual behavior, trafficking, and other actions that are against a person's sexuality without the person's consent. An estimate has shown that, one in every 20 women (5%) in EU nations had experienced a sexual assault since turning 15. Furthermore, a report from Nigerian National Population Commission shows that women in Nigeria suffer GBV at 5% for sexual abuse. The prevalence of rape has claimed the lives of several women and young girls. This menace has resulted in medical, social, psychological, and even economic hardship for many.*

Domestic violence includes all acts of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence that occur within the family unit or between intimate partners.

A report from Nigerian National Population Commission shows that 19% of women in Nigeria throughout their life experiences emotional violence either from their husband or others.

It is an abuse that happens at home and at the same time a behavior that could harm those who are more vulnerable. GBV is an anti-social behavior that involves hurting spouse physically, psychologically, or in any other way. It also affects every culture and every nation equally, regardless of social, economic, religious, or cultural preferences (Tanimu, 2018). Violence can occur between women and men, and it can also occur in relationships between people of the same sex. But women bear a disproportionately large share of the burden of domestic violence.

Concept of Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is a framework of dominance that denotes the power of the office, characterized by power dynamics that undermine traditional forms of trust and social hierarchies of estate and honor in favor of rational strategies of dominance (Weber, 1978). All state agencies involved in enforcing laws, administering regulations, and providing services are referred to as being in the bureaucratic field. Due to the rigid adherence to rules and laws, which inhibits organizations from achieving the actual purpose sought for, bureaucracy has a tendency to create goal displacement Merton, (2016). The modern bureaucracy is strong not because of the individuals who make it run, but because of the institution itself. It overpowers the person and exerts control over how they behave Foucault, (1979). Given the intense expectations placed on public agencies in recent years to become leaner so as to be more efficient and bring services closer to the people, governance challenges in the bureaucratic sphere have a unique significance. Foucault (1979) asserts that bureaucracy strengthens the dominance of the system, and those who participate in it are required to operate in accordance with the machine rather than how they think is best. By the 21st century, bureaucracy had taken over the entire world. Nicholas, (2002).

Interconnectivity between Variables

Nigeria enacted a National Gender Policy Framework and Action Plan in 2006, the laws apply to government acts with regards to GBV. The federal and state governments subsequently enacted the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act of 2015, which forbids female genital mutilation, destructive widowhood customs, destructive traditional customs, and all other types of violence against persons in both private and public life, included among these are the Inter-Ministerial Gender-Based Violence Management Committee, the Sexual Harassment Bill and so on. The ECOWAS Commission urged quick action to address GBV and safeguard children's rights in support of the regional legislative agenda to promote women's rights. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the Nigeria Police (NPD), and the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) signed the agreement in June 2020 that Physically aggressive behaviors such as slapping, striking, kicking, and beating; psychological abuse such as intimidation, continual belittling and humiliation; forced sexual contact and other types of sexual coercion; and Economic and social deprivation such as Removing a person's access to information or help, keeping tabs on their whereabouts, and isolating them from their friends and family must be prevented. Violence against women laws do not have a solid enforcement system. The proponents of women's rights contend that widespread education and stern legal punishment against offenders are required. The fundamental duty of GBV survivors is to report any suspicious activity as soon as possible to the police, civil defense, and other security organizations. To stop cases of gender-based violence in Nigeria, survivors of this type of abuse must collaborate closely with the security services. Existing nexus amongst social policy-makers, policy implementers (bureaucrats), Governmental and non-governmental institutions possibly brings about the social policy implementation. The State, Courts and other departments established for policy implementation have higher chances of reaching to public via their executive activities, as the bureaucrats are the agency of government that implement various policies through which benefits of legislation are provided. They play a vital role in social policy implementation which curbs the issues of Gender Based violence.

Contributing Elements to Gender-based violence in Nigeria

Families in Nigeria regard the birth of a male child as great and joyful. Similarly, they are more excited by the birth of a boy than a girl because of the preference for male offspring in Nigeria, especially in the south geopolitical zone. As the female child gets older, this behavior irritates her, and women in Nigeria like women everywhere else, are subjected to gender-based abuse regardless of their age, ethnicity, level of education, socioeconomic status, or religious beliefs (Zakariya, 2021). The prevention strategy for gender-based violence to help curb the menace includes widespread education and enlightenment policies, detention and legal action,

workshops and training, Laws that are effective and efficient as well as their application.

Theoretical Framework.

The study is based on Mary Wollstonecraft (1759) feminist theory. The theory advocated for women's rights, it provides a critical framework for understanding and addressing GB inequalities, promoting social justice and advocating for women's empowerment. This theory informs and enhances public bureaucracy's efforts to combat GBV by providing a critical framework for understanding the root causes of violence, identifying gaps in services and developing effective policies and interventions. Lauritzen and Guldvik (2025), provides that efforts to promote gender equality, including combating GBV, are more effective when characterized by consensus-building approaches, in line with this argument, public bureaucracy can create a more enabling environment for addressing GBV, ultimately contributing to a safer and more equitable society.

Methodology

This study relies heavily on secondary sources which included books, magazines, newspapers, government publications, key laws and policies, historical records, and the Internet. However, the investigation was restricted to specific information on gender violence, violence against women and girls, and gender inequality from academic journals, books, and the Internet.

Discussions and Findings

- i. Finding reveals that women should be conscious of the online risks they face and be prepared with protective skills for themselves.
- ii. Finding reveals that in spite of the severe and often critical effects of GBV, there is no urgency and seriousness during humanitarian responses.
- iii. Failure in rule of law and disintegration in structure of society can make women find themselves without shield and communal supportive systems during violence.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that Nigerian governments and important stakeholders need to increase the capacity for interventions of gender-based violence prevention and response with more effective and efficient technicalities, and also improve the judicial system accessibility, With regards to the response to the rise in gender-based violence, national governments, development partners, and non-governmental organizations had to fully work together. As part of their commitment in rehabilitating women and girls who have been abused.

- i. Digitalized supportive platforms and technologies should readily be planned with mechanisms which will precisely identify and proscribe every forms of GBV.
- ii. Broad GBV services should be established promptly during period of crisis in order to provide protection to girls and women as that will lessen their contact to violence, while raising their likelihood of revival and resilience.
- iii. Feminist approach to training that will report unequal power balance among gender should be design during intervention in crisis ravaged areas by Humanitarian Organizations.

References

- Anness, A. (2002). *Technologically Coded Authority, The Post-Industrial Decline in Bureaucratic Hierarchies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bridget, O.U. (2021). Women, Bureaucracy and Development In Nigerian: A Conceptual Perspective. *Journal of Public Administration, Finance and Law*. Retrieved: 4/5/2024 at <https://doi.org/10.47743/jopaf-2021-22-07>
- Dienye, P., Gbeneol, P. & Itimi, K. (2018). Intimate Partner Violence and Associated Coping Strategies Among Women in a Primary Care Clinic in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. *Journal of Family Medicine Primary Care* 3(3).
- Foucault, M. (1979). *The History of Sexuality*. 1 (1). New York: Vintage Books.
- Garcia-Moreno C. & Pallitto C. (2013). Global and Regional Estimates of Violence Against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence; WHO: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Lauritzen, T & Guldvik, I (2025). Gender Mainstreaming in Academia Flowing Between Policy and Bureaucracy. *NORA-Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08038740.2024.2446767>
- Merton, R.M. (2016) *A Reader in Bureaucracy*. Oxford Handbooks.
- Msughter A.E., Yar'Adua S.M. & Maradun L.U. (2020). Influence of Cultural Practices on Maternal Morbidity and Complications in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Health, Safety and Environment* 6(9): 670-681
- Mukoro, A. (2020). *Administration of the Public Service*. Ibadan: Ababa Press Ltd.
- NPC & ICF. International. (2014). *Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey 2013*. Abuja, Nigeria, and Rockville, MD: NPC and ICF. <https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR293/FR293.pdf>.
- Ojemeiri K.A., Aondover E. M. & Aruaye A.O (2022) A Critical Review on Gender Based Violence in Nigeria: Media Dimension. *Journal of Gynecology and Women's Health*. 24 (2), 1. Retrieved: 2/11/24 at <https://DOI: 10.19080/JGWH.2022.24.556135>
- Okemgbo, C.N., Omideyi, A.K. & Odimegwu, C.O. (2018). Prevalence, Patterns and Correlates of Domestic Violence in Selected Igbo Communities of Imo State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Reproductive Health* 6(2).
- Okenwa, L.E., Lawoko, S. & Jansson, B. (2009). Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence Amongst Women of Reproductive Age in Lagos, Nigeria: Prevalence and Predictors. *J Fam Violence* 24(7): 517-530. 18.
- Peterman, A. Potts, A. O'Donnell, M. Thompson, K. & Shah, N. (2020). *Pandemics and Violence Against Women and Children*. Working Paper 528.
- Tanimu, T.S., Yohanna, S. & Omeiza, S.Y. (2018). The Pattern and Correlates of Intimate Partner Violence Among Women in Kano, Nigeria. *African J Prim Heal Care Fam Med* 8(1): 6.
- Weber, M. (1978) *Economy and Society: an Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Berkley: University of California Press.
- WHO (2018). *Violence Prevention: the Evidence*. (Internet). World Health Organization. Geneva: World Health Organization, 127.
- World Bank (2018). *Fact Sheet: Update on Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Development Projects*.
- Zakariya, R.I. (2021). *An Examination of Gender- Based Violence in Africa; A Critical Analysis of Rape Culture in Nigeria*. A Thesis Submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Research Baze University, Abuja.