

Influence of Disciplinary Actions on Discipline among Public Secondary School Students in Kiambu County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Good school discipline ensures effective teaching and learning. Indiscipline is a major challenge facing schools in Kenya and it comes in many forms such as fights among students, truancy, drug abuse, dropout from schools and drop in academic performance and the problem is major challenges facing schools in Kenya. The government has recommended robust interventions at the school level to control the indiscipline. Nevertheless, students continue to exhibit immense behavioural problems. It is therefore necessary to assess the effectiveness of the numerous behaviour change interventions put in place. This study investigated the influence of school-based behaviour change interventions on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. The study was guided by the following four objectives; to explore the influence of teacher counselling interventions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya; to examine the influence of student peer counselling interventions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya; to assess the influence of mentorship interventions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya and; to determine the influence of disciplinary actions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was centred on the Ecological Systems Theory (EST). Based on the correlational research design, the study targeted the 227 principals 3,479 guidance and counselling teachers and the 89,065 students in Kiambu County. From these, the study sampled 23 principals, 97 teachers and 398 students using the simple random sampling technique. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview guides, and field observation schedules. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics in line with the study objectives. On quantitative data from the questionnaires; frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) aided in data analysis. The null hypothesis was tested using inferential statistics where, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) test was used at a significance level of 0.05. Qualitative data from open-ended questions in the questionnaires, interview guides, and secondary data transcripts were analyzed using content analysis procedures. The findings showed that there was evidence of positive and significant relationship between students' discipline and; school discipline actions ($r=0.599, p<0.05$). Based on these findings, it is evident that school discipline actions indeed influence students' discipline in the study area. Interventions around these areas should thus be strengthened to holistically enhance students' discipline in the schools studied. The study recommends that school disciplinary actions should be well regulated to make them responsive to the punishment needs of schools. The Ministry of Education should regularly review school disciplinary policy to make it responsive to the evolving demands for disciplinary actions in schools.

Keywords: Disciplinary Actions, Kiambu County, Public Secondary Schools, School Discipline

I. INTRODUCTION

The school environment, often referred to as the ecology, significantly impacts students' behaviors due to the considerable amount of time they spend there and the interactions they experience (Cortina & Fazel, 2015; Welsh & Little, 2018). Research indicates that teachers and classmates have immense effects on students' behaviors, making the school ecology crucial in addressing indiscipline among students. Various school-based behavior change interventions, such as guidance and counseling, mentorship, and disciplinary actions, are implemented to address these challenges.

Guidance and counseling programs in schools have been instrumental in enhancing students' discipline by providing personalized support and guidance to develop core values, social skills, and emotional intelligence (Oyieyo, 2012; Chindo, 2022). Additionally, these interventions contribute to the cultivation of well-rounded individuals who exhibit empathy, responsibility, and resilience (Nkinga et al., 2018). Studies have shown positive outcomes of guidance and counseling interventions on students' behavioral outcomes and academic performance in various contexts.



Disciplinary actions implemented by schools also play a significant role in shaping students' discipline (Williams et al., 2020). Research conducted in different countries, including the United States, Nigeria, and Uganda, has highlighted the influence of school disciplinary frameworks on students' behavioral outcomes. While some studies have shown positive effects of disciplinary actions on students' discipline, others have indicated mixed outcomes, suggesting that disciplinary practices could have both direct and inverse influences on students' behavior (Ssenyonga et al., 2019; Cortina & Fazel, 2015).

However, despite the implementation of various interventions, the prevalence of indiscipline cases, such as drug and substance abuse, truancy, gang behavior, and early sexual debut, remains high in Kiambu County, Kenya (Magai & Malik, 2018; Ndaita, 2016). Empirical evidence suggests that a considerable proportion of adolescents in the county exhibit behavioral problems, posing significant challenges to their well-being and development. Studies focused on Kiambu County have highlighted the high levels of indiscipline among secondary school students despite the deployment of discipline management interventions (Gesare, 2019). Factors such as drug use, sneaking out of school, bullying, and rudeness persist, indicating the need for systematic evaluation of the efficacy of school-based interventions in addressing these challenges (Ndaita, 2016; Gesare, 2019).

Overall, while several school-based interventions influence discipline among students, their efficacy in Kiambu County remains unclear. The relationship between these interventions and students' discipline needs to be systematically assessed to understand their combined influences and address the persistent challenges of indiscipline in the county effectively. This underscores the importance of conducting a comprehensive study to evaluate the influence of disciplinary actions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The persistent prevalence of student indiscipline in Kenyan schools, particularly in Kiambu County, poses a significant challenge to effective teaching and learning processes (Republic of Kenya, 2001; Mwaniki, 2018; Ndaita, 2016). Despite robust interventions recommended by the government, including guidance and counseling, mentorship, and disciplinary actions, students continue to exhibit various behavioral problems, such as truancy, drug abuse, violence, and academic underperformance (Republic of Kenya, 2001; Mwaniki, 2018; Ndaita, 2016).

In Kiambu County, the situation is particularly concerning, with high rates of drug and substance abuse, early sexual engagement, violent school strikes, and academic challenges among secondary school students (Ndaita, 2016; Kiambi, 2018; Kenya County Profile, 2015; Njeri, 2022). Despite efforts to address these issues, including the implementation of behavior change interventions, the effectiveness of these interventions in curbing student indiscipline remains uncertain (Ndaita, 2016; Kiambi, 2018; NACADA, 2014; Kiambu County Director of Education Office, 2018).

Therefore, the current study aims to investigate the influence of guidance and counseling, mentorship, and disciplinary actions on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. By addressing the knowledge gaps and providing insights into the effectiveness of these interventions, the research seeks to contribute to the development of more targeted and effective strategies for tackling indiscipline among students in the county.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

To determine the influence of disciplinary actions on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya

1.3 Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses have been formulated to guide the investigation:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between disciplinary actions and discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Disciplinary Actions Interventions and Students' Discipline

These are direct interventions such as punishments and suspensions meted on students after indiscipline incidents. Williams et al. (2019) examined *Middle school teachers' academic and behavioural perceptions of their students and expectations for high school graduation*. Data were collected from a diverse dyadic sample of 1,653 seventh graders and 63 teachers. The study established that school disciplinary frameworks contributed to better



behavioural outcomes. This current study assessed the level to which the disciplinary policies employed by schools reinforced school behaviour change interventions and vice versa.

Gage et al. (2019) studied *the effect of school-wide positive behaviour interventions and supports on disciplinary exclusions (SWPBIS)*. The Study employed propensity score matching to examine the differences in suspension and expulsion rates for 98 schools that were implementing SWPBIS and those who were not doing so. The study findings showed that schools that were using the SWPBIS framework had fewer cases of suspensions. This showed possible changes in negative behaviours.

Ssenyonga et al. (2019) carried out a study on, *Stress and positive attitudes towards violent discipline are associated with school violence by Ugandan teachers*. Data was collected from a sample of 291 teachers and 702 students using questionnaires. These were drawn from 12 public secondary schools in the southwestern region of the country. The study showed that there was no significant relationship between teacher's violent disciplinary methods and students' disciplinary outcomes.

Anyanwu et al. (2019) carried out a study on, *Students' perception on the effect of disciplinary suspension on their psychological well-being in public secondary schools in Lang'ata Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya*. The study was anchored on the deterrent and reformatory theories of punishment. Based on the phenomenological and descriptive research designs, data was collected from Form 2 and 3 students as well as discipline and counselling masters/ mistresses. The study showed that disciplinary measures had both positive and negative effects on the students. The study did not expressly show the level to which the discipline measures affect the behavioural outcomes of the students. This therefore underlines the importance of this current study.

Brugar (2016) carried out a study on, *Teaching social studies/history to elementary school students through a discipline-specific approach*. Based on mixed research methods, the study investigated the level to which disciplinary actions affected students learning. The findings show that the specific disciplinary interventions had different outcomes for students' academic performance and discipline in the schools studied. Schools with effective disciplinary frameworks had fewer indiscipline cases than schools. This current study investigated the level to which the disciplinary actions of schools affected students' discipline in Kiambu County.

Edwards (2016) investigated the nexus between school racial composition and racial inequality in the discipline. The findings showed that discriminatory disciplinary interventions meted on students from minority groups resulted in differential effects on behaviour. In this regard, it was pertinent for disciplinary actions to take cognizance of the different demographic attributes of students to check discipline inequality. Since schools have students' various backgrounds, it is important to ensure balance in dispensing discipline. This current study set out to investigate the level to which responsive discipline actions based on individual students' attributes affect their discipline in Kiambu County.

Anyon et al. (2016) in study on, *Restorative Interventions and School Discipline Sanctions in a Large Urban School District*, employed multilevel modeling of 9,921 student discipline records. The study showed that some discipline actions tended to focus on special groups of students. In this regard, youth from "Black, Latino, and Native American youth groups, boys, and students in special education tended to be overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions." This also led to skewed disciplinary outcomes among students from these groups. Restorative interventions aimed at achieving balanced disciplinary interventions were thus recommended to ensure balanced behavioural outcomes among the students. This current study investigated the level to which the disciplinary actions, and their perceived impartiality, affected the behaviour of students.

Okonofua et al. (2016) carried out a study entitled *Brief intervention to encourage empathic discipline cuts suspension rates in half among adolescents*. The study hypothesized that high suspension rates were linked to major negative life outcomes among students such as incarceration and unemployment. Data was collected from various environments. The findings showed that teachers' mindsets regarding discipline had a direct effect on the quality of teacher-student relationships. It also affected students' suspensions. In this regard, it was pertinent to put in place interventions aimed at enhancing teacher-student relationships through interventions aimed at appreciating the essence of various disciplinary actions among students. Overcoming negative attitudes towards discipline actions could enhance students' discipline as envisaged by this current study.

Ehiane (2018) carried out a study on, *The nexus between Discipline and academic performance in selected secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria*. The study conceptualized that discipline had positive impacts on the academic performance of students. The study showed that effective school discipline had positive effects on students' behaviour, which consequently affected their general academic performance. This current study tested the veracity of these findings in Kenya, which was not the focus of the former study.



Nyongesa et al. (2016) carried out a study on, *Teachers' disciplining styles and their influence on pupils' behaviour modification in primary schools in Kimilili Sub-County, Kenya*. The study was motivated by the fact that although various disciplinary styles were in place in schools - corrective, supportive, and preventive- indiscipline had constantly escalated in Kenya. This was evidenced by "general refusal to follow school rules and regulations, high levels of strikes, vandalism of school property, arson cases, bullying, absenteeism, as well as increased alcohol use" among others. Based on the mixed research approach, findings showed that "the majority of teachers preferred caning pupils rather than guidance and counselling them." Further, most of the disciplinary methods employed had positive effects on the pupils' behaviours. This current study investigated the influence of disciplinary actions on students' behaviour in Kiambu County.

M'muyuri (2021) carried out a study titled *Education democratization and students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County*. Based on the social learning theory, social systems theory and social factor theory, the study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Data was collected from a sample of 384 student's leaders in addition to 10 principals and 195 principals. The study underlined the central role played by government discipline policy in enhancing the discipline of students. The government emphasized strategies such as punishing, guidance and counselling, suspensions and parental involvement in dealing with indiscipline. According to Khatete (2014), the MOE also laid emphasis on "the rights of children which culminated in the banning of corporal punishment from schools in April 2001." The key aim of the policy was to enhance students discipline by checking riots, truancy, and all manner of rebellion among other behavioural problems. However, indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools remains a major challenge.

The enactment of democratic policies by the Government of Kenya in "The Basic Education Act" aimed to promote students' participation in Board of Management (BOM) meetings (Republic of Kenya, 2013). The objective was to involve students in decision-making processes and foster better relationships between students, teachers, and the school administration. By doing so, the government aimed to address negative perceptions of teachers as authoritarian figures and enhance overall discipline among students (Republic of Kenya, 2013). However, the implementation of these policies resulted in mixed outcomes, as it did not completely eradicate students' indiscipline. Therefore, it became crucial to assess the extent to which government discipline policies influenced disciplinary actions in schools and, consequently, students' discipline in Kiambu County.

Previous studies conducted by Khatete (2014) and M'muyuri (2021) did not specifically focus on this aspect, highlighting the need for further research in this area. This emphasizes the significance of the current study, which examined the impact of school behaviour change interventions on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. The study's findings revealed that improving discipline requires schools to establish a routine and rhythm within the classroom. By setting clear expectations and requirements for students, they would know what to anticipate and understand their responsibilities, potentially leading to positive changes in negative behaviours.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on three theories: the Ecological Systems Theory (EST). The theory was advanced by Bronfenbrenner (1979) to explain how the environment of a person influences their behavioural outcomes. Bronfenbrenner adapted ecological systems to discuss the different system levels that influence the development of a person (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017). These include the microsystem whereby the person is exposed to a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations in one on one setting such as home, school, peers and neighbourhood among others. The second system is the meso-system which incorporates linkages occurring between numerous settings where the developing person is located such as home and school.

The third system is the exo-system which includes one or more social settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant. In these settings, events occur that affect or are affected by what happens in the set containing the developing person. These could be the parental workplace whereby an individual can be affected by the context in which the parent works through acquired values among others. The last system is the macro-system. This includes influences from culture, subculture, and other extended social structures (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017). The last system is chrono-system. In this one, the development of a person is affected by affected over time by numerous influences that occur at school, home, or in the country at large.

Critiques of the Problem Behaviour Theory (PBT) argue that individuals need to remain within a specific ecological context to be consistently influenced by all the systems involved. Relocating to a different location or country can result in changes in the systems, leading to different patterns of development (Tudge et al. 2016). In the context of this current study, the Ecological Systems Theory (EST) is highly relevant as it acknowledges that adolescents' behaviour is influenced by the ecological environment in which they grow. Within this framework,



school-based behaviour change interventions play a crucial role in shaping students' discipline. Implementing measures such as guidance and counselling, peer counselling, mentoring, and involving parents in disciplinary processes in secondary schools can help create an ecological context in which indiscipline among students can be effectively addressed.

The strength of Ecological Systems Theory (EST) lies in its holistic approach, taking into account multiple systems that influence behaviour. By considering the context in which individuals develop, the theory provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors that may influence students' discipline in this study. However, the theory's complexity and lack of specificity could present challenges in its application. Researchers may find it difficult to measure and analyze the interactions between different systems effectively.

Nonetheless, in the context of the current study, Ecological Systems Theory (EST) was quite relevant as it recognized that students' behaviour and discipline are influenced by their ecological environment, encompassing various systems in their lives. The study aimed to understand how school-based behaviour change interventions operate within this ecological context to address indiscipline among students.

By emphasizing the impact of different systems, from the school microsystem to the larger cultural macrosystem, the study gained valuable insights into the factors affecting students' discipline. The theory's developmental perspective aligned well with the focus on students' discipline, which could evolve over time and be influenced by interventions implemented during their academic journey. To address the challenges posed by the theory's complexity, the study carefully considered the practical implications of its concepts. The finding of the study could offer actionable insights for improving students' discipline through the implementation of school-based interventions.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study was based on the correlational research design which is a type of non-experimental research in which the researcher seeks to understand the kind of relationships variables have with one another. Correlation design permitted the researcher to measure the degree and direction of these relationships among these variables as well as making predictions about one variable from the other. The degree of coefficient is expressed as correlation coefficient (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The correlational design is considered a paramount in observational research as no variables are manipulated by the researcher. The correlational research design was useful in examining the interconnectedness of selected predictor and responsive variables which made it suitable.

In this study correlation design was used to determine the relationship between teacher counselling, peer counselling, mentorship, disciplinary actions and students discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. The design was appropriate for analyzing the relationships between the independent variable - school-based behaviour change interventions and the dependent variable - student indiscipline as it was unbiased in its examination of the link between.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study focused on public secondary schools in Kiambu County. The county is one of the five counties of the former Central Province of Kenya. It is one of the most populous Counties in Kenya. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, it had a population of 2.418 million in the 2019 National Census (KNBS, 2019). The county is comprised 13 sub-counties namely: Kiambaa, Kikuyu, Gatundu North, Thika East, Gatundu South, Limuru, Githunguri, Juja, Kabete, Kiambu, Thika West, Lari and, Ruiru. With a total area of Kiambu County is 2,449 km², the main economic activities in the county are agricultural and commercial activities. The main crops grown are coffee, tea and dairy farming. Small scale farming is also common. Kiambu is also a largely commercial county with numerous small and medium enterprises. The county was chosen because it is characterized by high levels of indiscipline as observed by Kabiru et al. (2018) who argues that 22% of children in the county had behavioural problems, which is above the national average of 18%. Also, literature on the relationship between school-based behaviour change interventions and discipline in the area is scanty. This meant that making empirically informed recommendations on ways of dealing with indiscipline in the County remained an elusive goal.

3.3 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) defines the population for any study as all objects in the research site which are affected by the stated research problem. It was the portion of the study from which the researcher could practically



reach to select a representative sample. The study targeted all the 227 public secondary schools in Kiambu County with a total of 227 principals, 3,479 teachers and 89,065 students in the county (Kiambu County Government, February 2021). The study focused particularly on public secondary students. Involving public secondary students in studies about discipline in their schools in Kenya is of utmost importance as it empowers them to become active participants in shaping their own educational environment. By including students in these studies, their perspectives, experiences, and opinions are given due consideration, leading to more informed and effective discipline policies. Such engagement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among students, encouraging them to take accountability for their behavior and academic performance. Moreover, student involvement promotes a sense of trust and mutual respect between students and school authorities, ultimately creating a more conducive and harmonious learning environment that enhances overall academic achievement and personal development.

Table 1
Target Population

Category	Target Population
Principals	227
Teachers	3,479
Students	89,065

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Martínez-Mesa et al. (2016) defined sampling as the process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population in such a way that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group. This study used three types of sampling procedure namely; purposive sampling, stratified sampling and simple random sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select study location, public secondary schools and forms three and four students. The schools were further stratified into four categories namely: day, mixed day/boarding, girls boarding and boys boarding. The study used simple random sampling technique in selecting the school categories that is; four boarding schools for boys, six boarding schools for girls, three-day schools and ten mixed day schools. A total of 23 schools out of the total 227 schools were selected for study. This represents 10% of the total number of public secondary schools in Kiambu County. This sample is considered enough in social science study which recommends a minimum of 10% (Martínez-Mesa et al. 2016)

Simple random was further used in each of the three categories of the study participants namely; principals, teachers and students to obtain the respondents. In this regard, the study participants were randomly selected from the schools sampled.

To obtain the sample of teachers and students, the study used simplified formula for calculating sample size as put forward by Yamane (1967).

The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n=the sample size

N= the population size

e= sampling error (assumed at 0.1 for teachers & 0.05 for students)

For principals, a sampling error of 10% was used. This was informed by considerations for making it possible to reach them adequately for interviews. Furthermore, 10% is considered enough for a representative sample in descriptive studies (Kasomo, 2007).

While the overall sample size might seem relatively small, it was deemed adequate as it accounted for approximately 10% of the total population. Moreover, the study into consideration the level of heterogeneity within the population and the resources available for data collection and analysis. By sampling a diverse group of principals, teachers, and students, the study aimed to capture a comprehensive view of disciplinary practices and experiences in Kenyan schools. This carefully selected sample offers valuable insights into the dynamics of discipline within these educational institutions, paving the way for informed decision-making and potential improvements in fostering a conducive learning environment for all stakeholders involved. In this regard, the study sampled 23 principals, 97 teachers and 398 students as presented in Table 2.



Table 2
Sample Size

Category	Population	Sample	Sampling Procedure
Principals	227	23	$n_1=N (10\%)$
Teachers	3,479	97	$n_2=N/1+N (0.1)^2$
Students	89,065	398	$n_3=N/1+N (0.05)^2$

3.6 Research Instrument

Data was collected using questionnaires, interview guides, and observation schedules. By employing these different data collection methods, the researcher aimed to ensure a comprehensive and robust understanding of the research topic. The triangulation of data allowed for cross-verification, identification of patterns and inconsistencies, and the development of a more complete picture of the educational landscape in Kiambu County. The varied perspectives provided by questionnaires, interviews, and observations enhanced the validity and reliability of the data, as each method brought its own unique strengths to the study.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

This section presents the response rate of the study participants. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviewing various respondents. Table 5 shows the response rate from the sampled participants in the three categories that is principals, teachers and students. Four hundred and ninety nine (499) respondents of the 518 respondents (96.3%) sampled participated in the study. From these respondents, 18 out of 23 principals (78.3%) were interviewed. At the same time, 83 out of 97 teachers (85.6%) were interviewed while 398 out of 398 students (100.0%) responded to the questionnaires. According to Saleh and Bista (2017) the response rate is a critical aspect of the study as it reflects the proportion of participants who actively engaged in the research. A higher response rate (above 60%) generally enhances the reliability and generalizability of the study's findings, as it suggests that the sample is more representative of the target population. In this case, the response rates for principals, teachers, and students indicated a good level of participation, which enhanced the credibility of the study's results. The response rate is shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3
Response Rate

Category	Sample	Responded	Response Rate
Principals	23	18	78.3
Teachers	97	83	85.6
Students	398	398	100.0
Average	518	499	96.3

4.1.1 Disciplinary Actions and Students' Discipline

The fourth objective of the study was to determine the influence of disciplinary action on discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya. The findings from likert-scale statements, open-ended questions and interviews are presented in the following sections.

Table 4
Disciplinary Frameworks and Better Behavioural Outcomes

Descriptive Statistics					
School disciplinary frameworks contribute to better behavioural outcomes					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.20
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	1.28

Table 4 shows that to a high extent (M=4) the students noted that school disciplinary frameworks contribute to better behavioural outcomes. These findings underlined the pertinence of strong disciplinary frameworks and their implementation in schools since they could contribute to better behavioural outcomes among students in Kiambu



County. The finding aligned with the study by Williams et al. (2019) who established that “school disciplinary frameworks in the USA contributed to better behavioural outcomes.” The study established the various interventions put in place by assistant principals to deal with indiscipline cases in schools. Based on the critical race theoretical framework, the study showed that various school discipline interventions for African American students such as peer counselling and assorted guidance and counselling interventions were employed. These played pivotal roles in checking indiscipline among the students studied. The findings of this current study agreed with those of the former study that shows that disciplinary actions militate against indiscipline in Kenyan schools.

Table 5
Violent Disciplinary Methods and Positive Students’ Disciplinary Outcomes

Descriptive Statistics					
Violent disciplinary methods such as canning in schools have positive students’ disciplinary outcomes					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	3	1.66
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	2	1.28

Table 5 shows that to a moderate extent (M=3) the students and teachers agreed that violent disciplinary methods such as canning in schools had positive students’ disciplinary outcomes. The teachers agreed to a low extent (M=2) to the statement. The findings showed that canning and other violent disciplinary actions should be used as a last result among students since they did not have strong positive outcomes. This aligned with the findings by Ssenyonga et al. (2019) who showed that there was no significant relationship between teacher’s violent disciplinary methods and students’ disciplinary outcomes. As such, disciplinary practices could have inverse as well as direct influences on students’ disciplines. In this case of this study, it was evident that disciplinary actions had direct influence on school indiscipline.

Table 6
Discipline Measures and Positive and Negative Effects on Students

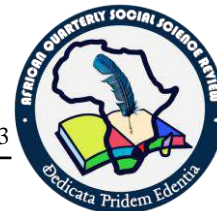
Descriptive Statistics					
Discipline measures have both positive and negative effects on the students					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.10
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.98

Table 6 show to a high extent (M=4) that the students and teachers agreed that discipline measures had both positive and negative effects on the students as shown in Table 31. This means that whereas disciplinary actions could contribute to better disciplinary outcomes among students, sometimes it could affect them, negatively; defeating the essence of such actions. These findings agreed with the study by Williams et al. (2019) who drew a positive link between disciplinary actions and behavioural outcomes among students. It was thus important to enhance students’ behaviours through stringent behavioural interventions. These findings further disagreed with the study by Ssenyonga et al. (2019) who elicited that there was no significant relationship between teacher’s violent disciplinary methods and students’ disciplinary outcomes. As such, from the study findings disciplinary measures could have both positive and negative influence on the students’ behaviour.

Table 7
Schools with effective disciplinary frameworks and Reduced Students’ Indiscipline

Descriptive Statistics					
Schools with effective disciplinary frameworks have fewer indiscipline cases than schools without such frameworks					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Teachers	83	2.00	5.00	4	0.84

Table 7 shows that the teachers agreed to a high extent (M=4) that schools with effective disciplinary frameworks had fewer indiscipline cases than schools without such frameworks (M=4). This shows that when schools put in place effective disciplinary frameworks their tendency curb indiscipline was enhanced. It was thus necessary for



schools strengthen their disciplinary actions. These findings further align with the study by Williams et al. (2019) that showed that disciplinary measures affected the discipline of students positively. There is need to constantly review disciplinary frameworks regularly to ensure that they remain effective. This study established that effective disciplinary framework had positive effects on students’ behaviour in Kiambu County.

The study by Nyongesa et al. (2016) on *Teachers’ disciplining styles and their influence on pupils’ behaviour modification in primary schools in Kimilili Sub-County, Kenya* showed that disciplinary actions played key roles in the discipline of students. Nyongesa established that although various disciplinary styles were in place in schools - corrective, supportive, and preventive - indiscipline had constantly escalated in Kenya. This was evidenced by “general refusal to follow school rules and regulations, high levels of strikes, vandalism of school property, arson cases, bullying, absenteeism, as well as increased alcohol use” among others. Most of the disciplinary methods employed had positive effects on the students’ behaviours

Table 8
Discipline Actions Based on Individual Students’ Attributes and Students Discipline

Descriptive Statistics					
Responsive discipline actions based on individual students’ attributes affect students discipline in our school					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	33.00	4	1.90
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	1.00

Table 8 shows to a high extent (M=4) that the student and teachers agreed that discipline actions based on individual students’ attributes affect students discipline in our school. Thus, the disciplinary actions that were effective and aligned with the needs of the students affected behavioural outcomes among such students. Edwards (2016) investigated the connection between school racial composition and racial inequality in the discipline. The findings showed that discriminatory disciplinary interventions meted on students from minority groups resulted in differential effects on behaviour. In this regard, it was pertinent for disciplinary actions to take cognizance of the different demographic attributes of students to check discipline inequality. Since schools have students with various backgrounds, it was important to ensure balance in dispensing discipline. This current study finding showed that when the disciplinary actions are aligned to individual students needs they are effective on the students’ behaviour in Kiambu County

Table 9
Negative Attitudes towards Discipline Actions and Students’ Discipline

Descriptive Statistics					
Negative attitudes towards discipline actions could challenge students’ discipline as well as their academic performance					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.13
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	1.13

Table 9 shows that the students and teacher agreed to a high extent (M=4) that negative attitudes towards discipline actions could challenge students’ discipline as well as their academic performance. This study findings showed the perceptions and receptivity of students towards disciplinary actions could determine their likelihood to register positive behavioural outcomes after being disciplined. The study by

Okonofua et al. (2016) on “Brief intervention to encourage empathic discipline cuts suspension rates in half among adolescents” showed that teachers’ mindsets regarding discipline had a direct effect on the quality of teacher-student relationships. It also affected students’ suspensions. This called for interventions aimed at enhancing teacher-student relationships through interventions aimed at appreciating the essence of various disciplinary actions among students. This study emphasized the need to overcome negative attitudes towards discipline actions in secondary schools. If these disciplinary actions do not factor in the potential impacts that such actions could have on attitudes towards them, the reasons for these actions can be defeated.

In this regard, it was pertinent for disciplinary actions to take cognizance of the different demographic attributes of students to check discipline inequality. Since schools have students’ various backgrounds, it is important to ensure balance in dispensing discipline. This current study corroborates the study by Edwards (2016) that shows that responsive discipline actions based on individual students’ attributes affect the discipline of students in Kiambu



County. Schools should thus study students carefully before embarking on disciplinary interventions to ensure that the chose actions are responsive to the needs of the specific students. Furthermore, both students and teachers noted to a high extent ($M=4$) that the school administration supports the disciplinary actions used on students as presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10

School Administration Supports the Disciplinary Actions

Descriptive Statistics					
The school administration supports the disciplinary actions used on students					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.34
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.93

Furthermore, both students and teachers noted to a high extent ($M=4$) that the school administration supports the disciplinary actions used on students as presented in Table 35. The findings showed that the pertinence of support of disciplinary actions by schools since it contributed to better disciplinary outcomes among students. The school administration could play a key role in creating an environment that supports the application of disciplinary actions in schools. This could go on to enhance students' discipline in secondary schools. The main preoccupation of schools should thus be ensuring that the school environment is well set to respond to students' disciplinary problems. This can be achieved by ensuring that all the various interventions take into consideration the specific needs of the schools. This is pivotal since as explained by the Problem Behaviour Theory (PBT) (Jessor, 1977), *The behavioural choices of students can be influenced by the relationships that they sustain in their environment*, (Ma & Shive, 2000).

The importance of the support of schools for disciplinary actions cannot be overemphasized. Schools play a critical role in providing a safe and supportive learning environment, as emphasized by Hussein and Hussein (2010). By ensuring security and removing triggers for conflict and violence, schools created a foundation for positive behaviour and discipline among students. This allowed students to communicate their thoughts, ideas, and motivations, engage constructively in classroom activities, meet their psychosocial needs, and work through challenges in a way that connects together different facets of their personalities thanks to a supportive learning environment (Omar, 2013).

On the other hand, the teacher must depend on positive reinforcement techniques rather than punitive ones while using contemporary disciplinary measures to teach discipline and protect the student's honor and reputation (Darwazah, 2014). This was crucial to enhance the receptivity of students to disciplinary actions. If the gap was created between students and teachers within the processes of implementing different behaviour management strategies in Kiambu County, then their efficacy would be greatly reduced.

A supportive learning environment, as noted by Omar (2013), enabled students to freely communicate their thoughts, engage constructively in classroom activities, and work through challenges. This environment allowed students to connect different facets of their personalities, fostering personal growth and development. Teachers' use of positive reinforcement techniques and contemporary disciplinary measures, rather than punitive approaches, as suggested by Darwazah (2014), was crucial in enhancing students' receptivity to disciplinary actions. When students feel respected and supported, they were more likely to respond positively to discipline and guidance.

As such, the effectiveness of behaviour management strategies depends on the relationship between students and teachers. Creating a positive and engaging school climate reduces the emergence of negative behaviours and promotes positive social behaviours and beliefs (Masadia, 2014). A positive school climate nurtured the academic, emotional, and social abilities of students, contributing to a harmonious and cohesive learning environment. This perspective is supported by William et al. (2012) who demonstrated the academic excellence of students in small schools and the superior academic performance of students in modern small and large schools compared to older institutions. William et al. (2012) highlighted the need to improve learning settings to maximize the anticipated gains. The school administration should, therefore, meticulously integrate disciplinary actions into their work processes to create a conducive learning environment that fosters academic excellence and positive behaviour.

Conversely, Dare & O'Donovan (2002) shed light on the influence of school administration in fostering a stimulating learning environment. The results showed that, from the perspective of instructors, school administration had little involvement in creating an engaging learning environment. To address this, the researcher suggested holding workshops and seminars on contemporary classroom management and effective student interaction. Achieving these goals should be a priority for school administrators to ensure a positive and supportive learning environment. By



prioritizing a positive school climate, schools in Kiambu County can ensure that disciplinary actions are more successful in achieving their intended goals.

As a result, schools should be well poised to ensure that disciplinary actions succeeded through collaboration between teachers and students as affirmed by one of the respondents who said that:

The school administration has a key role to play in disciplinary processes in schools. The schools should ensure that the behaviour management interventions they roll out succeed by integrating the input of teachers and school administrators as well as that of students (Respondent 6, Kiambu County, May 2022).

These findings were consistent with previous research conducted by Valdebenito et al. (2018), which also highlighted the significance of school interventions in shaping students' discipline. According to Valdebenito et al. (2018), the way interventions are implemented within the school environment can have a profound impact on students' behavioural choices. When students are provided with proper guidance and support to avoid problem behaviour, they are more likely to refrain from engaging in such behaviours. This aligns with the outcomes observed in this study.

The role of parents in supporting school-level interventions cannot be understated, as noted by Oyieyo (2012). Collaborative efforts between schools and parents can significantly influence students' behaviour. By fostering a positive and supportive environment both at home and in school, students are more likely to demonstrate improved discipline and conduct.

In Kiambu County, the interventions implemented proved to be pivotal in enhancing discipline among secondary school students. The interventions were thoughtfully designed to be responsive to the unique behaviour management needs of schools. This adaptability allowed for interventions that effectively addressed specific challenges and promoted positive behavioural change.

The current findings resonate with the previous research by Valdebenito et al. (2018) and Oyieyo (2012), as both studies underlined the efficacy of school behaviour change interventions in mitigating disciplinary issues. The positive impact of such interventions was evident in the improved discipline observed among students in secondary schools. When implemented effectively and with parental support, these interventions can foster a positive and supportive environment that encourages students to make better behavioural choices.

Table 11
Restorative Interventions and Balanced Behavioural Outcomes among the Students

Descriptive Statistics					
Restorative interventions aimed at achieving balanced disciplinary interventions enhance balanced behavioural outcomes among the students					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Teachers	83	3.00	5.00	4	0.65

Table 11 shows that the teachers went on to agree to a high extent (M=4) that restorative interventions aimed at achieving balanced disciplinary interventions enhanced balanced behavioural outcomes among the students. In this regard, it can be deduced that efforts to ensure balance in disciplinary actions contributed to favourable behavioural outcomes among students. These findings were presented in Table 36. Anyon et al. (2016) in “Restorative Interventions and School Discipline Sanctions in a Large Urban School District” found that restorative interventions aimed at achieving balanced disciplinary interventions ensure enhanced students’ discipline. The study showed that some discipline actions tended to focus on special groups of students. In this regard, youth from “black, Latino, and Native American youth groups, boys, and students” in special education tended to be overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions.” This also led to skewed disciplinary outcomes among students from these groups. Restorative interventions aimed at achieving balanced disciplinary interventions were thus recommended to ensure balanced behavioural outcomes among the students. This current study investigated the level to which the disciplinary actions, and their perceived impartiality, affected the behaviour of students’ behavioural outcomes among the students.

This current study showed that disciplinary actions, and their perceived impartiality, affected the behaviour of students. It was thus pertinent for schools to establish strong and responsive strategies aimed at strengthen disciplinary intervention in schools.

The response to interview questions showed that disciplinary action has a significant effect on the discipline among public secondary school students. The findings showed that the specific disciplinary interventions had different outcomes for students’ academic performance and discipline among the students studied. These findings were in line



with a study by Williams et al. (2019) that shows that “school disciplinary frameworks contributed to better behavioural outcomes.” These firms were corroborated by one of the respondents who said:

There is need to ensure that schools have elaborated disciplinary frameworks. This is important since schools that have good frameworks manage indiscipline well than schools that do not have such frameworks. It is also important to come up with good approaches to enhance behavioural outcomes (Respondent 5, Kiambu County, May 2022).

This study showed that it is essential to establish well-defined disciplinary frameworks within schools as emphasized by (Fabelo et al., 2011). Schools that have comprehensive disciplinary frameworks tend to effectively manage issues of indiscipline compared to those that lack such frameworks. A clear and elaborated disciplinary framework provides a structure and set of guidelines for addressing disciplinary incidents, promoting consistency and fairness in disciplinary actions. It helped create a conducive learning environment where students understand the boundaries and expectations of behaviour.

Furthermore, developing effective approaches to enhance behavioural outcomes is crucial. Schools should adopt strategies that go beyond punitive measures and focus on preventive and proactive interventions. Such approaches may include promoting positive behaviour through rewards and recognition, implementing social-emotional learning programmes, fostering a sense of belonging and connectedness among students, and providing counselling and support services.

By emphasizing positive behavioural outcomes and implementing proactive measures, schools can create a culture that encourages responsible behaviour and reduces instances of indiscipline. It was important to foster a collaborative approach involving teachers, administrators, students, and parents to develop and implement these approaches effectively. Regular evaluation and monitoring of the outcomes will help identify areas of improvement and ensure the continuous enhancement of behavioural outcomes in schools.

Overall, having well-elaborated disciplinary frameworks and implementing effective approaches to enhance behavioural outcomes are vital in promoting a positive and disciplined school environment. These efforts contribute to the overall well-being and academic success of students while fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and positive behaviour.

Therefore, repeating a grade or leaving school was twice as likely for students with just one disciplinary contact during their middle and high school years as it was for those without any. In Kiambu County, the findings make it apparent that indiscipline could affect the performance of students. In this regard, one of the respondents said.

Students with behavioural problems are likely to perform poorly as compared to students with good behaviour. It was thus important for schools to constantly monitor students to ensure that their negative behaviours were put in check (Respondent 7, Kiambu County, May 2022).

Academic success among students was typically further hampered when disciplinary actions results in expulsion from the learning environment. Numerous mechanisms that contributed to the issue have been identified through studies. First, suspensions result in a straightforward loss of teaching time. According to Skiba and Noguera (2010), increased academic learning time was associated with higher levels of student accomplishment; thus, denying students access to this learning time is counterproductive. Second, when a student is expelled from school, they may lose interest in the institution, its rules, and their coursework, which will lower their motivation to succeed academically (Gregory et al., 2010). Students were more prone to repeat inappropriate behaviour and even turn to breaking the law in the greater society when ties to school were severed. In Kiambu County, it was important, as result of these potential implications of indiscipline, to ensure that disciplinary challenges among students were quickly dealt with through all possible means. In this regard, one of the respondents said that:

Indiscipline has myriads of negative influences on the performance of students. In this regard, it was important to deal with indiscipline promptly through all possible means (Respondent 5, Kiambu County, May 2022).

Simba et al. (2004) advanced that academic achievement was better if there was good discipline. Academic performance measures a learner's aptitude and proficiency in a subject, a school, or a specific set of skills. Discipline was beneficial because it developed character and helped people learn in productive ways. Nobody can succeed in life



unless they have self-discipline. In the context of Kiambu County, it was important to ensure that indiscipline in schools was dealt with through the creation of a firm environment that incorporates all indiscipline cases.

The foregoing findings was aligned with the Ecological Systems Theory (EST) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The findings showed clearly that the school environment in Kiambu County schools influenced students' behavioural outcomes. Bronfenbrenner discussed the different system levels as Bronfenbrenner (1979) shows five systems that influence the development of a person. These include the microsystem whereby the person is exposed to a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations in one on one setting such as home, school, peers, neighbourhood etc. The school environment in Kiambu County as a micro environment played important roles in dealing with students' indiscipline through the interventions that were put in place there. The second system is the meso-system which incorporates linkages occurring between numerous settings where the developing person is located such as home and school. It was thus pertinent for parents in Kiambu County to collaborate with teachers in creating "a meso-environment which guided students in the right directions." Parents should support teachers in ensuring that indiscipline was managed. This was supported by one of the teachers who said that:

The home environment plays a crucial role in guidance students in the right directions. It was thus important to ensure that parents back up teachers and the school environment in ensuring that indiscipline is checked. (Respondent 5, Kiambu County, May 2022).

The third system is the exo-system which includes one or more social settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant. In these settings, events occur that affect or are affected by what happens in the set containing the developing person. These could be the parental workplace whereby an individual can be affected by the context in which the parent works through acquired values among others. The last system is the macro-system. This includes influences from culture, subculture, and other extended social structures (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). The last system is chrono-system. In this one, the development of a person is affected by affected over time by numerous influences that occur at school, home, or in the country at large. In line with these findings, it is imperative for the larger community to support behavioural interventions in schools. Some of the respondents in this study pointed out that religious and government institutions could play important roles in guidance students appropriately. Risk-taking behaviours at the community level should be controlled by reducing the risks in the community: One of the respondents had this to say to this end:

It is important to control risk taking behaviours in the community. This can be achieved by ensuring that the community was devoid of negative influences that could promote or sustain indiscipline among students. This was possible by creating rapport between the society and the schools. The government can also support schools by support disciplinary interventions through relevant policies. (Respondent 5, Kiambu County, May 2022).

It can be concluded that disciplinary actions in schools aligned to the EST since the home, societal and school ecologies of students affected their behaviour. In this regard, school behaviour change interventions determine the discipline of students. Measures such as guidance and counselling, peer counselling, mentoring and parental involvement within disciplinary processes in secondary schools create an ecology in which indiscipline among students can be checked. Schools should thus constantly strengthen behavioural interventions within the student's environment.

Brugar (2016) in a study on teaching social studies/history to elementary school students through a discipline-specific approach show that the specific disciplinary interventions had different outcomes for students' academic performance and discipline in the schools studied. Schools with effective disciplinary frameworks had fewer indiscipline cases than schools. This current study affirmed that disciplinary actions of schools affected students' discipline in Kiambu County. To this end, schools with effective disciplinary frameworks had fewer indiscipline cases than schools' situations where disciplinary actions were not effected. To support this, one of the respondents said:

Discipline measures had both positive and negative effects on the students. This in turn affects the academic performance of the students (Respondent 10, Kiambu County, May 2022).

Furthermore, the majority of schools already had stringent measures to implement enforce discipline in schools. For example, during opening days, students are searched at the gate to make sure they do not smuggle in goods that



are prohibited. The schools also made sure that students behave well all the times while on school premises, encourage students to cooperate with each other, and by punishing and caning. However, this could be challenged by the fact that government policy had called for banning of caning in schools (Khatete, 2014). Since April 2001, the MOE laid emphasis on “the rights of children which culminated in the banning of corporal punishment from schools.” The key aim of the policy was to enhance students discipline by checking riots, truancy, and all manner of rebellion among other behavioural problems. Nevertheless, schools in Kiambu County continued to face numerous behavioural challenges which had pushed them to constantly come up with a blend of interventions to curb it. Furthermore, discipline was influenced by peer pressure. As such, peer pressure breeds bad character. To support this, one of the respondents said:

Peer pressure convinces them to take certain actions, and when they do, they suffer the natural consequences – which they are not mature enough to handle. Peer pressure can lead students to alcohol, drugs, unsafe sex practices, blatant disrespect for authority, and aggression toward family member (Respondent 8, Kiambu County, May 2022).

The findings showed that to improve discipline, schools must make sure that the classroom has a routine and a rhythm. Students need to know what to expect from the class and what is required of them in this manner. This study finding was aligned with the findings by Gage et al. (2019) who noted that classroom management lead to fewer cases of indiscipline. This showed possible changes in negative behaviours. In addition, the teachers noted that school should have a discipline control procedure to keep the students in check. A proper code of conduct, rules, and regulations must be followed. This view was supported by Ssenyonga et al. (2019) who found that strict school rules kept bad behaviour such as school violence at bay. Further, the findings showed that schools should reward good behaviour. This would encourage other students to behave better. As a result, they would put in an effort to become a better student and to be disciplined (Okonofua et al., 2016).

The findings showed that principals were working hard to implement disciplinary measures in schools. Specifically, there was reduction of drug and substance abuse in schools. The teachers also encourage students to be honest with each other, avoid stealing from other students, respecting each other and avoid speaking mother tongues. As a result, the findings showed that Schools with effective disciplinary frameworks had fewer indiscipline cases than schools’ situations where disciplinary actions were not affected which further supports the findings by (Williams et al., 2019). Furthermore, students who observed high discipline experience improvement in their academic performance. To support this, one of the respondents said:

High discipline means keeping yourself focused on assignments or in classes, not getting yourself distracted during learning or times of study and making sure that you're on track with deadline, this will ultimately lead to high academic performance (Respondent 12, Kiambu County, May 2022).

The fourth hypothesis was to examine if there was a statistically significant relationship between and discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County.

H_{04} : There is no statistically significant relationship between disciplinary actions and discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya

Table 12
Correlation between Disciplinary Actions and Discipline

Disciplinary Actions Scores	Students Discipline Scores	
	Pearson Correlation	.599**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
R2	0.359	
N	481	

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



The findings in Table 12 shows that there was positive and significant correlation between disciplinary actions and discipline ($r=0.599, p<0.05$). These findings showed that the disciplinary actions meted on students were correlated with their behavioural outcomes. The null hypothesis was thus rejected. These findings aligned with the study by Williams et al. (2019) who “examined middle school teachers’ academic and behavioural perceptions of their students and expectations for high school graduation.” The study established that school disciplinary frameworks contributed to better behavioural outcomes. Brugar (2016) supports these findings by affirming that the specific disciplinary interventions had different outcomes for students’ academic performance and discipline in the schools studied. Schools with effective disciplinary frameworks had fewer indiscipline cases than schools without. The findings of this current study affirmed that the disciplinary actions of schools reinforced school behaviour change interventions.

The findings further aligned with the study by Gage et al. (2019) on “the effect of school-wide positive behaviour interventions and supports on disciplinary exclusions (SWPBIS).” The study showed that the disciplinary actions used by schools such as suspension and expulsion rates for 98 schools that were implementing SWPBIS and those who were not doing so had fewer cases of suspensions. This showed that disciplinary action had positive impacts on students’ discipline.

The findings of this study were in disparity with those of Ssenyonga (2019) in Uganda on “stress and positive attitudes towards violent discipline are associated with school violence by Ugandan teachers.” The study showed that there was no significant relationship between teacher’s violent disciplinary methods and students’ disciplinary outcomes. These findings showed that disciplinary actions do not always yield the desired outcomes. Whereas disciplinary actions could have positive effects in some instances and negative effects in other cases. Schools should thus meticulously choose the disciplinary actions they apply on their students to make them more responsive to disciplinary needs.

4.8 Students’ Discipline

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements regarding students’ discipline. The findings were presented in the following sections. The students agreed to a high extent ($M=4$) that school behaviour change interventions have enhanced participation in school programmes as presented in Table 13. This could contribute to enhanced discipline as shown by Government of Kenya in “The Basic Education Act” that enacted democratic policies aimed at including students in Board of Management (BOM) meetings (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

Table 13

School behaviour Change Interventions and Participation in School Programmes

Descriptive Statistics					
School behaviour change interventions have enhanced participation in school programmes					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.37
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.99

The aforementioned act created a good platform for propping up students’ participation in decision making as well as bridging the gap between students, teachers and the school administration. This was aimed at curbing negative perceptions of teachers as “dictators, cruel, and punishers” and by so doing enhancing discipline among students. This was in line with Ministry of Education guidelines (GOK, 2013). In line with the provisions of the government of Kenya Act, it is evident that the measures put in place by the government to check indiscipline, when coupled with school interventions play pivotal roles in checking indiscipline among students.

Table 14

Reduction in Absenteeism Due to School behaviour Change Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction in absenteeism due to school behaviour change interventions					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.18
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	1.11



As presented in Table 14, the students and teachers also agreed to a high extent ($M=4$) that there was a reduction in absenteeism due to school behaviour change interventions. The findings showed that reduction of absenteeism was an indicator of enhanced discipline among students. As the behaviours of students changed positively, there were likely to remain in school and focus on their studies. These findings were in line with the study by Nyongesa et al. (2016) in “teachers’ disciplining styles and their influence on pupils’ behaviour modification in primary schools in Kimilili Sub-County, Kenya.” The study by Nyongesa was motivated by the fact that although various disciplinary styles were in place in schools - corrective, supportive, and preventive- indiscipline had constantly escalated in Kenya. This was evidenced by “general refusal to follow school rules and regulations, high levels of strikes, vandalism of school property, arson cases, bullying, absenteeism, as well as increased alcohol use” among others. The findings of this study showed that “the majority of teachers preferred caning pupils rather than guidance and counselling them.” Further, most of the disciplinary methods employed had positive effects on the pupils’ behaviours. This current study affirmed that the influence of disciplinary actions on students’ behaviour in Kiambu County.

Table 15

Reduction in Drug and Substance Abuse Due to School behaviour Change Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction in drug and substance abuse in our schools due to School Preventive interventions					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.32
Teachers	83	1.00	4.00	4	4.52

The study also sought to find out if there was reduction in drug and substance abuse due to school behaviour change interventions. The findings are presented in Table 15. The teachers and students also agreed to a high extent ($M=4$) that there was a reduction in drug and substance abuse in our schools due to School Preventive interventions. The high standard deviation in teachers’ responses (4.52) showed that their opinions were very diverse. Nevertheless, the findings showed that reduction in abuse of drugs and substances was a main indicator of disciplinary outcomes in the study population. The findings were aligned with a study by Magai and Malik (2018) on “Emotional and Behavioural Problems in Children and Adolescents in Central Kenya in Kiambu County” that showed that substance use was a challenge facing students in the county. The findings of this current study were significant since they showed the contribution of behaviour management strategies towards enhancing students’ discipline in the county. The findings of the study also agreed with a study by Nyongesa et al. (2016) that showed that disciplinary management strategies play key roles aimed at dealing with “general refusal to follow school rules and regulations, high levels of strikes, vandalism of school property, arson cases, bullying, absenteeism, as well as increased alcohol use” among others.

Table 16

Reduction in Drug and Substance Abuse in Schools Due to School Preventive Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
Behavioural interventions have led to a reduction in unsafe sexual behaviours and abortions in our schools					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.36
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.89

The teachers and students agreed that behavioural interventions had led to a reduction in unsafe sexual behaviours and abortions in our schools ($M=4$). The findings as shown in Table 16 indicate that Kiambu County was faced with high incidences of indiscipline cases and risk-taking behaviour such as drug and substance abuse, truancy, gang behaviour, and early sexual debut. Reduction in these vices was thus a pointer of enhanced behavioural outcomes. Schools should thus put in place responsive interventions aimed at reining in on indiscipline among students. This was aligned with the study by Magai and Malik (2018) which showed that these were the main indicators of discipline among students.

There are numerous indiscipline challenges facing students in Kenyan schools. Carpenter et al. (2002) pointed out that disciplinary challenges among students such as truancy, disruptive behaviour, and low academic achievement



are factors that often degrade the quality of educational outcomes. Interventions by mentors are crucial allies in the attempt to develop and mold students, and they have a significant impact on the personality features of the students. Mentoring has a beneficial impact on students' achievement, behaviour, and academic success when teachers and administrators collaborate to help pupils. The foregoing findings show that behaviour management strategies such as mentoring among others which were investigated in this study are crucial in dealing with indiscipline among students in Kenya.

Table 17

Reduction in Reduction in Fighting in Schools Due to School Preventive

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction in fighting in our schools due to the disciplinary interventions					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.28
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.88

The findings in Table 17, shows that discipline interventions had managed to check indiscipline among students in Kiambu County. This showed that behavioural interventions had positive impacts on students' discipline. This finding is supported by the finding by Magai and Malik (2018) that showed the immense discipline challenges facing students in Kiambu County. The two found that in the county, 27% of those aged 6 to 18 years had behavioural problems compared. These high levels of indiscipline thus call for informed interventions. Reduction in fighting incidences could show the success of School Preventive interventions. This underlined the importance of checking unruly behaviour among students.

The findings of this study affirmed that it was important to have responsive discipline management strategies among students as shown by Anyanwu et al. (2019) in the study, on *students' perception on the effect of disciplinary suspension on their psychological well-being in public secondary schools in Lang'ata Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya*. The study was anchored on the deterrent and reformatory theories of punishment. The findings of this current study showed that disciplinary action focused on students as envisaged by theories of punishment play crucial roles in dealing with school indiscipline. This was particularly so since discipline measures had both positive and negative effects on the students.

Table 18

Reduction in Reduction in Bullying in Schools Due to School Preventive Interventions

Descriptive Statistics					
There is a reduction of bullying of others among students due to the school-preventive measures					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.17
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.82

The students and teachers agreed to a high extent that there was a reduction of bullying of others among students due to school-preventive measures as presented in Table 18. The findings affirmed that reduction in bullying was a main indicator of school behavioural outcomes. The gravity of indiscipline cases in Kiambu County were identified by Ndaita (2016) in "teachers' disciplining styles and their influence on pupils' behaviour modification in primary schools in Kimilili Sub-County, Kenya." The study was motivated by the fact that although various disciplinary styles were in place in schools - corrective, supportive, and preventive- indiscipline had constantly escalated in Kenya. This was evidenced by "general refusal to follow school rules and regulations, high levels of strikes, vandalism of school property, arson cases, bullying, absenteeism, as well as increased alcohol use" among others."

The findings of this current study supported the findings by Ndaita which showed high levels of drug use, sneaking out of school, bullying and rudeness in Kiambu County among others despite the fact that the schools deployed various discipline management interventions. The reduction in bullying incidences was thus a gain in checking indiscipline in the county through behaviour change interventions. These findings were a pointer to the need for systematic school behaviour management interventions aimed checking indiscipline in schools within the stipulated time period.

**Table 19***Behaviour Change Strategies Have Led Reduction of Destruction of School Property*

Descriptive Statistics					
Behaviour change strategies have led reduction of destruction of school property					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students	398	1.00	5.00	4	1.26
Teachers	83	1.00	5.00	4	0.90

Furthermore, to a high extent (M=4), the students and teachers observed that behaviour change strategies had led reduction of destruction of school property as shown in Table 19.

The findings showed that disciplinary actions employed had positive effects on students' behaviours. When the behaviours changes, wanton destruction of school property was curbed. This finding was similar to the finding by Nyongesa et al. (2016) in "*teachers' disciplining styles and their influence on pupils' behaviour modification in primary schools in Kimilili Sub-County, Kenya*" underlines the importance of reduction in indiscipline cases among students.

The study by Nyongesa et al. (2016) was motivated by the fact that although various disciplinary styles were in place in schools - corrective, supportive, and preventive- indiscipline had constantly escalated in Kenya. This was evidenced by "general refusal to follow school rules and regulations, high levels of strikes, vandalism of school property, arson cases, bullying, absenteeism, as well as increased alcohol use" among others. Based on the mixed research approach, findings show that "the majority of teachers preferred caning pupils rather than guiding and counseling them." Further, most of the disciplinary methods employed had positive effects on the pupils' behaviours. This current, although undertaken in Kiambu County which is in another part of Kenya underlines the importance of the influence of disciplinary actions on students' behaviour. As such, the findings of this study were a pointer to the fact that School Preventive interventions were bearing the expected results.

The findings from interviews showed that the various school measures put in place to check indiscipline had resulted in positive discipline outcomes among the students studied. These findings agreed with the study by Williams et al. (2019) in "The discipline gatekeeper: assistant principals' experiences with managing school discipline in urban middle schools." The study sought to establish the various interventions put in place by assistant principals to deal with indiscipline cases in schools. Based on the critical race theoretical framework, the study showed that various school discipline interventions for African American students such as peer counselling and assorted guidance and counselling interventions were employed. These played pivotal roles in checking indiscipline among the students studied. This current study affirmed that there was "a positive link between disciplinary actions and behavioural outcomes among students."

Students responded positively to interventions put in place to check their discipline and this had created a conducive leaning environment in the schools. In support of this, one of the respondents said:

There were improvements in students discipline among students. Some of our colleagues who were previously faced with discipline challenges were now well behaved and were performing well in school due to the interventions put in place by schools to enhance discipline (Respondent 17, Kiambu County, May 2022).

The findings further showed that the students' discipline was changing positively due to the discipline interventions put in place in the schools, further supporting the findings by Williams et al. (2019). As such, it was pertinent to reinforce disciplinary actions in the schools since this had positive implications on the discipline of the students. In support of this, one of the respondents said:

Our students were recording good disciplinary outcomes due to the various measures put in place in our schools to check disciplinary challenges. Students who had improvements in discipline started performing well in examinations. In a nutshell, it can be concluded that interventions to enhance discipline among students (Respondent 8, Kiambu County, May 2022).

According to the findings schools had implemented various measures to address disciplinary challenges, and as a result, students have been achieving positive disciplinary outcomes. Those students who had shown



improvements in their discipline have also experienced a positive impact on their academic performance, as reflected in their examination results.

By implementing effective disciplinary strategies and interventions, our schools had created an environment that promotes responsible behaviour and encourages students to adhere to the expected standards of conduct. These measures have helped in instilling discipline among the students, leading to improvements in their overall behaviour and attitudes.

The positive correlation between improved discipline and academic performance suggests that when students exhibit discipline, they are better able to focus on their studies, engage in learning activities, and perform well in their examinations. Disciplinary interventions have not only fostered a conducive learning environment but have also had a direct impact on students' motivation, self-discipline, and academic achievements.

Therefore, it was evident that the interventions implemented to enhance discipline among students had played a crucial role in promoting their academic success and overall development. These positive outcomes further highlighted the importance of continued efforts to nurture discipline and maintain a supportive disciplinary framework within our schools.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of school-based behaviour change interventions on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. The study aimed to investigate the influence of preventive measures such as counselling, mentorship, and disciplinary actions on indiscipline among students. The findings indicate a positive and significant correlation between students' discipline and teacher counselling interventions, student peer counselling, mentorship interventions, and school discipline actions. Regardless of other factors, all these variables could predict students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu County.

These findings highlight the influence of school discipline actions, mentorship interventions, student peer counselling, and teacher counselling interventions on students' discipline in the study area. Despite the potential influence of the school environment on student indiscipline, interventions implemented within the same environment effectively curbed such behaviour. This aligns with the ecological systems theory, which suggests that an individual's behaviour is influenced by their environment. According to the personal construct theory, consistent exposure to guidance and counselling through peers and counselling teachers, mentorship, and disciplinary actions can impact students' behavioural choices and reduce indiscipline by reshaping their value systems. It is crucial to strengthen interventions related to these school-based behaviour change strategies in order to comprehensively enhance students' discipline in the schools under study.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that school disciplinary actions be subject to well-regulated government policies to ensure their responsiveness to schools' punishment needs. Clear guidelines and regulations regarding disciplinary actions are essential to maintain fairness, consistency, and effectiveness in addressing disciplinary issues. Therefore, it is advisable for the Ministry of Education to regularly review and update school disciplinary policies to meet the evolving demands for disciplinary actions in educational institutions.

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Politics, Chieftaincy and Violent Extremism: Case of Chereponi-Wenchiki in Ghana-Togo Border

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ABSTRACT

This study examined three issues, namely politics, violent extremism, and chieftaincy issues, in the Ghana-Togo border communities to determine which variable(s) influenced the other. This paper examines the relationship between violent extremism, politics, and chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana's North East region. It attempts to see if there is any linkage or connection between or among the three variables in the context of conflict and security along the two West African countries' borders (Ghana and Togo). Edward Azar's (1990) Protracted Conflict Theory (PCT), later emphasized by Bat-Tal (2000), guided the study. This study posits that politics and chieftaincy conflicts are the primary causes of violent extremism. In this regard, the study seeks the opinions, views, and experiences of the people in the Chereponi district, especially the communities along the Ghana-Togo borders. The study adopted an exploratory research design with a blend of experts' and non-experts' perspectives in the North East Region of Ghana and a few communities in Togo. The experts are spread across five regions of Northern Ghana, whereas the non-experts are concentrated in the Chereponi district. Twenty (20) respondents were interviewed face-to-face. The study found that the two major political parties (NPP and NDC) in Ghana were more involved in promoting the interests of some chiefs for political expediency. It found no link between politics and chieftaincy, leading to violent extremism. The study concludes that there is a clear link between politics and the chieftaincy institution in Ghana, but it also establishes that the Ghana-Togo border is free of extremist activities. It recommends a strong collaboration between Ghana and Togo in the fight against insecurity and possible acts of violent extremism along their borders.

Keywords: Chieftaincy, Ghana, Politics, Togo, Violent Extremism

I. INTRODUCTION

Violent extremism is a global menace to human existence and an unparalleled security risk for societies. Coleman et al. (2021) claim that violent extremism not only places a tremendous deal of strain on a country's security forces but also seriously violates human rights all around the world and undermines human dignity. Security and military theories have analyzed the devastating effects of violent extremism since the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 (Price, 2014). According to Wickham (2002) and Boyle (2008), the United States government alone spent around 1.78 trillion dollars on the fight against terrorism between 2001 and 2017. From 5.7 million euros in 2002 to 93.5 million euros in 2009, the European Union spent more money combating violent extremism (International Crisis Group, 2021). Governments are gradually realizing that increasing funding to bolster security measures against extremism would not be sufficient to shield every one of their populations from violent extremist attacks as a result of globalization (Thrall & Goepner, 2017). The intricate interplay of internal and external factors, along with highly motivated socio-cultural and economic conditions, is the breeding ground for violent extremism. Although some extremist organizations have embraced inventive methods to recruit new members and broaden their support base, it appears that countering violent extremism has not changed in approach (Kometer, 2004; Yaro & Tseer, 2019; Kipo-Sunyezhzi et al., 2024).

The violent extremist groups operating in the West African sub-region have been more active in recent times. The region's numerous chieftaincy conflicts and challenges to national security have provided many extremist groups, including the Islamic State's West Africa Province, Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' in parts of West Africa and

the Maghreb, Ansarul Islam in Burkina Faso and Mali, and Boko Haram in Nigeria, with some opportunities to launch persistent attacks on civilians and security targets within the subregion of West Africa (Demuyne, 2021). According to the information available, there were over 85 instances of extremist attacks between January and March 2020 in Burkina Faso alone, which resulted in over 438 related deaths (Barkindo, 2020). These attacks and their aftermath impact other West African states such as Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo, Niger, and Ghana. This suggests that the activities of violent extremists pose a threat to all member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other states. Even though numerous countries have taken both individual and collective action to thwart terrorist insurgencies and violent extremism, these trends continue to rise. There is no single best approach or universally applicable solution to address the issue of violent extremist activities. Developing a strategic security plan is important, yet it is insufficient to combat the threat. Furthermore, security solutions fail to address many of the root causes of violent extremism (Lord et al. 2009). The central objective is to examine the relationship between political determinants, chieftaincy, and violent extremism within Chereponi-Wenchiki on the Ghana-Togo border.

Ghana's chieftaincy institution is one of the enviable ones that has made a substantial contribution to the nation's socioeconomic development (Agyeman, 2020). The chieftaincy institution has endured the three stages of Ghana's political history—pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial—despite all of its difficulties (Owusu-Mensah, 2014). Since the institution has grown to be the foundation of Ghanaian society, any attempt by political players to control it could have negative effects on the country's politics and society (Bonotti & Weinstock, 2021). Indeed, ever since colonialism began in Ghana, there has been a persistent pattern of interethnic and communal violence that has caused widespread societal division and an almost perpetual state of instability, particularly in the country's north (Anamzoya, 2013). For instance, the chieftaincy problems in Dagbon and Bawku, which are purportedly "purely traditional matters," include both a local and a national political component (Anamzoya, 2013). Local sides in these chieftaincy crises have made an effort to win over national political figures, paving the path for politicians to constantly exploit the rift. Ghana's multiparty system has led to the separation of subjects along party lines, exacerbating the societal differences already present in these sectors, thereby intensifying the politicization of these conflicts (Bonotti & Weinstock, 2021). Ghana's political landscape is extremely complicated and has changed significantly during the past century. Several administrations have made an effort to change chiefs' political activities and role in society since colonialism (Bukari et al., 2017). As a result, the relationship between the state and traditional political institutions has undergone a complex and ongoing transformation, which has been the hallmark of the chieftaincy institution. Halawayhi (2017) posits that the power of chiefs remains contextual, reflecting ongoing processes of struggle and compromise between the state and traditional authorities. Because chieftaincy battles are ongoing and involve political actors, violent extremism may occasionally emerge from them.

It is important to note that this study investigates the relationship between violent extremism, politics, and chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana's North East region (especially the Chereponi district) and some border communities in Northern Togo along the Ghana-Togo border.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Chieftaincy and violent extremism do not have a strong documented connection to Ghana's highly competitive and deteriorating political context. Until now, there have been clear connections. Numerous chieftaincy conflicts often link to the dangers associated with violent extremism. These conflicts are not only communal but are also deeply rooted in political activities. The ruling families and the custodians of the traditional authorities are the main allies of Ghana's political parties. The major political parties in Ghana clearly link the Bunkpurugu chieftaincy conflict (Jafouk and Jamong families) to the Bawku ethnic conflict among the Kusasi (Mahama & Longi, 2013). The Nalori conflict, which occurred recently, is also associated with chieftaincy and political interests in Chereponi. Against this background, the study sought to determine the relationship between violent extremism, politics, and chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana's North East region, especially the Chereponi district, and some border communities in Northern Togo along the Ghana-Togo border.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to determine existing relationship of Political activities, Chieftaincy conflict and violent extremism in the North East Region.

1.3 Research Questions

- (i) What is the relationship between political activities and chieftaincy conflicts?

- (ii) What is the link between politics and violent extremism?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 The Protracted Conflict Theory (PCT)

Edward Azar postulated the Protracted Conflict Theory (PCT) in 1990, which was later emphasized by Coleman (2000) among others. The theory describes continual confrontations within and between groups in a given area. The PCT explains deep-rooted conflicts between groups over basic demands such as access to resources, power, recognition, identity, and security (Coleman, 2000). These disputes are frequently complex, chronic, persistent, deadlocked, and intense, with far-reaching consequences affecting many aspects of life and development.

Human needs are the primary motivation for social disputes, according to research on this idea (Azar, 1990). Burton (1990) identified four sorts of human needs that must be satisfied to resolve conflicts and develop peace. It is important to emphasize that people often seek these needs together, and they are neither negotiable nor hierarchical. They include recognition, identification, fearlessness, and security (Burton, 1990). Recognition, for example, can involve acknowledging one's individuality and personal progress. The state meets these requirements by providing public goods to groups of people. However, a lack of these needs could lead to violence. Also, the act of intentionally denying people or groups their basic human needs could lead to war (Azar, 1990).

2.2 Conceptual Framework

The main point of contention is whether politics and chieftaincy disputes contribute to violent extremism or not. This section shows the interconnections between the major variables under each of the ideas covered in the literature and the theories to explain how chieftaincy conflicts and politics contribute to violent extremism or otherwise. Based on the struggle of groups for a limited resource, as illustrated in Figure 1, the realistic group conflict theory postulates that conflicts between them may escalate into violent extremism (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Concerning power struggles, political meddling, and the absence of fear, the theory helps us understand the root causes of conflicts or disputes in Africa or Ghana, especially in the North.

Early resolution of disputes and conflicts becomes advantageous. Social order, acknowledgement, and improved decision-making throughout society were among the positive impacts (Botchwey, 2006). Resolved conflicts do not necessarily lead to extreme violence; as a conflict intensifies, the underlying factors continue to hold true. An act of violent extremism can lead to fatalities, damage to property, the disintegration of society, and the destruction of sources of income. The conceptual framework of the study captures the interplay of three variables or factors, namely politics, chieftaincy disputes, and violent extremism (as shown in Figure 1).

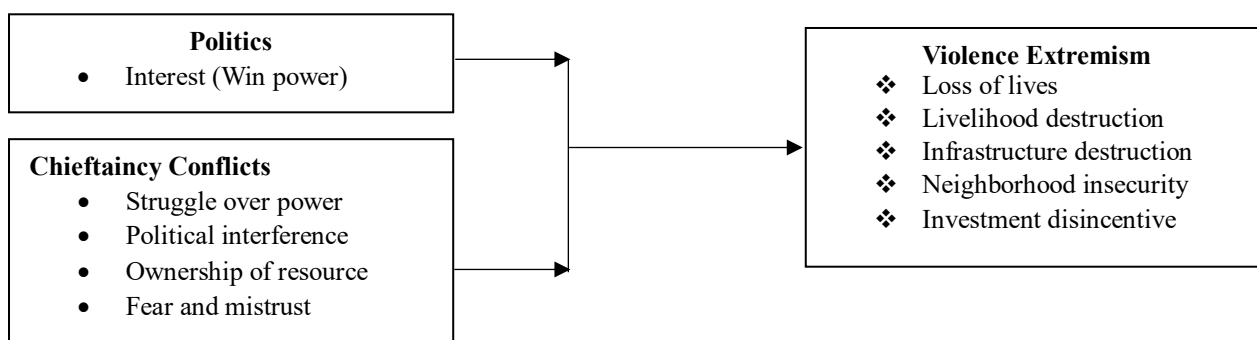


Figure 1
The Linkages between Conflicts and Development
Source: Authors Construct (2024)

2.3 Empirical Review

Sulemana (2012) noted that while chieftaincy disputes are prevalent throughout Ghana, they primarily occur in the northern region of the country. There are numerous ethnic groups spread over five areas in northern Ghana. Because of problems with ethnic identity, recognition, and competition for limited resources, as well as a lack of strong institutional state authority, the northern sector is vulnerable to conflict (Adewoba, 2009).

Chereponi District is one of the six districts that make up Ghana's newly established North-East Region. The district has previously seen several conflicts, which others have even described as "wars." The area experienced the Konkombas and Bimobas conflict or war, the Konkombas and the Mamprusis conflict or war, and the Bimobas and the Mamprusis conflict. These ethnic groups were the principal parties to such conflicts or disputes. These battles or conflicts typically resulted in the loss of numerous lives, the displacement of numerous individuals, the destruction of properties, and a near-halt to social life. The effects of these conflicts are considerably more severe because they leave people from such affected areas traumatized, without social support, without a job, and with many becoming widows or orphans and estranged from their families, homes, or communities entirely (Kipo-Sunyehzi et al., 2024).

Moreover, interethnic conflicts have long existed amongst the four main ethnic groups of Chereponi: the district or area, namely Chokosis, Konkombas, Bimobas, and Mamprusis. For example, a dispute arose in April 2017 about fishing rights in the Kpembi River between the Bimobas and the Chokosis. In 2018, the Chereponi District Police Command report documented the destruction of over 500 homes, properties, and dwellings, the deaths of two (2) people, and the displacement of numerous others. Another clash occurred between the Konkombas and the Chokosis over a land dispute the following year (2018). It is important to highlight that throughout the country's northern regions, the Konkombas ethnic group has been involved in several conflicts with other ethnic groups. For instance, in 1981, the Konkombas and the Nanumbas engaged in combat (Sulemana, 2012). In 1991 and 1992, respectively, the Konkombas and Gonjas engaged in combat once more (Awedoba, 2009). In 1994, the Konkombas engaged in combat with the combined ethnic groupings of Nanumba, Gonja, and Dagomba (Mahama, 2011).

Since the Konkombas are known for having battled all of their neighbors in the past, it was not surprising when they engaged in combat with the Chokosis in December 2018. What was unexpected, though, was the sheer number of casualties. In one day, reports indicated the displacement of over fifty thousand people and the deaths of over twenty-eight (28) individuals. Sulemana (2017) reported the burning of 500 dwellings. The destruction of food crops, the burning of homes, and animal looting are the main characteristics of these wars in this region of the nation (Awedoba, 2009; Mahama, 2011; Sulemana, 2012; Yaro et al., 2018). On the other hand, in comparison to the recent war between the Chokosis and the Mamprusis, the amount of destruction was frequently minor. Once again, ethnicity has always been a factor in the majority of these confrontations. Geertz (1988) proposed that ethnic groups have been fighting because of innate animosity since the dawn of humanity. Nevertheless, relative deprivation theories and instrumentalism, two contemporary explanations of ethnic conflict, have supplanted this theory.

Mawuko-Yevugah and Attipoe (2021) examined the discourse surrounding the treatment of chiefs concerning the interplay between modernity and tradition through a case study of the modern Ghanaian chieftaincy institution. The study's development involved compiling and debating a comprehensive compendium of pertinent literature. The research identified the primary discourse surrounding modernity and tradition as rooted in a binary school of thought. This school of thought holds that the two can coexist harmoniously, while another strain argues that modern societies must be entirely devoid of tradition. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana acknowledges and grants autonomy to the chieftaincy institution in the Ghanaian context, according to the study (Mawuko-Yevugah & Attipoe, 2021). As a result, a split state has emerged, where both constitutional law and customary law are immediately mandatory. The interface between the two systems of government has revealed itself mainly in land management, local governance, and expansion over time. Chiefs were known for their important contributions to state development and asset assistance via land management (Mawuko-Yevugah & Attipoe, 2021). Chiefs acted as mediators between the government and their citizens, nurtured unity, and used their influence and familiarity to implement maintainable development enterprises in their corresponding regions. Current times have witnessed a decline in their influence and consequences, partly due to disagreements and inappropriate land management.

Agyeman (2020) aimed to boost knowledge of the factors that contribute to the hullabaloo, land and chieftaincy clashes, and the connection of political parties in the Bawku Traditional Area. Individual interviews were conducted with key informants to confirm the fourth-placed claims in the study and gather additional perspectives on unresolved conflict-related issues. The scholarly studies later fused the stories derived from the interviews, using them as themes and patterns. The study recognized political involvement, the spread of small arms, trepidation and suspicion, and insufficient access to social services as the main causes of the Bawku conflict. Furthermore, the study revealed that the conflict is merely in a state of deferment, with potential resurgence due to campaigns, elections, and other socio-economic concerns (Agyeman, 2020). The results show a significant link between the efficacy of election-managing bodies, the democratic system, and the prevalence of violence. To add to that, the study discovered that democratic governance in Ghana is noticeably more operative than in other countries in Africa, for example, in Kenya (Nambiema, 2012; Asamoah, 2019; Agbiloko & Chiotu, 2021).



Sithole (2018) studied the core contexts employed by the African Union (AU) in response to unofficial changes in government. These contexts demarcate model tactics for elections and conflict management. Despite the existence of numerous contexts for conflict management best practices, the study reveals that the African Union has not implemented these contexts when necessary. Francophone countries such as Cameroon, Niger, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, and Mali serve as examples.

The reoccurrence of violence related to elections and other instances of unconstitutional government changes, along with the subsequent reaction from the AU, has brought to light its deficiencies and lack of proficiency in conflict management. The study's findings suggest that unless the AU acknowledges and upholds its dedication to safeguarding democratic progress on the continent, Africa will encounter a formidable and challenging challenge in its efforts to solidify democracy.

Bukari et al. (2017) examined northern Ghana's socio-political repercussions of land disputes and interethnic chieftaincy. The primary aim of the research was to demonstrate, through the application of theoretical foundations, that conflicts possess certain advantages in terms of socio-political progress and that conflict theories also offer potential resolutions to disputes. Using examples from the emancipation disputes in Sissala, Mo, Kusasi, Dagomba, Nanumba, Gonja, and Konkomba, the study used content analysis of secondary data based on realistic group conflict theory. According to the study, the main positive effects of the conflicts are an improvement in decision-making processes regarding community development issues, a strengthening of interethnic unity, and assistance in the redemption of a group's identity; the major negative effect is the devastation of life and property.

Halawayhi (2017) investigated the function and characteristics of chieftaincy among Dagbamba migrants residing in the Metropolis. The research employed purposive sampling, observation, and interviews as data collection methods. It was discovered that the Dagbamba held their chiefs in tremendous regard. Nevertheless, the executives entrusted with ceremonial, consular, interface, and ambassadorial responsibilities encountered obstacles such as members' indifference towards their duties. Moreover, quotidian obstacles confronted the chiefs, including tensions stemming from the Yendi and Bimbilla skin affairs, religious sectarianism, and financial insufficiency. Once more, the article noted that the Dagbamba chieftaincy was proactive in ensuring the protection and integration of the rights and privileges of migrant Dagbamba within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, notwithstanding the obstacles encountered.

Owusu-Mensah (2014) investigated the correlation between politics and chieftaincy in Ghana by tracing the historical position of chiefs in the context of customary law. The study discovered that in Ghana, customary values and norms are guardianship-chieftaincy-style. According to Owusu-Mensah (2014), the chieftaincy institution has demonstrated remarkable resilience throughout Ghana's three political epochs. Furthermore, the author asserts that it fills the void left by contemporary partisan politics. Also, Anamzoya (2013) analyzed the Ghanaian instance of mixed government after drawing examples from other nations concerning mixed government. In addition to an exhaustive review of the relevant literature, he gathered empirical data for his paper via interviews and observation. As demonstrated in the instance of Ghana, the paper concluded that the chieftaincy institution in postcolonial Africa has a lengthy lifespan.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Location

Chereponi district, one (1) of six (6) districts created out of the Northern Region, aligns with the newly established North-East Region of Ghana. According to the Ghana Statistical Service, the district has a total population of 87,176, with a gender composition of 49% males and 51% females of the population; the youth constituent is more than half of the gross population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). Chereponi District is unique among the six districts in the region. Chereponi District is the only district in the region where both its political administration and traditional administration belong to the North East Region (Manprugu) and the Northern Region (Dagbon), respectively. It has two major ethnic groups (Anufor and Konkomba), and other smaller ethnic groups include Mossi, Dagonba, Bimoba, Fulbe Ewe, and Kotokoli (Ghana Statistical Service, GSS-2021). The number of individuals engaged in the formal sector of the economy, including development practitioners, nurses, district administrators, and teachers, is relatively smaller compared to those in the informal sector within the Chereponi district. The majority of the inhabitants are involved in farming, forestry, fishing, and trading (GSS, 2021).

3.2 Research Design

The research design employed for this study was the exploratory design, which aligns well with the pragmatic philosophy. This choice was made because it enables both quantitative and qualitative analysis (Creswell & Creswell,



2017). The exploratory method strategy was utilized, involving the collection and analysis of qualitative data before arriving at the final interpretation. This approach enhanced the study's robustness, going beyond a mere representation of qualitative data. Flick (2007) have noted that the qualitative strategy is particularly suitable for the pragmatic research philosophy due to the higher level of analysis it allows. The study's target population was deliberately limited to experts and individuals possessing experience and knowledge with respect to conflict situations in the district. This group include key figures such as the Chief Chiefs and elders, Teachers, Farmers, NCCE Official, political party leaders (NDC, NPP, PNC, CPP, etc.), Police Officers, BNI Officers, Prison Officers, Queen Mothers, fishermen, Traders and some youth leaders. Additionally, all the representatives were purposively selected due to their philosophical insights into the subject matter.

3.3 Data Sources and Data Collection Methods

The field data (primary data) for this study was gathered through individual interviews employing structured interview guides. This data was further enhanced by augmenting it with secondary data, which included journal articles, books, and online documents obtained from the internet. Each interview moment with respondents took about 30 minutes, and notification and consent were sought from all members. The interviews were conducted by the research team over two months, from the month of March 2024 to May 2024 in Northern Ghana, especially Chereponi District.

3.4 Data Analysis

A total of twenty (20) participants were initially selected for interviews, but only 19 of them participated in the interviews. Out of 19 participants, four (4) were experts in these areas: peace, security, conflict and chieftaincy while 15 were the non-experts. One participant had to decline the interview due to personal reasons. The researchers regarded this as an uncontrollable occurrence and considered it a normal part of the research process. The field data collected went through thematic analysis in which three major themes emerged namely political parties' meddling with chiefs, the linkage or connection between politics and chieftaincy, lastly, the security situations at border communities. These three major themes have emerged from the data gathered from the field. The analysis process started with the interview results, which were transcribed by the researchers and shared among them for editing and review. Subsequently, each researcher was tasked with developing codes, sub-themes, and main themes from the transcribed data. These identified themes, derived from the codes, were classified and named by each researcher accordingly.

In respect to constancy, steadfastness, and weight, the themes were then compared after the researchers coding and theming process. The researchers revised and corrected the codes, merging them into straightforward themes. These themes were later kept into wide-ranging themes. Finally, the results were construed in configuration with the recognized themes, all in accord with the study's objectives.

3.5 Ethical Consideration

The researchers adhered rigorously to the ethics of research and upheld them during the data collection process. These protocols included no harm to the study participants, gaining informed consent from participants, guaranteeing participants' confidentiality, ensuring anonymity, and maintenance of the well-being of the participants. Lastly, the researchers made it known to the study participants that participation in the study was strictly voluntary where participants could decline interviews without any consequences.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Experts Opinions

The researchers sought the views of four security and conflict experts representing each of the five regions of Northern Ghana on issues concerning politics, chieftaincy and their relationship with violent extremism. The intention is to see whether there are connections, linkages or relationships between or among the three variables/factors (politics, chieftaincy conflict and violent extremism).

How do the two main political parties in Ghana [the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC)] use chieftaincy institutions to strengthen their political power?

This was how a security expert representing the Upper East Region of Ghana [Northern Ghana]. The Upper East Region some parts share border with Togo and other parts shares a border with Burkina Faso. So, experts from the Upper East are crucial in terms of issues of security at the border communities. This is how the security expert responded to the issues on the relationships between or among the three factors [politics, chieftaincy and violent extremism].

In the Upper East Region, we have about 99% of the Chiefs saying they are affiliated to the NDC and they identify themselves with NDC. They feel that that is their party partly because they come to homes purported to be NDC before they became chiefs. So, they don't even hide. They'll tell you they are non-partisan and sympathize with the NDC. They may not be active members but work underground for those they are aligned with [Male Participant, BN001, Upper East Region, Ghana].

This is how the expert from the Upper West Region of Ghana responded to the same question:

Yes, they think that if this chief is in power, he can command his people to vote for them. That's all, so they want to install chiefs for themselves so that they know that this Chief is our man, so he commands respect, and he can call the community people and command them or warn them that they should vote for the party he supports. So, that is what they [politicians] think. [Male, PC002, Upper West Region of Ghana]

This is how the expert from the North East Region of Ghana responded to the same issue/question:

Politicians want power and can do anything to get power. So when there is chieftaincy conflict, they may benefit from that. Because, when two chiefs or gates are in conflict, they can come to support one side making them believe they have them at heart and they use this opportunity to canvas for vote and further create enmity between the two sides. All they are interested in is the vote to win power. [Male, PC003, North East Region, Ghana]

The next question and the responses are presented as follows:

Are there any connections or links between politics and chieftaincy issues/conflicts that may lead to violent extremism in your area?

A response from an expert in the Upper East Region:

The answer is yes, and it is also no. Yes, for areas closer to the border communities like Bawku, and Pusiga, especially those beyond Bawku due to cross-border crimes and cross-border associations. Areas far from the border areas, I will say no, such linkages are most unlikely. [Male Participant, BN001, Upper East Region, Ghana]

An expert from the Upper West Region has this to say:

The answer is a big yes. In this region it is worrying the level or extent to which Chiefs are getting into politics though the constitution does not permit Chiefs to do active politics, they [Chiefs] do politics well. But I do not see how extremists from the Sahel region can take advantage of the issues of politics and chieftaincy to perpetrate political violence or violence in the region. [Male, PC002, Upper West Region of Ghana]

The expert from the North East response to the same issues/question:

Yes, there are close links, it is politics that create conflict and most of the conflicts in the region are having political undertone. And it is the same politicians who hire hooligans and macho men to come and fight their political opponents to get power. Even to hire criminals and extremist groups' politicians can do that for the sake of power. Boram Haram is a case to look at in Nigeria. [Male, PC003, North East Region, Ghana]

The researchers attempted to know or to find out how the area (community) is affected concerning the security situation.

How has your area been affected by the security situation across the border?

An expert opinion from the Upper East Region:

I think we are very lucky that we don't have youth groups or individuals that are interested in these terrorist acts. That is our luck. Before terrorists can come into your area, they must first know the geographical area very well before they can operate. The lives we live here are common. Everybody knows everybody and they know what everybody does. So, if you go and join a different group, your family will not agree. If not, we have one of the most porous borders ever. [Male Participant, BN001, Upper East Region, Ghana]

The expert from the Upper West Region of Ghana, this was how responded to the question:

Yeah, you know, because of these conflicts and when there is no leader, it becomes so difficult and making the people so vulnerable, like for example, the people of Nandom. Nandom, even though now there is a leader, the people are still not accepting him. So, it makes the people more vulnerable. You see, we know there is a chief, somebody who is highly respected is the chief there but before then when there was no leader, it made the whole place vulnerable because other tribes were shooting their guns and doing all manner of things, yet nobody was there to control them. There's no leader. [Male, PC002, Upper West Region of Ghana]



The North East Expert has this to say on the security situation on the borders (Ghana-Togo)

There are indeed pockets of crime in the form armed robbery and violent extremism in some of the border communities as studies from the National Peace Council Regional Office have unravelled. But because these days, people are quite enlightened about violent extremism through the mantra of See Something, Say Something, it is quite better. Just that most rumours about terrorist activities in some border communities in the region turned out not to really be so after we found out. Aside the threats of crime like armed robbery and extremism, the issue is about chieftaincy and land disputes due to their proximity to Togo where some of these problems are also happening. [Male, PC003, North East Region, Ghana]

4.1.2 Non-Experts Opinions

How do the NPP and NDC use chieftaincy institutions to strengthen their political power?

A participant from Chereponi said this on how politicians use chieftaincy to back their power:

Yes. This is what they [politicians] believe because sometimes they always believe that they know the truth but deny it and go and do other things to favour some maybe. [Participant 001, Chereponi]

Another participant a female back the point that politicians use chieftaincy institutions for power:

The NDC and NPP members all belong to clans and are using their people for power. [Female Participant, 005, Tambong Community]

Interestingly, this participant indicated that sometimes politicians use some chiefs to boast image:

Those in power [NDC/NPP] usually use the power of some of the chiefs to get more popularity. [Male Participant, 006, Farmer, Sargon Community]

Controversially, this participant does not see any difference between the two major parties:

Both NDC and NPP have those that they like and are using them to achieve their aims so right now everybody is divided that is why there is no peace. [Male Participant 007, Naduni Community]

In addition, a participant opined that all the politicians have their targets on chieftaincy institution:

All the parties have the chiefs they are working with to strengthen their political power deepening on their stronghold. [Male Participant, 008, Fisherman, Yorku, Border Community]

This participant simply said the parties are in one way or the other involved in the area conflicts:

These fighting that they are doing there [Chereponi-Wenchika areas], the NPP NDC, they are included. So, you see, in Chereponi, what is happening now we don't know. It is only God. Yeah, because now they will kill you, burn your house, burn your food, your property. What will you do again? What will do? You are now useless. Even if they killed you, it is better. So, people are suffering. You see the NPP and NDC, they are all the same. [Female Participant, 009, Fashion Designer, Chereponi]

A local party executive admitted that politicians do assist in installing their favorites as chiefs:

They [NDC and NPP] do by installing their favorites as Chiefs so that they can help them in campaigning for them. Yes. [Male Participant, 010, Constituency Political Party Leader, Chereponi]

In this section, the searchers attempted to find if there is any connection or linkage between politics and chieftaincy. The responses of the participants are presented.

Are there any connections or links between politics and chieftaincy issues/conflicts that may lead to violent extremism in your area?

Chereponi resident said this:

Just like external groups. Like, we have politicians, we have violent extremist organizations and then vigilantes. Yeah, the vigilantism, the vigilante. They are there because each time there is conflict, I understand they bring some people from some parts of town. They bring them from somewhere to come and help. Accra, Bawku. They mentioned Bawku. Sometimes they get people from Bawku and even the Northern region. [Participant 002, Chereponi]

A participant from Wenchiki also said this on the same issue of the linkage between politics and chieftaincy:

Yeah, if for example, the DCE is talking with the chiefs. You know at high-class meetings; they sit with the Chiefs and whatever comes out from that. The youth for example, normally point out the DCE and the political class that they are in bed with the chiefs and so on. [Participant 003, Wenchiki]

A traditional leader added his views on the same issue:

The chieftaincy issue here, it is not easy at all. We started in 1998. Violence, violence, violence. I didn't know the reason why. That city is from my grandfathers and my grandmothers. Wenchiki is my land; it is my area. The chieftaincy too is my property, but few people did not understand it. By they are not

from Wenchiki. They are not from Wenchiki and they want to spoil Wenchiki. The community in Wenchiki itself, they don't have a problem. People come from far away to come and push a few people that they should come and fight. They will come and support them. But every time, the same thing happens. When there is a problem, they push those who are in the community here to come and cause the trouble. Those from far away will come and support them. When it is dangerous, they runaway to their village but those who are here will suffer it. About four times, we have had chieftaincy conflicts in Wenchiki [Traditional leader, Participant 004, Wenchiki (border Town)]

A participant from a much rural setting in the district of the North East of Ghana said this:

Sure, there are connections, politicians want to use their positions to win the support of chiefs so that the chiefs will tell the people to vote for the MP or back the DCE. [Female Participant, 005, Tambong Community]

A local politician based in the Chereponi district capital shared his opinions on the linkages:

I do not think and see any link between politics and chieftaincy that will lead to violent extremism. You know despite all my political and chieftaincy troubles; we want peace and will not support any terrorist group or extremist groups here. [Male Participant, 010, Constituency Political Party Leader, Chereponi]

The issues of security concerns around the border areas or border communities are asked and the responses presented:

How has your area been affected by the security situation across the border?

This was how a female participant responded to the security situation around the border:

Yes, because in our area here we like fighting over lands and chieftaincy, terrorists may come in. The youth and young women are at high risk of recruitment because many of them are not working. [Female Participant, 005, Tambong Community]

A male participant added his voice to security issues around the border areas (communities):

Over here we are not by the border, but we are very concerned about the peace in the area. In terms of extremists operating around the border, the youth and politicians are at risk because many of them have nothing doing which they can easily be captured [Male Participant, 006, Farmer, Sargon Community]

A participant from a rural setting of the district added his views on security situations at the border

Security issues in this area are not the best because all the time different kinds of people pass which, we don't know their motives, we don't have police monitoring the border. [Male Participant 007, Naduni Community]

A participant resident in a border community shared his live experience on the reality at the border:

We are just by the border and everyday people cross but security persons do come from time to time to check especially those buying things from Togo to Ghana. I heard of them [extremists] but the very people who are at risk are the youth since many of them have nothing doing, to earn a living. [Male Participant, 008, Fisherman, Yoraku, Border Community]

A local politician shared the issues of security at the Ghana-Togo border of the North East Region:

Currently, we haven't experienced any attack from violent extremist groups around this area and I'm sure it's because of the security that we have around, that are being stationed all around. So, without any severe attack, I don't think they would have caused any effects on us as a community. [Male Participant, 010, Constituency Political Party Leader, Chereponi]

A participant on the other side of the border has this to say:

The security situation in Togo is hard and suggests that both countries' security need to collaborate in dealing with threats to lives and properties. [Participant, 011, Anjo (Togo) Teacher (Professeur)]

He emphasized collaboration as the best conflict resolution measure on the chieftaincy issues:

By tracing historical evidence from the traditional councils of each country and call, a spade, a spade and not a big spoon. [Participant, 011, Anjo (Togo) (Professeur)]

Another participant in Togo added this perspective on security at the Ghana-Togo border:

Provision of security to conflicted zones trained experts to mediate factions and, granting NGOs locally to help the situation. [Douaniere (Togo Winchiki)]

4.2 Discussions

In terms of how the two dominant political parties in Ghana, namely the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), use chieftaincy institutions to strengthen their political power, The study revealed that both political parties, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), hold a

significant stake in the chieftaincy institution in Ghana, frequently endorsing chiefs for their own political gains. Both the experts' and the non-experts' interviews corroborate the findings that politicians have a vested interest in reaping political benefits from chiefs, a trend that has persisted since independence. The empirical findings on the influence of Ghanaian politicians on the chieftaincy institution are consistent with previous studies (Bonotti & Weinstock, 2021; Agyeman, 2020).

This study also revealed that excessive politicization of chiefs, whether during the nomination or installation stages, exposes the chieftaincy institution to agitation by factions, a phenomenon known as "royal gates." These occurrences contribute to the problems of conflicts and disagreements, sometimes leading to violence, as observed in the Chereponi-Wenchiki areas of the Chereponi district in the North East Region of Ghana. Additionally, they raise questions about the appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms to address these disputes. These observations agree with previous studies (Sulemana, 2012; Awedoba, 2009; Kipo-Sunyehzi et al., 2024).

Regarding the issue of connections or linkages between politics and chieftaincy conflicts, the study discovered numerous connections or linkages between politics and chieftaincy in both Northern Ghana and Ghana overall. Both expert and non-expert opinions point to such connections. This study revealed a close link between Ghana's politics and the chieftaincy in the Chereponi-Wenchiki area, with politicians often exploiting the chieftaincy institution to gain political power or the chiefs' support. These findings align with the findings of previous studies (Owusu-Mensah, 2014; Anamzoya, 2013). But the study findings are inconsistent with those of Bonotti and Weinstock (2021), who revealed that any attempt by political players to control chieftaincy institutions in Ghana could have negative effects on the country's politics and society (Bonotti & Weinstock, 2021). This suggests that attempts by Ghanaian politicians to exploit chieftaincy institutions could result in severe consequences for them or the Ghanaian political system, potentially leading to negative outcomes. This means that the Ghanaian people must be careful in terms of mixing chieftaincy issues with political issues.

The argument that politics is connected to chieftaincy and such connections may lead to violent extremism seems not to be the situation in the study area (Chereponi District of the North East Region of Ghana). The responses of both the experts and the non-experts show no clear linkage. Thus, the study found no linkage between politics and chieftaincy that could lead to violent extremism. Most of the participants admitted that sometimes politics turns violent, but not yet in the situation where such disagreements or disputes pave the way for violent extremism. Ghana's border communities, including the Ghana-Togo border, have not yet documented any such connections. Participants in Ghana and Togo's responses did not suggest such linkages.

4.3 Implications of Findings

The study's findings imply that politicians meddling in chieftaincy issues has serious consequences because such meddling could easily lead to conflicts and possible violence. Additionally, some politicians' practice of promoting or pushing for the nomination of their favorites as chiefs posed a threat to Ghana's noble chieftaincy. The findings also suggest that, though there is no clear linkage between politics and chieftaincy that may lead to violent extremism, there is still a need for Ghanaians to be careful of the extent of violence or disagreements in order not to attract extremists.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The study has established that both parties (NPP and NDC) are promoting the chieftaincy institution intending to gain political favour or support from the Ghanaian chiefs. It concludes that there is a clear link between politics and the chieftaincy institution in Ghana. The study established that the Ghana-Togo border is free from extremist activities.

5.2 Recommendations

One, both parties need to discourage the practice of promoting some chiefs' interests against others. Also, there is the need to divorce or dissociate politics from chieftaincy in Ghana and Africa. Finally, per the findings of the study, it is recommended that Ghana and Togo strengthen their collaboration and increase their security information sharing to prevent acts of terrorism and an effective way in the fight against violent extremism in West Africa particularly, Ghana and Togo.

Contributions

The study contributes to politics and chieftaincy in Africa and the relationship between the two



Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

Ethical Issues

Informed consent of participants was sought, and institutional permissions were received.

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Leveraging Gods' Influence in Sustaining Byelaws in Ghana: A Case of *Dipo* Practice in Yilo-Krobo

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ABSTRACT

This article explored the extent to which the gods' factor in the development and implementation process of Dipo, a womanhood initiation rite of the Krobo people of Ghana, had regulated sexual behaviour among young people. The Dipo womanhood rite has been introduced by the gods many centuries ago as an important part of the socialization process. The study adopted the quantitative research design approach. The target population was all young girls within the age bracket of 15-24 years in Yilo Krobo, which was purposively selected for this study because the Dipo rite was a unique indigenous culture of the people. The simple random sampling technique informed the selection of the respondents. In all, 284 indigenous young girls, 15-24 years old in Yilo-Krobo, Ghana were structurally interviewed to ascertain the power of Dipo practice and the gods' influences on its sustenance. STATA 14.0 was adopted to analyse the data. Findings revealed the need for re-visitation (Sankofa) of some past practices and entrench them for development in the present. Further, the study revealed a strong correlation between the gods' element and the development and implementation success of Dipo, which tends to highlight the relevance of divine command in development. The article espoused the values of African traditional practices and stimulated discussions on leveraging the gods' factor in the process of policy development and implementation in Ghana. Byelaws are very likely to be sustained with compliance if residents are sensitized to believe that they were formulated with the endorsement of the gods of the land. Largely, the average Ghanaian strongly believes that the lesser gods or divinities play a crucial role in their wellbeing and the development of their society. The study therefore recommends the need to apply the gods' factor in policy initiatives to attain compliance and sustainability for development in Ghana.

Keyword: Development, Dipo, Gods

I. INTRODUCTION

Although there is a paucity of studies in Ghana on the attitude of residents towards the implementation of byelaws in traditional societies and, by extension, Ghana, it is common knowledge that most inhabitants are not reaping the full benefits of the existing regulations (Boamah et al., 2012). This is because, despite the associated sanctions and penalties for non-compliance, the inhabitants fail to obey them (Antwi-Agyei et al., 2019). This is occurring at a time of digital technology, where information technology aids regulators to track trends and engage citizens in policy initiatives that ensure high compliance levels and sustenance (Kankam & Robadue, 2013). The power to enact byelaws in Ghana is entrusted to Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) by the Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462) to regulate activities in their areas of jurisdiction (Kankam & Robadue, 2013). In accordance with this mandate, some measures to address perennial flooding, disposing of rubbish or trash, and building structures on waterways, among many other social problems have been implemented in various districts in Ghana, yet they lack strong power to achieve the desired results (Anane-Amponsah, 2022; Antwi-Agyei et al., 2019; IMANI, 2018). Owing to this, policy-makers at various districts and municipalities in Ghana have preoccupied themselves with finding alternatives to ensure the lasting and adequate implementation of policies for development (Mensah et al., 2022).

Amidst all these challenges, less attention has been devoted to unearthing the fact that prior to colonialism, African traditional societies formulated indigenous mechanisms that had majority acceptance for ensuring social order

(Lasisi & Rekiya, 2019). This was achieved because, aside from their egalitarian nature, they also have a deep respect and reverence for the lesser gods. Consequently, any convention introduced with recourse to the gods was accepted without contestation (Ossom-Batsa, 2008). *Dipo* womanhood rite is one of those interventions introduced to conform residents to acceptable sexual standards among the Krobo ethnic group of the Eastern Region of Ghana (Huber, 1993). In other words, *Dipo* was mainly instituted to train and empower young females to eschew premarital sex since it is a taboo among inhabitants. Its origin is credited to *Nana Kloweki*, the goddess of fertility of Krobo in the Seventeenth Century (Narh, 2017). According to the Krobo tradition, young girls who chose to engage in sex or became pregnant prior to the initiation were detected when they climbed the *tegbete* stone and were sanctioned together with their families as well as the males who impregnated them (Amos, 2013). The *tegbete* is a sacred stone that young girls were assisted by old and expert women from the community to sit on to attest their purity (Steegstra, 2005). The sanctions included stigmatization, payment of fines, or banishment from their family homes or towns (Huber, 1993; Steegstra, 2005). The severity of the sanctions reduced the frequency of early sex and its associated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) issues (Anarfi, 2003; Asubonteng-Manu, 2023; Ostrow, 2011).

The Krobo ethnic group, a patrilineal society in Ghana (Nukunya, 2003), valued virginity (Sackey, 2001). In this light, the social mores of the Krobo expect young girls to remain virgins until they are married (Glozah & Lawani, 2014; Sackey, 2001). Consequently, the *Dipo* womanhood rite was instituted and celebrated yearly between March and May in Yilo-Krobo and Manya-Krobo (Steegstra, 2002) to conform pubescent girls to the acceptable behaviour of the community (Odonkor, 1971).

Though *Dipo* survives today, the advent of colonialism, Christianity, migration, and Western education have affected its performance. The rite was customarily performed for virgin girls aged between 14 and 20 years, and those who went through it successfully were believed to make good wives (Amos, 2013; Anarfi, 2003). Nowadays, girls younger than 5 years are initiated, and it is believed to have empowered them to engage in early sex (Langmagne et al., 2018). Also, some devout Christians and Muslims deemed certain activities characterising the celebration, especially the pouring of libation, the worship of ancestors, and the costume that portrays a greater portion of the initiates' naked bodies to the public, inimical to their doctrine (Agra & Gbadegbe, 2014; Ostrow, 2011; Steegstra, 2005; Teyegaga, 1985). Subsequently, they have dissociated themselves from the practice.

It is within this context that this study attempted to comprehend the power of *Dipo* practice and the gods' influential role in its implementation leading to massive compliance and sustenance of the rite. These questions, therefore, guided the study: will understanding the gods' influential role in the implementation of *Dipo* serves any useful lessons that could be mainstreamed in the formulation and implementation of modern policies, and will the implementation of byelaws be sustained if they are endorsed by the gods of the land?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Explanation of Key Concepts

Early sexual debut (ESB): The age for early sexual debut has attracted various definitions from recent scholars. For instance, Seff et al. (2020) defined it as experiencing first sex prior to age 15. In the last decade, studies from West Africa have shown that ESB is significantly associated with multiple sexual partners, substance use, and truancy (Doku, 2012, cited in Seff et al., 2020). For the purpose of this study, ESB refers to engaging in premarital sex before the age of 16. In Ghana, sex below 16 years is an offence since the legal age for consensual sex according to the Criminal Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29) is 16 years (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection [MGCS], 2018).

Initiated: In this study, the initiated refers to young girls who have passed through the *Dipo* rite. There were two categories: early initiated and late initiated. The former refers to those exposed to the initiation below 12 years old, and some of them were infants who did not understand their initiation. The latter refers to those who were initiated at 12 years of age or older and are regarded as mature since they were developed, experienced menstruation, and understood and appreciated the process of their initiation.

Uninitiated: In this study, the uninitiated refers to girls who were not initiated and had no intention to undergo the initiation at the time of the survey.

Traditional Societies: Within the disciplines of Sociology and Anthropology, traditional society is referred to as one that retains most of its past characteristics and is predominantly governed by customs with minimal change from the past to the present. These societies have their own inbuilt mechanisms, such as communal modes of production, that foster conformity to rules and regulations among residents (Lasisi & Rekiya, 2019). In the wake of colonialism in Africa and Ghana, however, most traditional ways of life have become superfluous. Notable among these is the formulation and implementation of policies in traditional African societies, including Ghana. This system

of maintaining social order in traditional societies, hitherto invested in the "collective conscience of the people" (Ibid: p.101), was shifted to the colonial administration. Currently, with an entrenched democratic system of governance in Ghana, coupled with the era of information technology (IT), policymakers, or DAs, can track trends and engage citizens in policy process initiatives. Yet, modern policies have failed to garner a high level of compliance and sustenance among residents due to a lack of proper consideration of the history, socio-cultural beliefs, and development needs of the indigenes (Boamah et al., 2012).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 The Divine Command Theory

The Divine Command Theory (DCT) was adapted to explore the processes of the institution of *Dipo* by the gods and its productive implementation. Socrates (469–399 BCE) was one of the proponents of DCT when he queried whether an act is good because God commanded it or God commanded it because it is good (Abubakar, 2021). Basically, the DCT states that morality is grounded in the commands or character of God. Simply put, actions that are morally right are the ones that God commands or requires, with sanctions for disobedience. The theory has been supported by classical and contemporary scholars like St. Augustine, Duns Scotus, Immanuel Kant, and John Calvin. However, critics of DCT included Plato, J.L. Mackie, and William of Ockham (Abubakar, 2021).

The critics argue that if God chooses to command abhorrent acts such as theft, murder, or rape, then these acts would be morally acceptable. Also, the theory raises a moral dilemma: are actions morally right because God commands them, or does God command actions because they are right? (Abubakar, 2021). This presupposes that right and wrong preceded God since they were not coming from Him, which runs counter to the general belief among African traditional societies that God alone has no beginning and no ending and is also the creator of all things (Ekeke & Ekeopara, 2010). However, Adams (1987) mounted a defence for the theory that even if God could command actions that are cruel or that would cause suffering and pain, by the nature of God as omnibenevolent and merciful, He would not do them. Hence, humans, who were created in the likeness of God, would also not inflict suffering and pain on their fellows.

Likewise, the belief in lesser gods or divinities is paramount in the African Indigenous Religion ontology (Njoku, 2002; Ushe, 2017). They are regarded as next to The Supreme Being in the hierarchical order of power (Ushe, 2017). Their wishes and commands are therefore respected and binding since they are known to punish offenders and reward obedient people in the community with integrity (Ossom-Batsa, 2008; Purzycki & Sosis, n.d.). The Krobo have an annual ritual of sowing where libations are offered to the divinities to ensure a good harvest. Owing to its importance, the elders, with the endorsement of the gods of the land, decreed it a taboo for any farmer who refused to observe the ritual. During the ritual, the inhabitants were gathered in the presence of priests or priestesses of the *Okumo* and *Kloweki* deities. A person found guilty of an offence was either inflicted with sickness or struck dead by the deity (Huber, 1980; Ossom-Batsa, 2008). The inhabitants endorsed these conventions because they were established with recourse to their respected and revered divinities (see Ossom-Batsa, 2008).

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 The Lesser gods in the Context of Traditional Societies

Among traditional African societies, God (The Supreme Being) is believed to be the sole creator of the universe (Ekeke & Ekeopara, 2010). However, an African mythology has it that The Supreme Being is not worshipped directly because, after the creation of the universe and all things were in motion, He withdrew and went to live in a remote place that withdrew Him from human life (Ukpong, 1983, cited in Ndemanu, 2018). This provided the space for Africans to rely on lesser gods or divinities who would stand in for them and constantly channel their problems through him to The Supreme Being. Hence, African religion considered the role of divinities sacred, divine, and supreme to humanity, as they were believed to have attributes of God. Besides, African cosmology regarded the divinities as the lieutenants of God with ministerial power given to them by God to mainly mediate between God and man (Ushe, 2017).

In West Africa, these divinities are called differently according to the needs of the societies (Ekeke & Ekeopara, 2010; Mbeti, 1969). *Sango* is the divinity of thunder, and *Ani* or *Ala* is the earth divinity among the Yoruba and Igbos of Nigeria, respectively. In Sudan, *Deng* is known as the divinity of rain and fertility (Ekeke & Ekeopara, 2010). In Ghana, it is on record that the Oguaa people (Cape Coast) have seventy-seven (77) recognised divinities or gods who are believed to be the children of The Supreme Being. These are assigned specific functions that they perform for the indigenes (Korsah & Kowornu-Adjaottor, 2019). Each of the gods has a name, and rituals are offered to them in the form of sacrifices and the pouring of libation around stones, rocks, trees, and groves where they are

mostly located. They are believed to send blessings and curses to individuals. These gods are not worshipped on Thursdays because it is a day for them to meet The Supreme Being about the affairs of the Oguaa people (Ibid.).

Current events have affirmed that the mix of fear and reverence accorded to the gods in Ghana is unmatched. More recently, myjoyonline.com reported that river gods in Ampabame I, a farming community in Ashanti Region, Ghana, have registered their displeasure over the location of a modern toilet facility. Consequently, the residents have refused to patronise the 32-seater facility until the gods' demand for five human heads for sacrifice is met (Awuku, July, 2022). This reinforces the belief among Ghanaians that the wishes and commands of the gods remain paramount since disobeying or disrespecting them can provoke curses and death for the individual or the community as a whole.

2.3.2 The Myth Around Nana Kloweki

As noted earlier, the institution of *Dipo* has been famously credited to *Nana Kloweki*, the goddess of fertility in Krobo. The oral history of the Krobo has it that during their migration from Judah in Israel through Notsie in Northern Togo, they met an old woman who took delight in them and was later named *Nana Kloweki*. On their journey, they arrived at *Zugu* and encountered *King Akpate Sukluku*. The latter refused them passage through his settlement unless they honoured his request for human lives. As difficult as it was for the travellers, *Nana Kloweki* gathered her people and sang praises to the king of *Zugu*. The praises pleased the King so much that he gave them unconditional access (Odonkor, 1971). Finally, the people of Krobo, accompanied by *Nana Kloweki*, found a haven on top of the Krobo hills (*Kloyo*) in Gold Coast (now Ghana) and stayed there until the British colonial administration, led by Governor Griffiths, forcefully ejected them to settle on the plains, which has remained their abode since 1892 (Steegstra, 2005).

Again, Krobo history has it that the cult of *Nana Kloweki* may not be the first to arrive in Krobo; however, she's regarded as the 'head fetish' and also the most venerated deity among the people of Krobo (Steegstra, 2005). For instance, while on the *Kloyo*, the membership of a joint council known as *Djameli* that had both ritual and politico-religious functions was all male priests, except one. The only female priestess among them was a representative of *Nana Kloweki*. She was highly regarded, and whenever there was a deadlock in their decision or someone contested their ruling, the case was referred to her for another ruling that was final and 'irrevocable' (Steegstra, 2005). *Nana Kloweki* was associated with the highest moral authority in the land. The priests and priestesses representing her were expected to stay pure and ritually clean (i.e., not to hold firearms, cutlasses, spears, or arrows) since these were weapons for shedding blood. They were also limited in their movements and contacts with strangers (Ibid.).

In another instance, *Nana Kloweki* was said to have fallen into a trance one day and saw a man holding a big cross standing in front of her with instructions that the cross was the 'symbol of purification that was coming'. Soon afterwards, the man vanished from her presence. When she regained her consciousness, she understood that her days with the people of Krobo were numbered and the cross, also interpreted as the 'Cross of Christ', was the 'new light'. She hurriedly made an image (a bust) of herself with clay and set it on a stand. Then she informed her assistant, chief priest *Asikpe*, about her trance and disappeared. Her disappearance occurred around 1820, and a few years later, the Basel Missionaries arrived on the Gold Coast. However, *Nana Kloweki* became an instant deity, and her image was revered and worshipped. Moreover, the Krobo people continue to use the cross as a symbol of protection in the celebration of *Dipo* (Steegstra, 2005; Teyegaga, 1985).

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study was cross sectional involving the use quantitative research design to assess the relevance of *Dipo* in contemporary times. The design offered the researchers the opportunity to examine mainstream practices and observations pertaining to *Dipo* rite. The study involved young boys and girls aged 15–24 years. The age group was when most young adults had either been initiated or otherwise (Agra & Gbadegbe, 2014). However, since females were exposed to *Dipo*, this article focused on data involving 284 indigenous young girls. This rich data was not only used for the purpose of understanding the power of *Dipo* practice, but also to stimulate discussions on leveraging the gods' factor in policy implementations for development in Ghana.

3.2 Study Area

Due to the nature of the problem, the study was purposively carried out in Somanya (Urban) and Ogame (Rural), both in the Yilo-Krobo Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Municipality is located approximately 45 km from Koforidua, the capital town of the Eastern Region, and 50 km from Accra, the nation's capital (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2012). The Municipality lies within latitude 60.00'N and longitudes 00.30W

and 10.00W. It covers an estimated area of 805 square kilometres, constituting 3.3 percent of the total land area of the Eastern Region. Lower Manya Krobo Municipality and Upper Manya Krobo District bound the Municipality in the north and east, respectively. In the South, the Municipality is bounded by Akwapim North Municipality and Shai Osudoku District, and in the West by New Juabeng and East Akim Municipalities and Fanteakwa District. The Municipality has about 230 settlements, but it is predominantly rural (GSS, 2014).

Though the selection of Yilo-Krobo was purposeful, it was chosen on the basis that the indigenes have exhibited strongly that *Dipo* is part and parcel of their lives. When *Dipo* was outlawed by the colonial administration in 1892, the elders clandestinely performed it for their young daughters in the community (Huber, 1993). Recently, at the apex of the Corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic, some elders defied the Government's imposition of restriction Act 2020 (Act 1012) as a measure to control the spread of the disease, to perform the rite and got arrested (kasapafmonline.com, May 2020). In light of this, Yilo-Krobo was considered appropriate and opportune to explore the urban and rural dynamics, which have retained their essence, albeit some activities that have been altered due to the entrenchment of colonialism and rapid social transformation (Anarfi, 2003).

3.3 Sampling

The 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC) put the population of young people aged 15 – 24 years in both study communities as 4285. This was made up 3506 and 779 for Somanya and Ogome respectively (GSS, 2012). In view of this, the study applied the mathematical formula proposed by Miller and Brewer (2003) to determine the sample size. The mathematical formula by Miller and Brewer (2003) given as: $n = N/1+N(\alpha)^2$ where, n is the sample size; N was the population of the affected areas and α was the allowed margin of error at (5%) was applied to determine the sample size.

Thus, substituting the population figure obtained into the formula, the sample size (n) was determined as $4285/1+4285(0.05)^2 = 4285/11.7125 = 366$. Though, the sample size estimated was 366, however, due to the fact that population in the study communities might have increased between 2010 and 2020, an estimated projection of 10% was assumed. Hence, the sample size obtained was 402 due to the adjustment. So, the sample size (n) became 402. However, at the end of the survey, 350 (86.8%) questionnaires were successfully retrieved made up of 284 females and 66 males (for details, see Asubonteng-Manu, 2023). In this article, the data obtained from the 284 females informed the discussion.

3.3.1 Sampling Techniques

The purposive sampling technique informed the selection of the study area (Yilo Krobo) because of the uniqueness of *Dipo* rite as a culture of the people. Further, the simple random sampling, a type of probability sampling that gives every member of the population an equal chance of being part of the sample (Taherdoost, 2016), was employed to select respondents. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census report, there are about 5452 households in the study communities (4350 in Somanya and 1102 in Ogome) (GSS, 2014). All the households were assigned with numbers, folded, put them in a container and mixed thoroughly. Then, without replacement (ie. once a number was selected, it was removed from the population or the container to avoid re-selection), the researchers' eyes were blind-folded as they picked numbers from the container (Mustafa, 2010). From this process, the estimated sample size was obtained. At the end of the procedure, the selected sample size was representative enough to cover the three categories of female initiation in the communities.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

A pre-testing exercise was conducted in Dodowa, the capital town of Shai-Osudoku District in the Greater Accra Region, due to its proximity and the fact that they also perform similar womanhood rites. The exercise helped to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire and afforded research assistants (RAs) the opportunity to become acquainted with terminologies pertaining to the rites. The actual survey covered a period of one and a half months. Structured interview was used to elicit information from respondents on a one-on-one basis. This technique aided in understanding the reasons behind the answers given by the respondents. For example, the age at initiation and the reason behind that age of initiation. The Microsoft Excel spread sheet was used for data entry and cleaning. STATA 14.0 was adopted to analyse the data for the generation of tables, graphs, and figures to describe the trends and patterns of the information gathered.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Pillay (2014) has declared that strict ethical principles should be applied in research, especially those involving children. Stringent ethical procedures were therefore followed throughout the research process. The issues

of anonymity and confidentiality were observed, whereby participants were identified only by code numbers instead of their names. Moreover, participants were neither coerced nor influenced in any way, as consensus regarding their voluntary participation was obtained from them or their parents. This ensured the smooth collection of quality data because it built a cordial relationship between the researchers and participants. Ethical approval was also sought from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 The Gods' Influential Role in the Implementation of *Dipo* and its Implications for the Formulation and Implementation of Modern Policies in Ghana

Many oral accounts have been attributed to highlight the influential role played by *Nana Kloweki* in the institution of *Dipo* in Krobo. In this article, however, two of these origins are discussed. First, according to Krobo oral tradition, in the olden days, a man married two women. One of them gave birth to males, whereas the other brought forth only females. In those days, men were needed for war. Hence, giving birth to males was a great honour for the parents and community. It happened that as the male children were celebrated with colourful initiations, the girls attracted no affection whatsoever. The aggrieved woman took solace in an elderly woman in the community called *Nana Kloweki*, who, as a matter of urgency, acted on her concern. *Nana Kloweki* and her elders made a proposal, which was highly endorsed by *Nana Korle Akpankwaa*, an elder of reputable standing. It was proposed that when the daughter experienced her first menstruation, she would be kept in a secret room for some time and given pertinent traditional education, mainly on her duties as a good and adorable wife and mother. The climax of the occasion would involve old women in the community assisting her to sit on a *tegbete* (a sacred stone) specially mounted for her to test her virginity. After successfully completing the process, she would be elegantly dressed in traditional costume and presented to the community as someone who has attained marriageable age. Then, her father and other members of the community would shower her with precious gifts to end the celebration.

Second account acknowledges that while on top of the hills, *Nana Kloweki* established an informal vocational school known as *Dipo*. The intention was to train and prepare virgin young girls who had reached a marriageable age for marriage. Usually, a Krobo young girl of about 14 years old is sent to *Nana Kloweki's* 'school' of domestic science of marriage to commence the training. The girls were kept in a camp for about three years and were trained in cookery, sweeping, caring for kids, knitting, and all female chores, as well as how to be good and respectful wives. The girls who completed the training successfully were given tribal marks on some parts of their bodies (Huber, 1993; Steegstra, 2005) as confirmation.

Given the above role played by the deity in the institution of *Dipo* and its philosophy, respondents who were virgins at the time of the survey were targeted to understand whether the *Dipo* initiation rite was a contributing factor or otherwise. The results are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

Percentage of Relationship between Dipo and Virginity by Initiation Category

Variable	Initiated		Uninitiated	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Still Young/In School/Apprentice	20	40.0	30	60.0
Afraid of Parent/Family Consequences	24	61.5	15	38.5
Dipo Taught me to Remain Chaste	28	93.3	2	6.7
Parents Give me all I Need	3	33.3	6	66.7
My Religion/Custom Forbids	3	27.3	8	72.7
Parents Taught me to Remain Chaste	6	42.9	8	57.1
Personal Decision	7	46.7	8	53.3

As observed in Table 1, while close to two-thirds (61.6%) of initiated girls attributed their virginity to the fear of punishment by their parents or family for disobeying the norms associated with *Dipo*, only about 4 out of 10 uninitiated girls (38.4%) indicated the same. This was expected because the latter mostly belong to Christian and Muslim families who strongly believe that *Dipo* has lost its relevance (Ostrow, 2011). Hence, they were unafraid to defy its rules (Abbey et al., 2021). As a result, most uninitiated mainly attributed their virginity to being in school or an apprenticeship, religion, parental influence, advice, or a personal decision.

Yet, out of the 30 virgin young girls, an overwhelming majority (93.3%) reported their virginity was due to their initiation. This finding runs counter to earlier reports that suggest that *Dipo* is a catalyst for early sexual activities

and teenage pregnancies in the community (Langmagne et al., 2018). Quite a few uninitiated (6.7%) also indicated their virginity was due to the practise of *Dipo* in the community. This validates the notion that the uninitiated also tend to respect the standard practises binding on the indigenes as enforced by the gods. They strictly abide by the systems and initiatives that would help them avoid the stigmatization associated with disobedience. This is largely because traditional societies often regard girls who have not been initiated as immature, irrespective of their age at first sex, and punish them (Dintwat, 2010; Munthali et al., 2018).

Moreover, the fear that anyone who contravenes the norms governing *Dipo* gets punished by the gods has compelled the young men to stay away from licentious behaviours. During the survey, nascent news in town has it that a young man who had carnal knowledge with an uninitiated young girl has vowed to resume active sexual life only when he is married. This followed the stigmatization and reprimands he suffered from his parents and friends, who also cautioned him to eschew such behaviour because it is considered taboo in the community.

Clearly, the above has shown that the gods exuded an aura of power in traditional societies and, by extension, Ghana that is akin to that of The Supreme Being in its affairs. However, in this technological age coupled with emergent democratic dispensations across Africa, including Ghana, the aura of power and respectability around the gods has been dwindled and bastardised (Ndemanu, 2018). But indications are that even some people who, by virtue of their religion or profession, are suspected to be opponents of *Dipo* are covertly behind the celebration (Ostrow, 2011). Writing about *Dipo*, Schroeder & Danquah (2000) observed that even parents who are not in favour of *Dipo* initiation will not agree for their sons to marry a girl who has not passed through the initiation since such girls are regarded as unclean and cursed. Therefore, in this technological era, MMDAs in Ghana should not shy away from leveraging the gods' factor in the process of policy formulation and implementation.

Given that the fear of the gods is entrenched in the thoughts and way of life of the average African (Ndemanu, 2018), it will be prudent for policymakers and MMDAs to fearlessly take lessons from the gods' influence in the successful implementation of *Dipo* and develop modern policies with recourse to them. This is because the gods have distinguished themselves well as far as discharging their duties are concerned, which has won them the highest accolade of respect among the people. Hence, the residents will have no option but to embrace policies emanating from them to transform our societies and country for the better. More importantly, the youth and little kids should be targeted and given intensive education on African traditional beliefs in schools and homes. This will empower them to desist from labelling them as unscientific. It will also enable them to acknowledge the divine role of lesser gods and how they punish people who disobey and reward those who obey their commands.

4.2 Sustaining Modern Policies with the Endorsement of the Gods of the Land

Young girls whose sexual debut occurred at the time they were mature enough were assessed to understand whether the *Dipo* womanhood rite was the reason for the delay or otherwise. This was used to measure the sustainability of *Dipo* and how it has imposed strong control over the sexual activity of girls in contemporary times. Their responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Percentage of Relationship between Dipo and Timing of First Sex

Categories	Did you delay first sex due to Dipo practice?				P-Value
	Yes	%	No	%	
Initiated	86	96.6	13	41.9	0.000
Uninitiated	3	3.4	18	58.1	
Total	89	100.0	31	100.0	

The results in Table 2 indicated that an overwhelming majority (96.6%) of young girls who have passed through the *Dipo* initiation expressed the opinion that the initiation was the reason for delaying their sexual debut. This could be due to two reasons. First, *Dipo* is governed by traditional ethical norms specified by the gods. Consequently, most young girls would want to avoid their wrath by not getting pregnant prior to the initiation. Second, the old women who take care of *Dipo-yoo* (Dipo girls) at the *Dipo* camp instruct them about their womanhood. This includes the need for them to remain chaste until marriage, since that is the wish of the gods. This eventually enjoins them to live according to the conventional behaviours of society, because it is the only means to enjoy the rewards of the gods meant for those who obey their commands. The results further indicate that more than half of the uninitiated (58.1%) attributed the delayed sexual debut to factors other than *Dipo* initiation. These included religion, strict parental control, and personal reasons. Yet, an appreciable proportion of them (3.4%) alluded delay of their sexual debut to the practise of *Dipo* in the community. This could suggest that they were equally afraid to indulge in sexual

deviance since the gods have demonstrated through the introduction of *Dipo* that they abhorred early premarital sex in society.

Nevertheless, earlier studies have reported that even with the initiation of young girls in place, the Municipality has consistently remained one of the areas with the highest HIV and AIDS prevalence rates in Ghana (Langmagne et al. 2018). This article, therefore, attempted to investigate socio-economic and cultural factors that expose or inhibit young females from engaging in early sex prior to marriage. This is because, early sexual debut can have negative ramifications, resulting in abortion, teenage or unintended pregnancy, and STIs. In lieu of this, findings from the logistics regression analysis in Table 3 show that *Dipo* initiation and levels of commitment and involvement of young girls have a significant relationship with early sexual debut.

Table 3

Binary logistic regression predicting Early Sexual Debut by Background Characteristics

Early sex initiation	Odds Ratio	P-value	[95% Confidential Level	Interval]
Dipo initiation				
Early Dipo (R)				
Late Dipo	0.044	0.000	0.011	0.182
Attachment to parents				
Sometimes (R)				
Very often	0.222	0.064	0.045	1.090
Commitment and involvement of Dipo				
Not committed at all (R)				
Committed	0.135	0.020	0.025	0.725
Very committed	0.038	0.005	0.004	0.381
Puberty rule beliefs				
Disagree (R)				
Agree	2.089	0.424	0.343	12.716
Age of respondents				
15-19 (R)				
20-24	1.631	0.475	0.179	2.230
Education of Respondents				
Primary (R)				
Junior High School	3.593	0.093	0.809	15.963
Senior High School	2.776	0.195	0.593	12.992
Tertiary	1.377	0.854	0.046	41.465
Migration Status				
No (R)				
Yes	0.384	0.133	0.111	1.337
Locality of Respondents				
Urban (R)				
Rural	0.631	0.407	0.212	1.874
Constant	14.458	0.049	1.007	207.593

The results revealed that young girls who were initiated at mature age were 0.044 times less likely than those initiated early to have indulged in an early sexual debut. Obviously, the belief is that the initiation transposes adolescents into womanhood. Hence there is a likelihood for early-initiated young girls to experience early first sex since they feel they are old enough and would not be punished even when they conceived out of wedlock (Agra & Gbadegbe, 2014; Langmagne et al., 2018). Being a conservative society that eschews premarital sex, the elders have noticed this appalling behaviour with grief. The causation effect is that most parents only tend to enforce maximum controls over girls' sexual conduct when they are yet to undergo *Dipo* to avoid disgrace and shame. In light of this, the Queen Mother has stepped up awareness-creation measures that are yielding positive results. Among them is a caution given to both *Dipo* carers and parents to desist from initiating kids since the practise is not only leading to early sexual debut, but it is also against the commands of the gods.

Further, in Table (3), commitment and involvement in *Dipo* activities also have a significant relationship with early sexual debut. Thus, those who were very committed or involved in *Dipo* activities in their community are 0.038 times less likely than those who were not committed or involved in *Dipo* activities to engage in early sexual debut. Further, those who were committed to or involved in *Dipo* activities in their community were also 0.135 times less

likely than those who were not committed to or involved in *Dipo* activities to engage in early sexual debut. This finding agrees with previous scholarship findings that young people who strongly participate in or are committed to conventional behaviours such as religious activities, beliefs, and practises are more likely to delay early sexual debut than their counterparts who are not religious (Somefun, 2019).

Following from the above, it predisposes that pre-initiation sex is decreed by the gods as taboo among indigenes. Offenders are found out during their investiture at the sacred *Tegbete* stone and are punished accordingly. Consequently, young girls would rather stay pure to avoid bringing disgrace to themselves and their significant others. Thus, as an informal social control mechanism against early premarital sex, *Dipo* more often empowers mothers, especially those who have performed the rite themselves, to discuss issues of acceptable behaviour with their daughters. This includes the punishments for contravening the norms governing the rite and the potential gains the young girls stand to enjoy if they avail themselves of the initiation. The gains include the blessing of the gods, fruitfulness, and a successful marriage. Furthermore, they are often seen as the epitome of sexual morality and are also the most preferred choice of wives for Krobo young men (Steegstra, 2005).

Obviously, despite this era of digital technology, *Dipo* provides an outline for the timing of sexual activities among initiated and uninitiated girls, who tend to revere and respect the standard practise of the communities as decreed by the gods. This is because the average African has a deep reverence for the lesser gods, and their commands on moral issues are followed without contestation (Ossom-Batsa, 2008). Furthermore, *Dipo* has been sustained mainly because it's an informal measure endorsed by the gods of the land to achieve a good course. A study by Ostrow (2011) opined that both Christians and non-Christians agreed that *Dipo* is good, at least on the grounds that it encourages young girls to uphold chastity until marriage. Thus, the philosophy underpinning *Dipo* remains unparalleled and the rite continues to wield strong control over the timing of first sex among indigenes. In a nutshell, sustaining the laudable byelaws churned out by MMDAs will be attained if they are endorsed by the gods of the land.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

This article has attempted to explore the extent to which the gods' factor in the development and implementation process of *Dipo*, a womanhood initiation rite of the Krobo to regulate sexual behaviour among young people, has been sustained to achieve the required results. It concludes that *Dipo* initiation over centuries continues to impose strong control over the sexual activity of young girls. Moreover, young men are also afraid to engage in pre-*Dipo* sex with young girls. This is because the gods of the land are ready to unleash their anger on anyone who contravenes their commands without fear or favour. All in all, it tends to highlight the elements of the DCT that like the commands of The Supreme Being, *Dipo* is a morally right control measure grounded in the commands of the gods, which must be revered with sanctions for disobedience.

5.2 Recommendations

Clearly, the article has espoused the values of African traditional practices and stimulated discussions on leveraging the gods' factor in the processes of policy development in traditional societies and, by extension, modern Ghana. In this instance, byelaws will be sustained with huge compliance if residents are sensitised to believe that they were formulated with the endorsement of the gods of the land. In order to achieve this, community engagements on byelaws initiatives should stress the point that recalcitrant will not only be sanctioned according to the dictates of the laws, but also by the wrath of the gods of the land. Like the case of the *Dipo* practice, the average Ghanaian strongly believes that the lesser gods or divinities play a crucial role in their wellbeing and the development of their societies. Hence, the need to apply the god's factor in policy initiatives to attain sustainability for development.

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Evaluating the Effectiveness of United Nations Peace-Building Strategies in South Sudan

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ABSTRACT

This article evaluates the effectiveness of United Nations peace-building programs in South Sudan. The study aimed to identify the main United Nations peace-building strategies, determine how local perceptions impact United Nations peace-building strategies, and illustrate the effectiveness of United Nations peace-building strategies in supporting sustainable peace in South Sudan. The study borrows from liberal institutionalism and conflict transformation theory. The theories explain the collaborative approach to addressing the root causes of conflict in South Sudan. The study employed a mixed-methods design, utilizing descriptive statistics including SSP version 28 for quantitative data and thematic excerpt evaluation for qualitative data. This enabled the study to explore the effectiveness of various peace-building strategies, gaps, and interventions. It targeted military peacekeepers, including troops, staff officers, military observers (MILOBs), and police, including both UN police and GOSS local police, accumulating to 3280. A sample size of 354 was determined by the Yamane's formula, and participants were sampled through cluster sampling, convenience sampling, and purposive sampling. Primary data collection methods included questionnaires, focus group discussions (FDGs), and interview schedules. Secondary data was collected through a review of various publications. Specifically, it highlights the impact of DDR and SSR programs and other economic reforms as conflict management and prevention mechanisms. The findings show that the mission in South Sudan has provided essential support during and post-conflict, improving local and national coping mechanisms. Despite challenges in funding, coordination, and sustainability, the mission has significantly impacted peace-building efforts. Recommendations include enhancing resources, integrating third-party donors, and focusing on mental, physical, and vocational well-being. Additionally, follow-up interventions for ex-combatants will boost sustainability. Strengthening conflict resolution, protecting civilians, and fostering inclusive dialogue will help UNMISS achieve lasting peace in South Sudan.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Demobilization, Disarmament, Economic Reforms, Ex-Combatants, Peace-Building Programs, Prevention Mechanisms, Reintegration, Security Sector Reform

I. INTRODUCTION

In some situations, conflict emerges as the only way to manage existing issues and overcome negative peace. When this happens, the conflicting parties should consider participating in conflict resolution practices such as negotiation, mediation, and arbitration processes (Cilliers & Mills, 1999). At the global level, the United Nations, made up of member states, provides specific guidelines on how international interventions should act when intervening in conflict within or among countries. The United Nations (UN) Charter specifies this step in Chapter VI, a non-binding recommendation that entirely relies on members' willingness to cooperate. However, the UN Charter employs Chapter VII if the situation becomes harmful and violent (Shapiro & Lampert, 2014). These guidelines provide scope and limitations for external measures to be used in controlling conflict escalation and restoring peace.

It requires the Security Council (SC) to use drastic measures, such as military action and economic or diplomatic sanctions that are binding and enforced by the parties (UN, 2024). The financial sanctions can vary from freezing the country's assets to restricting their participation in the global market. The diplomatic sanctions can be as severe as expelling ambassadors and restricting diplomatic ties. Military use is always the last resort, as international troops have the authority to use force to protect civilians and restore peace. It requires forceful UN participation in conflict resolution and violence control. The main goal of the UN mandate is to help nations under conflict and violence gain sustainable peace.

At the regional level, every regional community has its own guidelines and scope of intervention in conflict. The European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) promote sustainable peace by using various mechanisms for preventing, managing, and resolving conflict upon involvement. Some of the interventions have been successful, including the signed treaty between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 2018, which was due to the involvement of the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (UN, 2024). The regional community interventions are

successful because they have structured the mandate according to the deeper understanding of the countries involved paying keen attention to their culture and structure of governance.

The UN has utilized its mandate to develop the United Nations Mission in South Sudan in an attempt to restore peace. The mission's main aim is to cease fire and be at the forefront of the development of peacebuilding strategies and implementation. Significantly, peacebuilding in South Sudan has complex multispectral frameworks (Bellamy & Williams, 2011). It has involved the participation of international, regional, national, and local actors in the development of strategies that would address the root causes of conflict and develop sustainable peacebuilding initiatives. The strategies target the establishment of effective governance, rule of law, and promotion of democratic institutions, which will consider the needs of all key actors in South Sudan.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The United Nations has implemented external measures and provided assistance to a member state. The Mission in South Sudan involved a military component as the last resort and sanction that could alleviate conflict. The mission engaged both regional and international forces, acting as external experts, to manage the conflict through dialogues, reconciliation programs, and rebuilding strategies, with the aim of peace restoration and sustainable development (Shapiro & Lampert, 2014). The UN mandate, through the mission, focuses on reducing hostility and creating a suitable environment for dialogue and reconciliation.

The missions' goals also entail economic development initiatives that target livelihood wellness at the local and national levels. The program entails economic empowerment events with vocational and technical training that will eventually reduce reliance on humanitarian assistance (Nyandera, 2018). These tools also promote peace-building strategies by developing interdependent business ventures and positions that increase the pool of income.

Despite being in South Sudan for over two decades, the mission has faced several challenges in the implementation of these goals. The multiple cycles of conflict in South Sudan have adversely affected the progress of implemented initiatives and the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs for former combatants (Nyandera, 2018). It has also affected the relationships of local actors in the UN due to the diversity of perceptions of the approach used. However, there needs to be further research exploring the role and impact of the mission's strategies on the path of peace and sustainability that addresses the root causes of conflict and the engagement of local actors.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To identify the main United Nations peace building strategies in South Sudan.
- ii. To determine how local perceptions impact United Nations peace-building strategies in South Sudan.
- iii. To illustrate the effectiveness of United Nations peace-building strategies in supporting sustainable peace in South Sudan.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study utilizes liberal institutionalism and conflict transformation theories to explain conflict in South Sudan and UNMISS peace building efforts.

2.1.1 Liberalism institutionalism theory

Liberal institutionalism explores the South Sudan conflict from an international perspective. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye describe the theory as international interventions for individual states that promote unity (Keohane & Nye, 1977). They focus on using collaborative efforts to facilitate diplomatic negotiations, promote cooperation and coordination among member states, and encourage global peace through international law. The mission is a collaborative action to resolve the conflict in South Sudan. The mission has partnered with other international, regional, and national actors agencies and programmes to promote peacebuilding processes in South Sudan. The mission faces challenges related to varying interests, insufficient resources, and coordinating diverse actors' representatives. Regardless, it has structured the interventions to align with the complex nature of the culture and needs of South Sudanese citizens. The interventions emphasize the inclusivity of national, armed groups, and local community representatives through dialogue and decision-making processes.

2.1.2 Conflict Transformation Theory

The conflict transformation theory, developed by John Paul Lederach, recognizes the complexities of conflict and the need to use complicated approaches in developing positive, sustainable peace (Lederach, 1997). It emphasizes that peace processes should consider the relationships of involved parties, explore multi-level approaches, and focus on implementing long-term changes. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are considered temporary solutions because they fail to address the root causes, according to the theory. The UN mission in South Sudan focuses on developing political, economic, and social peacebuilding initiatives.

The mission has employed collaborative efforts to develop problem-solving strategies. It has also emphasized the significance of including marginalized communities, women, and youth in developing sustainable and effective peacebuilding solutions (Keohane & Nye, 1977). Thus, conflict transformation theory provides an extension of liberal institutionalism. While the latter explains UNMISS's collaborative inclusion of international actors in South Sudan's peacebuilding efforts, conflict transformation theory explains the need for processes addressing root causes and the significance of inclusivity at all levels.

2.2 Empirical Review

In line with the first objective of identifying the main united nations peacebuilding strategies, it is evident that the main aim of the mission is to restore peace and help South Sudan develop sustainable peacebuilding initiatives that would help improve the fragility of peace in South Sudan. Investing in SSR programs also entails improving security (Belloni, 2012). The mission aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of security forces by offering adequate training to impact their knowledge and skills and change their approach to align with the conflict situation in South Sudan. Additionally, the mission aims to participate in developing legal and institutional frameworks, specifically those for security governance. These strategies will promote the judicial system's legitimacy, transparency, and accountability in delivering justice and promoting the rule of law.

One of the main determinants of the success or failure of United Nations peace-building strategies is the level and effectiveness of coordination among various groups in a mission area. According to Smith's (2017) study, conflict areas face significant challenges in multi-stakeholder coordination within a single mission. This is due to the fact that the mission area comprises multi-dimensional actors and partners, including the military component, the civilian component, and the police component, which have diverse operational capabilities and professional dimensions. The various local government agencies, national agencies, and regional and global parties further exacerbate this situation by collaborating to lessen the harsh realities and impact of conflict on the vulnerable population. In any integrated mission, all partner stakeholders and actors work together in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction.

According to Smith (2021), another perspective suggests that the main role of coordination mechanisms is to enhance the coherence and efficiency of peace-building efforts. These activities include joint planning, resource mobilization, intelligence, and information sharing. The study by Nyadera (2018) provides valuable insights into the critical roles and challenges faced by various mission actors in the process of achieving seamless coordination and collaboration.

In line with the second objective on the perspectives of the locals on the impacts of peacebuilding strategies, the study established that the perceptions of the local population have influenced the effectiveness of UN peace-building strategies. A study by Baker et al. (2023) highlights the complicated interplay between local perception and the success or failure of various peace-building strategies. The study accentuates the importance of understanding and incorporating the perspectives and opinions of the local population into various peace-building strategies. The study asserts that this framework plays a crucial role in enhancing the trust of the local population, fostering legitimacy, and guaranteeing local ownership among the conflict-affected community members.

Similarly, Smith (2021) emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity and contextual awareness in shaping external perception and promoting intervention efforts in conflict environments (Kumalo & Roddy-Mullineaux, 2019). These insights underscore the necessity for various international organizations, such as the United Nations and other peace-building agencies, to further engage in participatory strategies aimed at

empowering local stakeholders and parties, and further aligning interventions with the needs and desires of the local community.

Consistent with second objective, the local perception is also envisioned through Alao (2017), in his study titled "Local Perceptions and the Effectiveness of United Nations Peace-Building Strategies," emphasizes the dynamic nature of local perceptions and the roles they play in ensuring both long-term and short-term sustainable peace-building initiatives (Shapiro & Lampert, 2014). The study suggests that there is a need to prioritize and focus on the local attitude in peace-building initiatives, which provided invaluable insight for policymakers and other conflict practitioners in fostering sustainable peace and stability in conflict-affected regions like South Sudan (Kumalo & Roddy-Mullineaux, 2019). For peace-building strategies to succeed, they must incorporate local perspectives into their designs, implementation programs, and evaluation strategies, as this will ensure their effectiveness, suitability, and sustainability.

In line with the third objective on the effectiveness of United Nations peacebuilding strategies, it is evident that the security situation in South Sudan has deteriorated due to the numerous conflict surges. This has changed people's perception of the rule of law, the government's ability to restore peace, and people's respect for human rights (Belloni, 2012). The ongoing instability has jeopardized every intervention implemented to restore peace and help the building process, leading to the destruction of progress and rendering it ineffective, complicated, or unstable. These changes influenced international and regional actors to intervene through the mission.

To illustrate the effectiveness, the study has developed independent and dependent variables from a theoretical and empirical standpoint. The independent variables entail reducing violence and conflict, improving security, enhancing social cohesion, increasing political stability, developing socio-economic development, and protecting human rights and civilians. These variables align with the mandate and main objectives of the mission. The dependent variables include SSR, DDR, economic development, social-cultural strategies, dialogues and negotiation, the rule of law and human rights, and community engagement. The structure, involvement, and implementation of these variables will determine the success or failure of the peace-building initiatives.

Aligned with the third objective, the study also assessed the role of communication institutional infrastructure and leadership roles in enhancing peace-building coordination efforts. Scholars such as Jones and Smith (2017) emphasize the importance of leadership dynamics and various power relations, as well as how they influence and shape coordination mechanisms and end states. The findings accentuate the need for proper political, social, and cultural perspectives to positively influence coordination mechanisms, which are necessary for sustainable peace in South Sudan.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study used a mixed-methods design across five regions: Juba, Aweil, Malakal, Rumbek, and Wau in South Sudan and Nairobi in Kenya. The study had a target population of 3280, which comprised both military and police personnel, Payam administrators, religious leaders, United Nations international staff, diplomats, humanitarian affairs heads, and personnel from international non-governmental organizations (INGOs).

To select settings and participants, the study utilized a sample size of 354 combined with both probability and non-probability sampling techniques consisting of purposive, clusters, stratified proportionate, and simple random sampling (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Yamane's (1967) formula was used to achieve recommended sample confidence (Louangrath & Sutanapong, 2019). Questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGDs), and interview schedules were used to collect primary data from the respondents while secondary data collection involved literature review and analysis of academic papers, policy documents, reports, and relevant publications from reputable sources such as the United Nations, governmental agencies, and NGOs (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999).

Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were utilized with quantitative data being analyzed using numerical techniques and statistical methods while excerpts were used to explain plausible interpretations of qualitative data. Equally Face and content validity processes were considered alongside data triangulation from numerous methods and sources to evaluate the nature of UN missions and peacebuilding strategies in South Sudan.



IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

The study aimed to identify the main United Nations peacebuilding strategies, determine how local perceptions impact United Nations peace-building strategies, and illustrate the effectiveness of United Nations peace-building strategies in supporting sustainable peace in South Sudan. To facilitate an in-depth investigation, the study collected data from a sample size of 354 individuals with a response rate of 82% and used a self-administered survey method. The response rate of 82% was achieved by the successful completion of 290 surveys, and FGDs, and the use of an interview schedule highlights the integrity of the data collection process. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), any response rate above 72% is recommended and holds statistical significance for a reliable conclusion and findings as presented below.

Table 1

Response Rate

S/No	Category	Total Participants	Response received	Response rate (%)
1.	Surveys, FGD and Interview schedules	354	290	82%

4.2 Security Sector Reforms

The mission has been successful in promoting SSR in South Sudan. The mission cooperates with national police to conduct joint patrols around key zones (Nascimento, 2018). These patrols demonstrate a unified approach to restoring security in South Sudan. It also provides an opportunity for the police and the mission to develop an improved applicable approach that includes the current trends and South Sudan culture. Moreover, the mission has engaged civil society organizations in SSR processes.

They understand the gaps and opportunities that would enhance SSR's practicality, effectiveness, and sustainability. They ensure that the amendments reflect the local community's needs and the people's peace vision. The mission provides training and workshops for these representatives, a strategy that enhances competency and creates a sense of qualification and belonging in conducting and participating through dialogue processes in rebuilding the security sector.

The study sought to explore how the mission has utilized SSR and the effectiveness of SSR as a peace-building strategy for promoting sustainable peace in South Sudan. This was done by surveying 290 respondents to obtain their views and perspectives. The study analyzed various dynamics and patterns relating to violence and conflict and the findings are presented in Figure 1 below.

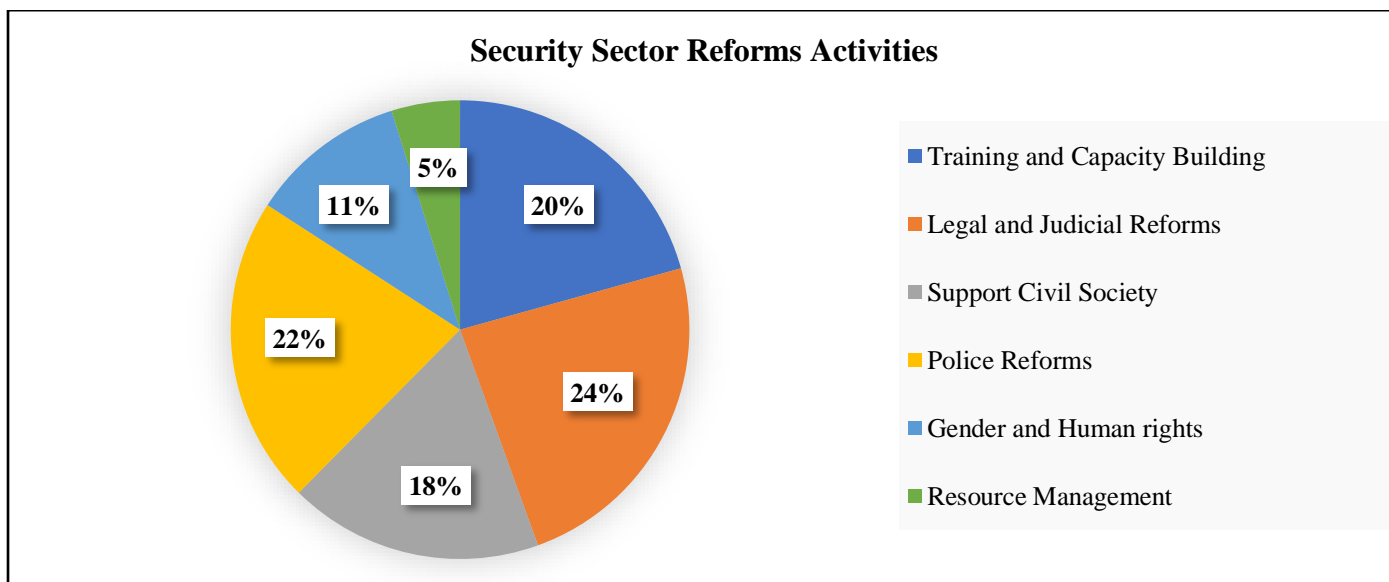


Figure 1

Security Sector Reform and Peace Building

The study findings above illustrate the mission's proactive efforts in utilizing SSR as a peace-building strategy in South Sudan. 24 % and 22% of the surveyed respondents observed that legal, judicial and police reforms respectively were critical in ensuring the success of the SSR programs and promoting sustainable peace (Nascimento, 2018). The mission has immensely contributed to the promotion of peace and a stable environment which aligns with the mission's border comprehensive approach to SSR programs and sustainable peace in South Sudan.

The findings provide a clear understanding of the respondents' perspectives and viewpoints thus highlighting the roles SSR has played in promoting peace and stability in the country (UNSR, 2021). The study findings also record training and capacity building, support to civil society gender and human rights and resource management are equally important in ensuring accountability transparency and effectiveness of security institutions in South Sudan.

The mission has been efficient in supporting SSR processes. Its existence in South Sudan for more than a decade has strengthened its awareness of conflict cycles and structures of formal and informal settings. It has allowed the mission to develop more stable strategies that would be effective through its second chance. The initial opportunity was in 2013 when the mission used its military forces to cease the war, a plan that was rendered ineffective. Applying international intelligence in managing the South Sudan conflict and war cycles was impractical since the mission's mandate was detached from the situation, culture, and war dynamics in South Sudan.

The second chance to implement SSR was in July 2011, in which the aim was not primarily to use military functions but to develop peace agreements through negotiations and state-building dialogues ("South Sudan Monitor," 2011). This way, the SSR processes will entail the government to local representatives, including all components. It also included representatives from marginalized groups and informal armed groups, who may seem insignificant but had influence and links to opposing political parties. This strategy enhanced participation and was a more organized structure for promoting peace-building in South Sudan.

One of the most tremendous missions' successes is the implementation of the United Nations Security Resolutions (UNSR) that aim to promote SSR reforms. UNSR 2577 (2021) emphasized renewing the sanctions present in South Sudan to curb ongoing conflict (UNSR, 2021). Reducing the distribution of firearms will eventually reduce up rise of violence within South Sudan. These sanctions aim to limit sources of future conflict and violence cycles.

Travel bans also target the movement of key stakeholders who are key players in the ongoing conflict. Moreover, the mandate implemented a travel ban on specific individuals, including group leaders and political leaders, who might be linked with parties in conflict, and government officials who oppose peace negotiations. The ban also applied to monitor rebel leaders of armed militia groups. Limiting their movement limits the movement of weapons through porous borders. Controlling the black market's influence on the conflict helps the military and police focus on borders' root causes of conflict and limit human rights violations.

The mission, through the mandate, has involved a Panel of Experts in South Sudan. This independent body, appointed by the UN, comprises individuals with candid knowledge and experience in implementing sanctions and guiding the nation through SSR processes. They also observe and report the security patterns in South Sudan, providing detailed reports and evidence necessary to further SSR approach improvements. This resolution did not necessarily introduce any new sanctions. It focused on reaffirming and extending the existing, only with more aggressive and informed approaches. A former sector commander Sector noted that:

UNMISS supported the development of the National Security Policy and the National Security Strategy, which were launched in 2014 and 2018, respectively. These documents provide a framework for the reform of the security sector and outline the government's vision for security sector governance, management, and oversight.

The other resolution entailed accountability issues in South Sudan. UNSR 2206 (2015) established a working framework that ensured the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) took responsibility for the SSR and peace processes (Beny, 2015). It did not authorize using force in South Sudan, but it pressured the conflicting parties to participate in finding programs that promote sustainable peace. For example, the resolution emphasized GoSS be responsible for protecting civilians from war crimes, including ethnic cleansing, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), and crimes against humanity (Sedra, 2011).

The government would also lead in re-establishing the rule of law by addressing human rights abuses and violations. The resolution created a committee that conducted observation and reporting of the progress and performance of the government in executing these roles to the Security Council. The information was influential in developing programs that engaged local and state-level government participation, improving the reconciliation and justice processes in South Sudan.

The implementation of SSR by the mission faced challenges. Funding, oversized forces, and prioritization of police and military reforms at the expense of judicial and transitional reforms were the main threats to implementing the



UN-based SSR projects. The multiple cycles of violence and destruction of SSR progress instilled fear among experts in taking significant steps toward implementation (van der Lid, 2023). Thus, they invested much in local-level projects and less at the state level due to fear of taking such intense risks and failing. Moreover, it took time for the international and regional actors (African Union and IGAD) to understand the conflict dynamics (van der Lid, 2023).

Thus, the local interventions are diverse and geographically based in South Sudan. The varying needs of each location inhibit the unification of the SSR local structures. Additionally, the locally recruited experts, under the peacebuilding police and military, are tied, reported, and dependent on the commanders. Thus, the funding challenges led to low and delayed salaries, fueling cases of corruption and willingness to participate and condone human rights violations, extortion, and looting. These actions inhibited the success of restoring the rule of law and justice in South Sudan, rendering the mission's efforts insignificant, resulting in more harm than good.

4.3 Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

DDR programs happened in two phases. The first phase occurred in Sudan and South Sudan under the United Nations mandate through the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 (Lamb & Stainer, 2018). The aim was to resolve existing conflicts by creating a conducive environment promoting reconstruction, security, and development. In the initial stages of peacebuilding, the efforts were less effective than the mission perceived. The plan was attractive on paper but highly insignificant upon implementation. The DDR process failed to align the security and violence situation in South Sudan to the goals and implementation process of the DDR.

The study sought to explore the effectiveness of DDR programs in promoting sustainable peace in South Sudan. The study surveyed a total of 290 respondents to obtain their views and perspectives on the role and effectiveness of DDR programs and their views were summarized. The study analyzed various activities and dynamics relating to DDR. The findings are presented in the subsequent 2 table below.

Table 2
Impact of DDR on Peacebuilding Initiatives

DDR Activities	Population	Percentage
Community-Based Peacebuilding	74	26%
Reconciliation and social cohesion	84	29%
Economic Empowerment	58	20%
Reduced armed conflict	74	25%
Total	290	100

The study findings reveal that the mission has had an effective DDR program which has supported peacebuilding initiatives in the country. The findings further highlight the critical role played by DDR programs in disarming ex-combatants, demobilizing them into civilian life and further re-integrating them into society. According to the findings, DDR has been able to support the restoration of the communities affected by conflict (Day et al., 2019). Through reintegration, the mission has been able to address the socio-economic and psychological needs of the ex-combatants as they transition from military to civilian life. It was observed that acceptance by society, and productive participation in civilian life is important for the seamless integration of ex-combatants. One local elder observed that;

....Some of the main challenges facing DDR implementations include; intercommunal violence, recurrent armed insurrections, widespread insecurity and border conflict with Sudan in the North...

Moreover, the program targets the elderly, disabled, and child combatants from armed groups (Lamb & Stainer, 2018). It aimed to reintegrate them into the community by equipping them with skills and counselling to help them find a position in the local community. Phase II of this project began before South Sudan's independence, hoping to customize the program to suit the structure, culture, and security issues in South Sudan under UNMISS.

Different from Phase I, the new DDR program operated on various dynamics. It aligned with the UNSR 1590 (2005), which aimed to monitor strategies that deter violence in support of CPA (Lamb & Stainer, 2018). It also considered the sensitivity of peace in Sudan and South Sudan, focusing on ending both countries' civil war and reconstruction. It had zero tolerance for CRSV, SGBV, and human rights violations.

The program also considered a multi-framework approach. It included international actors such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations through the mission, and GoSS through the South Sudan Peoples Defense Forces (SSPDF) (UNDP, 2021). It aimed to use local organizations to disarm civilians, reduce the spread of firearms, facilitate training, and reintroduce them to the local community. This project was more fruitful than Phase 1.

DDR steps are specific in roles and purpose. Disarmament is the process in which community leaders voluntarily collect small arms from civilians (Day et al., 2019). The mission trains representatives on weapon identification, communication approaches, and collection techniques. In the demobilization stage, the mission, through representatives, identifies and screens eligible candidates, confirming that they were not perpetrators of human rights abuses. Statistics have shown that 5,000 ex-combatants make it through the screening process (Donais & Solomon, 2022). The mission then sets centres through which they distribute necessities and register them. The centres also offer medical and psychological support, preparing for the last phase. One key informant observed that:

Reintegration is the most involving and complex process of the three. This is because, while the other two processes, disarming and de-mobilization focus mainly on the physical disarming and demobilization of ex-combatants, reintegration explores deeper into the far-reaching socio-economic and psychosocial aspects of transition back into civilian life.

This step requires vast human and technical resources and support. It entails offering vocational training in carpentry, mechanics, and agriculture. The 2018 Yambio program provided training and start-up equipment to 600 ex-combatants, as the setup assistant (Researcher's Findings). Despite reducing the number from the previous step, the recording is better than the first phase of the DDR program. Psychological support at this stage is crucial, especially among ex-combatants struggling with trauma and stigma.

The mission has faced various challenges through the DDR programs. Funding and scarcity of resources, as the greatest of all, are the main reasons for the reduced output of the program. It has affected the quality of training, especially since most professional facilitators resigned after the first phase (Lamb & Stainer, 2018). This adversely affected the quality of the vocational training, as many figured the program might need to live up to its goals. Additionally, the DDR program in South Sudan was more technical and involved various organizations.

This congestion affected information sharing, planning, and implementation coordination. Many organizations approached the program with individual goals and different expertise. This situation created challenges in aligning the program with the needs of ex-combatants and the varying cultures (due to geographic location). Moreover, there was an increased risk of voluntary donors withdrawing their donations without the possibility of providing alternatives in the future. These issues among stakeholders at the controlling level influenced the behaviour of the DDR program.

These challenges affected ex-combatants on their reforming journey. For instance, reintegration is the most sensitive of the three stages. The program needed more resources to support the evolution process by identifying areas of livelihood opportunities. Lack of income-generating jobs, inadequate training, and insufficient start-up resources hinder the sustainability of the program's effects. Moreover, illegal trade and porous borders make the disarmament process insignificant. Upon perception of failure, the ex-combatants would turn to armed militia groups for survival and protection due to frustration and poor coping capability.

4.4 Social and Cultural Strategies

The mission invested in social and cultural strategy as an approach strategy to the deep causes of conflict. It targeted resolving identity and association crises, cultural differences, and ethnic and social differences on individual, social, and governing levels. The investment would promote the significance of reconciliation and dialogue processes, enhancing the sustainability of the peacebuilding initiatives. The competition for scarce resources, historical grievances, mistrust, historical issues, and revenge missions have caused different uprisings of conflict and violence among citizens of South Sudan.

The study sought to investigate how the mission has applied social and cultural strategies and their effectiveness in promoting sustainable peace in South Sudan. The study surveyed a total of 290 respondents to obtain their views and perspectives on the effectiveness of social-cultural aspects as a peace-building strategy in South Sudan. The study analyzed various activities and dynamics relating to social-cultural strategies and the findings are presented in Figure 2 below.

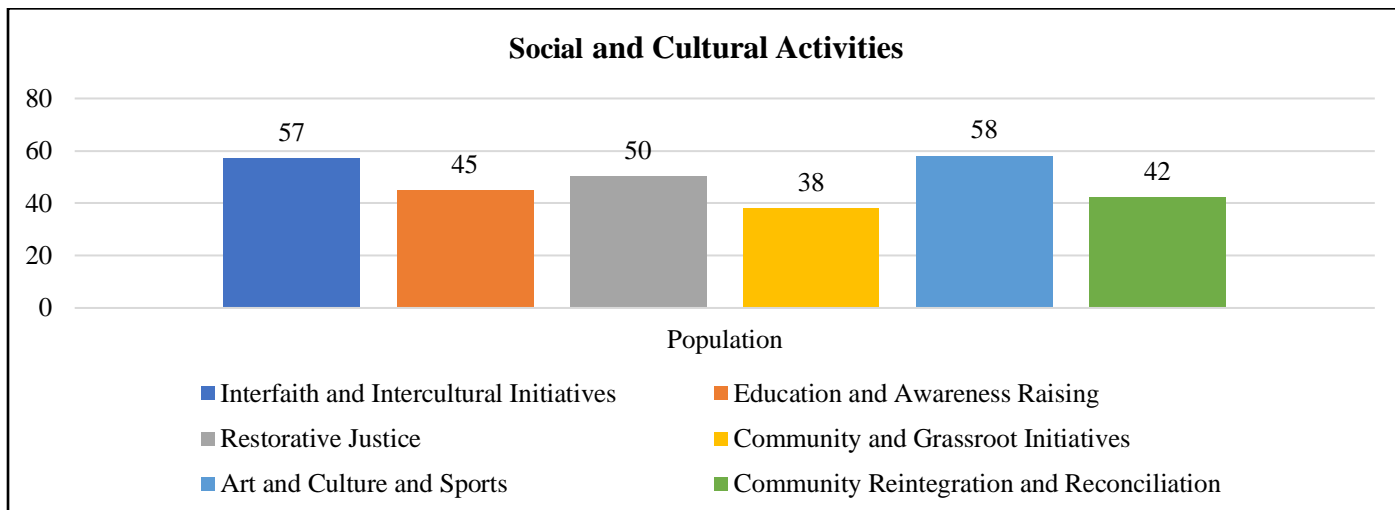


Figure 2
Social and Cultural Factors

The study findings highlight the implication of social and cultural factors as a key strategy employed by the mission to promote stability and sustainable peace in South Sudan. The findings reveal the critical roles played by the mission in promoting social cohesion reconciliation and healing thus empowering and encouraging local communities to embrace peace transparency and understanding. It is therefore necessary to adopt a holistic approach embedded in social and cultural dimensions to achieve efficient and sustainable peace efforts.

Social and cultural strategies of peacebuilding used the holistic approach in addressing conflict issues in South Sudan and promoting sustainable peace. Initiatives, such as intercultural and interfaith dialogues and events, target changing myths, misconceptions, and negative beliefs. Cultural events, celebrations, and performances help communities appreciate their history and differences. Thus, they develop a sense of identity and belonging from the perception of inclusion and participation in a unified decision-making process.

Art, music, crafts, and storytelling strategies have helped communities express their version of South Sudan and their conflict experiences (Pahrenholz, 2010; Zehr & Mika, 2017). This display has enabled others to understand and relate to suffering and pain, creating a favourable environment for reconciliation, forgiveness, and trust development. Consequently, community members can express themselves without fear of judgment, developing victim management programs, justice pursuit, and mediation processes.

The mission has used empowerment strategies to enhance the community’s coping mechanisms, especially at the individual level. Civil mass education equips individuals with knowledge and skills to participate in democratic and peace dialogues with an understanding of the role of their leaders in promoting peace. This way, the mission ensures the community and governance systems are sustainable, especially after the withdrawal of post-conflict support.

Peace education equips people to understand conflict dynamics, analysis, and management strategies. It ensures that people can de-escalate conflict situations among themselves before they turn into violence. It also ensures that people can identify and use non-violent mechanisms to oppose negative propaganda and ideas from leaders that could potentially ruin the peacebuilding processes, protecting the infrastructure.

The mission has enabled the community to understand its position in reconciliation and reintegration programs. They have become active participants in generating locally driven solutions on opportunities to address social grievances, the election of leaders, and maintaining their peace investments. Thus, they develop a sense of ownership due to inclusivity and consideration of their needs.

Such solutions are long-lasting because they align with the cultural practices, available resources, and current needs. For reintegration and reconciliation, the mission has trained experts to coordinate the returning home, resettlement, and reconciliation processes. They facilitate dialogues, public apologies, and truth-telling commissions. The mission involves the community in resettling schemes by supporting individuals in setting up businesses, finding appropriate job opportunities to utilize the ex-combatants’ new skills, and rebuilding homes.

4.5 Dialogue and Negotiation

The mission has been at the forefront of leading dialogues and negotiation processes in South Sudan. The work entails increasing participation and inclusivity of individuals from local and national levels in dialogues about peacebuilding and sustainability programs. The programs also aim to facilitate local-driven solutions in the management



of armed groups, who have strong links to the national level and keep perpetrating violence despite the signing of the 2018 peace agreement (Spink, 2020). Participation will also remove the barriers between local and national governments, effectively conducting conflict analysis, defining linkages, and curbing perpetration at all levels. This way, people will actively shape the government system that would effectively serve them and promote peace processes on all governing levels.

The study also sought to investigate the effectiveness of dialogue and negotiation as a peace-building strategy and how it influences the effectiveness of the mission. A total of 290 respondents were interviewed on their views of dialogue and negotiation as a peace-building and the outcome is presented in table 3 below.

Table 3

Dialogue and Negotiation as a Peace-building Strategy

Dialogue and negotiation Activities	Population	Percentage
Inclusivity and Representation	48	17%
Mediation and Facilitation	55	19%
Confidence-Building Measures	47	16%
Consensus-Building and Compromise	47	16%
Peace Agreements and Implementation	42	14%
Sustainability and Long-Term Engagement	51	18%
Total	290	100

From the study findings, it is evident that the mission has played a critical role in promoting the rule of law as emphasized by the respondents. The perspectives and opinions of the respondents point to the fact that the rule of law is important in ensuring the effectiveness of Mission and thus it has been employed by the Mission to promote a just fair and accountable legal system capable of upholding and promoting human rights and ensure transparency of the judicial processes within the mission (UN, 2022). The findings indicate that there is a need for the mission to promote political processes and support the government and the rule of law.

The respondents listed the key activities which they consider important in promoting the rule of law with the majority being of the opinion that mediation and facilitation, sustainability long-term engagement and inclusivity were effective and played a crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of the mission in ensuring sustainable peace and stability.

Inclusivity also increases the scope of details on things to discuss and observe while pursuing sustainable peace. For example, justice conversations from communities of Fangak and Ayod focused on holding human rights abusers accountable for the suffering of the victims, as described by traditional leaders, women, and youth present in one of the meetings (Samuel, 2023). The conversation also highlighted inherited hatred, violence, and rivalry. From understanding the conflict situation, the meeting developed several recommendations, including setting up healing centres that would offer counseling and constructing prisons to deter crime.

Dialogues and negotiations also consider the position of regional actors and neighbouring countries in promoting peace sustainability in South Sudan. For instance, in 2017, President Salva Kiir launched a national dialogue that included other leaders, including David Shearer, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and representatives from China, Ethiopia, and the United States, among others (UN, 2022). The conversation highlighted the deployment of additional troops to Juba, peacebuilding progress, sanction issues, and the humanitarian crisis after the onset of seasonal rains around the camping sites. Including regional and international actors helps in accounting for progress in South Sudan, highlighting problems and issues that affect the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives.

The mission has played an essential role in improving coordination between GoSS and other structures regarding co-existence and stability. In 2015, GoSS, under the leadership of President Salva Kiir, signed the Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) ("ITI," 2021). ARCSS aimed to provide a detailed national reconciliation and reintegration plan. However, the agreement failed and led to another violent uprising in 2016. The agreement had a poor implementation plan that resulted in confusion and friction between the locals, the government, and the military.

Consequently, in 2017, South Sudan used the Transformative Initiative to support the South Sudan National Dialogue (SSND) ("ITI," 2021). The program ensured that representatives from the government, civil organizations, and marginalized communities were present. With lessons from South African experience, the mission used the program to ensure that all peace projects were practical and inclusive of governance from all levels. It also aimed to change the local community's focus from violence survival to conflict resolution and peacebuilding.



The missions’ involvement has improved South Sudan’s peace restoration approaches. It has increased people’s confidence in the national efforts through ceasefire, prison releases, and developmental projects. These initiatives foster goodwill and show government responsibility in addressing national needs at the local level. The development projects address infrastructure-related needs such as water supply, food availability, and access to conflict zones to supply relief aid. Confidence-building measures (CBM) projects, including DDR, are sensitive and require all parties’ commitment. Any failure would be a sign of weakness and might have a more prolonged effect on strengthening the rule of law.

4.6 Rule of Law and Human Rights

The rule of law is dependent on existing legal frameworks and human rights. The evaluation of the rule of law assesses the performance of legal frameworks and how judicial bodies have promoted their independence and accessibility and ensure that people are active in protecting peace and justice (Ansorg & Gordon, 2020). It helps identify gaps in the justice system by determining how best to strengthen courts, improve the application of the law, and deal with crimes against human rights violations.

The study also sought to investigate the impact of the Rule of law and human rights as a peace-building strategy and its influence on the effectiveness of the mission. A total of 290 respondents were asked about their opinion of the rule of law and human rights and its effectiveness in consolidating and promoting peace-building initiatives in South Sudan and the outcome is presented in Figure 3 below.

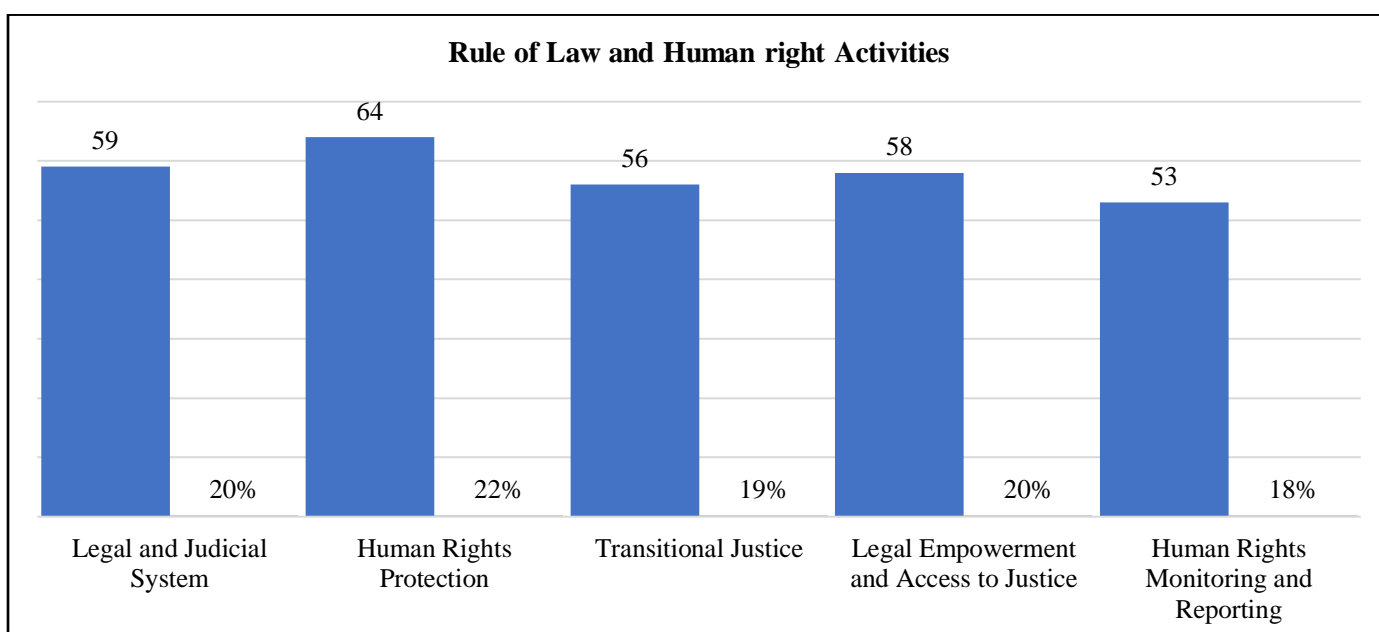


Figure 3
Rule of Law and Human Rights Activities

From the study findings, it is evident that the mission has played a critical role in promoting the rule of law as emphasized by the respondents. The perspectives and opinions of the respondents point to the fact that the rule of law is important in ensuring the effectiveness of Mission and thus it has been employed by the Mission to promote a just fair and accountable legal system capable of upholding and promoting human rights and ensure transparency of the judicial processes within the mission (Ansorg & Gordon, 2020). The findings indicate that there is a need for the mission to promote political processes and support the government and the rule of law.

The respondents listed the key activities which they consider important in promoting the rule of law with the majority being on the opinion that human rights protection, proper and working legal and judicial systems, and transitional justice were key in promoting the rule of law in the mission and thus have played a crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of the mission in ensuring sustainable peace and stability.

On the other hand, protecting human rights is essential in determining the relations within a community and between people and the government. Human rights promotion mechanisms aim to establish the truth and use reconciliation strategies to reduce conflict tension, build a suitable negotiation environment, and foster trust. Human rights is a framework that provides measures for understanding grievances, measuring crimes against humans, and promoting justice and reconciliation.

The mission has played a significant role in setting the pace for re-establishing the rule of law. It was an active participant in the baseline survey that helped GoSS identify the needs and situation in South Sudan (Baker et al., 2023). The mission assessed the structure and coping capacity of individuals and institutions that promote national justice. The studies identified judicial system gaps and opportunities to increase effectiveness and operations. These measures provided the starting areas for the development of inclusive and practical structures toward the rule of law.

The rule of law approach included all levels of government. Within the South Sudan structure, this included administrative officers, political parties, and national police within the national, state and local government. The civilians included the local community, marginalized groups, and internally displaced populations' representatives. The mission provided experts and advisors from UNDP, IOT, and UNDP. International and regional partners included the AU monitoring squad and the Norwegian Refugee Council (Baker et al., 2023).

This inclusivity ensured that the scope of resolutions was adequate and considered the roles of various administration bodies. However, the mission struggled to provide sufficient positions for women in the council, having the highest score at 35% (Baker et al., 2023). It involved women as legal advisors and consultants in human rights issues. Despite this issue, the mission's efforts and inclusive nature improved the performance and efficiency of the resolution programs. One key informant from Payam administrators observed that;

Inclusivity is quite a priority for the success of the mission as it helps to address many underlying grievances, foster a sense of ownership and legitimacy and help build trust in the peace process.

The mission's involvement in the Rule of Law promoted the success of the justice chain in South Sudan. The mission was present when matters of peace and stability were sensitive in South Sudan. There needed to be more transparency in public revenues, poor trust in the justice system, a high probability of new conflict cycles, and an unstable political structure of leaders with links to local armed groups (Merry, 2006). The mission participated in setting up mobile courts and training for justice actors at the community level.

These structures allowed the actors to establish the truth and reflect on the damages associated with violence and crimes. The availability of experts from the local, national, regional, and international actors played a significant role in structuring the systems effectively to suit people's needs and promote justice sustainably. The mission also established reform projects that helped victims and affected populations of conflict-related crimes. For instance, victims of CRSV in need of psychological, emotional, and medical support had access to professional assistance, shared their experiences, and gained coping skills.

The courts could only handle low-ranking cases in significant areas to improve the established judicial structures. In most cases, the court cannot involve generals and commanders for assessment and prosecution. Impunity was a matter of concern, but participants in these courts needed to be highly-ranked stakeholders. Moreover, the mission needed help finding common grounds for interlinking customary and statutory justice systems (Baker et al., 2023).

The customary law ruled at the local level and needed a clearer understanding of the statutory law, especially concerning the rights of women and children. As an intervening measure, the mission organized workshops for traditional leaders on human rights, holding discussions on merging constitutions and resolving complicated cases. The mission also organized a conference for livestock farmers to address the violence of cattle rustling in different states. Such forums helped to establish the truth and counter misconceptions about people and law.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The mission has been involved in South Sudan both during conflict and post-conflict which presents an opportunity period for rebuilding and implementing peace-building initiatives. The mission has significantly provided operational and human technical support through the reconstruction period. As a multi-sectoral body, the mission has used its expertise and resources to improve South Sudan's local and national coping mechanisms. Despite funding, information distribution, and cultural diversity challenges, the mission has dramatically improved people's views on peace and unity. The ongoing efforts have strengthened the nation's capacity to restore the country's governance stability and promote justice.

5.2 Recommendations

The mission's outcome had limitations related to funding, coordinating involved organizations, and creating sustainable projects. The mission has the opportunity to accumulate resources to improve the results of these programs. It also has the chance to acknowledge third-party voluntary donors with temporal projects and interests in South Sudan and merge projects to enhance the effect and outcome of the initiatives. Moreover, reconstructing programs should go beyond reestablishing governance.



It should focus on promoting mental, physical, and livelihood well-being. Psychological well-being and vocational training programs empower the community to become dependent on external humanitarian aid. The mission should also develop follow-up interventions to promote DDR effects to ex-combatants. The initiatives will enhance the program's sustainability, promoting economic sustainability and encouraging more to enroll. These measures will improve the resilience of the initiatives. By promoting conflict resolution mechanisms at the grassroots level, enhancing the protection of civilians, bolstering inclusive political dialogue and enhancing national reconciliation, UNMISS will be able to secure a remarkable milestone in achieving sustainable peace in South Sudan

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Effect of Monitoring and Evaluation Practices on the Performance of Education-Funded Projects in Rwanda: A Case of the Building Learning Foundation (BLF) Project in Gasabo District

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ABSTRACT

A large number of Rwandan corporate groups have failed to meet their goals because of ineffective monitoring and assessment. Companies with a strong competitive edge use monitoring and evaluation since it is expensive and demands technological competencies. Some of the issues that have arisen inside the BLF project include a lack of expertise, inadequate managerial abilities, and sloppy monitoring and assessment practices. The general objective of the study was to assess the role of monitoring and evaluation practices on performance of education funded project in Rwanda. A case study of Building learning foundation (BLF) in Rwanda. To identify the effect of monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District, to determine the effect of monitoring and evaluation risks analysis on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District, to examine the effect of monitoring and evaluation trainings on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District and to identify the effect of M&E accountability on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District. Both the Theory of Change (ToC) and the Realistic Evaluation Theory (RET) were used in this research. There was a total of 184 people considered, and 126 were chosen at random. The researcher utilized a simple random sampling approach to choose a sample from the BLF community. Data were gathered using questionnaires, interviews, and documentation, taking into account the character and organization of the BLF population. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to modify, code, and enter the obtained data. This allowed the researcher to get frequency tables, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The model summary for the regression showed the R value of .861 indicates a strong positive correlation between the predictors and the dependent variable. The R Square value of .742 represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is predictable from the predictors. In this case, approximately 74.2% of the variability in the performance of the BLF project can be explained by the predictors included in the model. The coefficients provide the findings, M&E budgetary allocation has a coefficient of 0.551, indicating that a one-unit increase in budget allocation corresponds to a 0.551 increase in BLF project performance. Similarly, M&E risks analysis, M&E trainings, and M&E accountability show coefficients of 0.285, 0.291, and 0.186 respectively, indicating their respective impacts on BLF project performance. All predictor variables exhibit significant p-values, with M&E budgetary allocation, M&E risks analysis, and M&E trainings demonstrating statistical significance ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This emphasizes their crucial roles in influencing positive outcomes in the BLF project. It is evident that when these components are effectively managed, they significantly enhance project performance, validating their importance in the BLF project performance. The study recommended that Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District should conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine the optimal budget allocation for monitoring and evaluation activities.

Key words: Accountability, Budgetary Allocation, Monitoring and Evaluation Practices, Monitoring and Evaluation Risks Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Trainings, Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, monitoring and evaluation has in the recent become a necessary requirement for not only education funded project but also for other projects. There is evidence that companies or organization applying M&E practices are more competitive at the both, regional and international perspectives. Monitoring and evaluation practices provide essential aspects in improving institutions 'operations in complexity, multidisciplinary and intensive processes (Barasa, 2019). The globalization movement presents the significant effect on accountability and tangible results in many countries and this has obliged to adopt results based on M&E practices to ensure future performance of education funded projects. Even if monitoring and evaluation present significant contribution to so many projects of profit-making organization, nonprofit making organization or companies still face with challenges related to insufficient material

support, managerial skills issues, technical skills issues, human skills issues and financial constraints which call for intervention (Matimba, 2023).

In Africa continent, especially in Ghana, monitoring and evaluation is important tool of planning and management and this has led to so many project performances but inefficiency management of resources has brought crucial effects on institutions' operations which called to strategies application. Africa initiatives have several challenges in monitoring and evaluation, leading to disappointing results in productive commercial organizations, even if a large number of resources are required to execute education-funded performance projects. The usefulness of monitoring and evaluation in effective organizations is lacking, despite the importance of the practice (Masvaure & Fish, 2022).

In Rwanda, poorly executed monitoring and assessments have caused several commercial organizations to fall short of their intended output. Monitoring and assessment are used by highly competitive organizations due to their high cost and technical competency requirements (Government of Rwanda, 2019).

The problem arising within building learning foundation (BLF) project consists of poor application of monitoring and evaluation, insufficient management skills, shortage of knowledge, poor performance as far as projects is concerned. That is the reason why the study intends to assess the role of monitoring and evaluation practice on performance of education funded project in Rwanda.

1.1 Research Objectives

The general objective of the study was to assess the effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on performance of education funded project in Rwanda with reference to the Building Learning Foundation (BLF) in Rwanda.

Specific objectives:

- i. To examine the effect of monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.
- ii. To determine the effect of monitoring and evaluation risks analysis on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.
- iii. To examine the effect of monitoring and evaluation trainings on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.
- iv. To assess the effect of M&E accountability on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.

1.2 Research Hypotheses

The study guided by the following null hypotheses;

H_{01} : There is no significant effect of monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation on the performance of the education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.

H_{02} : There is no significant effect of monitoring and evaluation risks analysis on the performance of the education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.

H_{03} : There is no significant effect of monitoring and evaluation trainings on the performance of the education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.

H_{04} : There is no significant effect of M&E accountability on the performance of the education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Theory of Change (ToC)

This theory was developed by Carol Weiss in 1995 and explains how the activities undertaken by an intervention such as a project, program or policy contributes to the desired outcome eventually. The theory change put more focus on monitoring and evaluation aspects as they provide regular checking if the activities of the project are going as planned. However, with theory of change, shows the opportunities of achieving objectives in most specific, measurable, attainable, realistic ways within timeline. The theory of change as far as the evaluation process is concerned seeks to find out if the outcomes are as the result of the activities and strategies put in place (Idowu & Ajibola, 2020).

The Theory of Change (ToC) significantly enhanced the monitoring and evaluation practices for education-funded projects in Rwanda by providing a structured framework for understanding and mapping the pathways to desired educational outcomes. By starting with long-term educational goals, such as improved student performance and increased enrollment rates, ToC allows stakeholders to identify the necessary preconditions and interventions required to achieve these objectives. The implication of this theory is that it helps to identify deviations and corrective actions

accordingly so that the ultimate goals and objectives are achieved. The theory of change provides a sense of direction for education funded project.

2.1.2 Realistic Evaluation Theory (RET)

Pawson (1997) released realistic theory, which offers a model based on project results and how they are created under certain circumstances. The evaluator may learn what parts of the intervention are necessary to make the project more successful and what parts of the context are necessary to repeat the intervention in other areas by using realistic evaluation theory. In order to achieve a particular goal, realistic theory attempts to identify the specific environmental factors that enhance the efficacy of an intervention. This idea suggests that the organization may achieve sufficient output via the use of monitoring and assessment procedures. Therefore, practical activities of monitoring and evaluation are encouraged to be needed to achieve the performance of education funded project (Mburu & Kamau, 2020).

Realistic Evaluation Theory (RET) offered a nuanced approach to monitoring and evaluating the performance of education-funded projects in Rwanda by focusing on the interplay between context, mechanisms, and outcomes. RET posits that the effectiveness of educational interventions is not only determined by the interventions themselves but also by the specific contexts in which they are implemented and the underlying mechanisms they activate.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Budgetary Allocation

Gonzalez and Wu (2019) explored the relationship between M&E budget allocations and water supply project effectiveness in East Africa. Employing a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and interviews, it was observed that projects with higher M&E budgets demonstrated a 22% increase in sustainability. The conclusion endorsed the view that enhanced budgetary support for M&E leads to more sustainable project outcomes. Recommendations advocated for a minimum 10% allocation of total project funds to M&E. This underscores the necessity of financial investment in M&E for long-term benefits. The study clearly illustrates the importance of adequate budgeting for effective M&E practices.

Osei and Mensah (2021) investigated M&E budget impacts on healthcare projects in West Africa, this longitudinal study used budget tracking and performance metrics. Findings revealed projects with M&E budgets had a 25% reduction in inefficiencies. The conclusion was that financial allocations to M&E are crucial for reducing project waste. Recommendations included making M&E a mandatory budget line in healthcare projects. The study emphasizes the financial efficacy brought about by proper M&E budgeting. Effective M&E budgeting significantly reduces resource wastage, ensuring better project outcomes.

2.2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Risks Analysis

Adama and Owusu (2018) assessed the impact of M&E risk analysis on financial stability in Sub-Saharan African microfinance projects. Utilizing financial performance tracking and reviewing risk assessments, it was found that projects with risk analysis had a 15% reduction in default rates. The conclusion emphasized that risk analysis enhances financial stability. Recommendations included incorporating risk analysis in the planning stages of microfinance projects. This helps in mitigating financial risks. The study demonstrates the financial benefits of integrating risk analysis within M&E. It supports the need for comprehensive risk management in project planning.

Uwayezu and Habimana (2022) investigated the influence of risk analysis in M&E on rural development projects in Rwanda, this study used interviews and quantitative data analysis. Results showed that projects with risk analysis components had higher community satisfaction rates. The conclusion stressed the critical role of risk analysis in rural development success. Recommendations included implementing structured risk analysis methods in rural initiatives. This improves overall project outcomes and community satisfaction. The findings suggest that managing risks effectively can lead to better project performance. It underscores the importance of structured risk analysis in enhancing rural development.

2.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Trainings

Tonombe and Babajide (2020) examined the influence of M&E training on project performance in the water sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. Conducting statistical analysis on project performance data pre- and post-training, it found projects with trained M&E personnel had a 25% improvement in performance metrics. The conclusion was that M&E training is essential for better water sector project outcomes. Recommendations included implementing continuous M&E training initiatives. This highlights the importance of training for effective water resource management. The findings demonstrate the relationship between training and project performance. Ensuring regular training can significantly improve water sector project success.

Habyarimana and Manzi (2022) investigated the impact of M&E capacity-building initiatives on NGO project success in Rwanda, this study used surveys and project success rate analysis. Findings revealed that capacity-building and training increased project success rates by 30%. The conclusion highlighted that M&E training is essential for successful NGO projects. Recommendations included prioritizing M&E training and capacity-building within NGOs. This would enhance project effectiveness and success rates. The study underscores the value of continuous capacity building. The findings demonstrate the transformative effect of training on NGO project success.

2.2.4 M&E Accountability

Murenzi and Kanyesigye (2021) explored the impact of accountability mechanisms in M&E on project performance in Rwanda. Using case studies, interviews, and document reviews, it was found that enhanced accountability led to a 20% improvement in project outcomes. The conclusion emphasized that accountability within M&E practices is crucial for project success. Recommendations included strengthening accountability frameworks in M&E processes. This research highlights the importance of clear accountability measures. Effective accountability mechanisms can significantly improve project outcomes. The findings underscore the positive effects of accountability on project performance.

Ngugi and Wekesa (2020) investigated the role of accountability in M&E for donor-funded projects in East Africa, this study conducted a comparative analysis of projects with stringent versus lax accountability measures. Results indicated that projects with strong accountability had a 25% higher donor satisfaction rate. The conclusion was that accountability in M&E ensures higher donor confidence and project success. Recommendations included implementing stringent accountability measures in donor-funded projects. This highlights the importance of transparency and accountability. The study illustrates the positive impact of accountability on donor relations and project outcomes. Clear accountability measures are essential for enhancing project success.

Ndagijimana and Mukarwego (2020) analyzed the influence of accountability measures in M&E on community development projects in Rwanda, this study used case studies and performance monitoring. Findings indicated that projects with robust accountability mechanisms had higher community approval rates. The conclusion was that accountability in M&E enhances community trust and project success. Recommendations included establishing clear accountability protocols for community projects. This improves overall project outcomes and community satisfaction. The study emphasizes the positive relationship between accountability and community engagement. Effective accountability can lead to higher project success and trust within communities.

Musoni and Nyiramatama (2022) investigated the impact of accountability in M&E on the performance of educational projects in Rwanda. Using surveys and performance analysis, it was found that projects with strong accountability mechanisms in M&E achieved higher educational outcomes. The conclusion highlighted that accountability in M&E practices is essential for educational success. Recommendations included implementing accountability-focused M&E practices in educational projects. This ensures better project execution and outcomes. The study underscores the importance of accountability in improving educational project performance. Clear and stringent accountability measures are crucial for the success of educational projects.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The researcher conducted both descriptive and correlational studies. Descriptive survey research use surveys to collect information on a variety of issues, quantitative approach used for data collected with questionnaire and correlational studies research design examined at the links that exist between variables under the study.

3.2 Study Population and Sample Size

The population is defined as the total collection of elements about which wish to make a sum. During this research, the target population comprised four categories including management officials of BLF, project supervisors, technicians and project beneficiaries. In total they were 184 from which a sample were selected.

The Yamane' formula, which offers a straightforward method for doing so, was used to determine the sample size. A total of 126 participants were found to be the sample size.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

Data Collection Instruments are tools or techniques used to gather information and data for research purposes. In this study, multiple data collection instruments were employed, including questionnaires and documentary review.

A self-administered semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the participants. Questionnaires consist of a set of pre-determined questions that participants complete on their own. For this study 126 questionnaires

were distributed to the participants, who were instructed to respond to the questions based on their knowledge, experiences, and opinions.

The researcher reviewed relevant documents related to the project, such as project plans, reports, and records. The documents provided additional information and insights into the project's background, objectives, processes, and outcomes. The information gathered from the documentary review complemented the data collected through other instruments.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

Data analysis involves reducing the accumulated data to a manageable size, developing summaries, researching patterns and applying statistical techniques, while data preparation includes editing, coding and data entry and is an activity that guarantees the accuracy of the data and their conversion from raw form to reduced form and classified more suitable for analysis. Data coding involves assigning numbers or other symbols to responses so that responses can be grouped into a limited number of categories. Data entry converts information gathered by secondary or primary methods into a medium for visualization and manipulation. Version 22.0 of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used as a tool to analyze the data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for quantitative analysis was used in the study.

Qualitative data condensed and summarized within each category. Researcher identified key quotes that exemplify the essence of each objective. This process helped in reducing the amount of data and presenting a concise summary of the main findings.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the data gathered from 126 participants. The data are presented in tables and then analyzed.

Table 1

Response Rate of the Study

Questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage
Filled and returned	118	93.65
Unreturned	8	6.35
Total	126	100.0

Table 1 shows response rate data in the engagement of participants in the study's questionnaire distribution. Out of the total 126 questionnaires distributed, a significant 93.65% response rate was achieved, as 118 questionnaires were completed and returned by the respondents. This high return rate indicates a strong willingness of participants to engage with the study's objectives. However, a minor portion of questionnaires, constituting 6.35%, remained unreturned, implying a slight disengagement from these participants. The lack of returned questionnaires was mainly due to the temporary absence of selected individuals during the data collection phase. Sataloff and Vontela (2021) indicated that response rates above 50% are desirable in social science research. A high response rate strengthens the validity of your findings, as it suggests that your data is more likely to be representative of the target population you aimed to survey.

Table 2

Perceptions of Respondents on Monitoring and Evaluation Budgetary Allocation

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
M&E budget is sufficient to achieve the performance of education funded project	0 0.0%	5 4.2%	10 8.5%	47 39.8%	56 47.5%	4.31	.801
The proper budget allocation provides a clear and adequate outcome of education funded project		2 1.7%	21 17.8%	48 39.0%	49 41.5%	4.20	.791
Having monitoring and evaluation budget encourage feasibility of project	6 5.1%	4 3.4%	13 11.0%	49 41.5%	48 39.0%	4.06	1.048
Monitoring and evaluation budget is planned before and during project operations to achieve the desired performance		2 1.7%	31 26.3%	44 37.3%	41 34.7%	4.05	.825
The project budget is accumulated from various sources to achieve performance of education funded project	2 1.7%	16 13.6%	8 6.8%	51 43.2%	40 33.9%	3.94	1.057
The revision of project budget allows decision making on the project		14 11.9%	8 6.8%	52 44.1%	44 37.3%	4.07	.958
Overall						4.10	.913



Table 2 presents the findings on the effect of monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation on the performance of the education-funded project of the Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District.

A significant number of respondents agreed (39.8%) and strongly agreed (47.5%) that the M&E budget is sufficient to achieve the performance of the education-funded project. The very high mean score of 4.31 indicates a very strong positive agreement among respondents, and the standard deviation of 0.801 shows heterogeneity in response. Similarly, a notable portion agreed (39.0%) and strongly agreed (41.5%) that proper budget allocation provides a clear and adequate outcome of the education-funded project. The high mean score of 4.20 reflects strong positive agreement among respondents, with a standard deviation of 0.791 indicating heterogeneity in responses.

Additionally, respondents generally agreed (41.5%) and strongly agreed (39.0%) that having monitoring and evaluation budget encourages feasibility of the project. The high mean score of 4.06 indicates strong positive agreement, while the standard deviation of 1.048 highlights some heterogeneity in responses. Moreover, respondents agreed (37.3%) and strongly agreed (34.7%) that monitoring and evaluation budget is planned before and during project operations to achieve the desired performance. The high mean score of 4.05 reflects strong positive agreement, with a standard deviation of 0.825 indicating heterogeneity in responses. Furthermore, respondents generally agreed (43.2%) and strongly agreed (33.9%) that the project budget is accumulated from various sources to achieve performance of the education-funded project. The high mean score of 3.94 indicates strong positive agreement, and the standard deviation of 1.057 shows some heterogeneity in responses. Regarding the revision of project budget allowing decision making on the project, respondents agreed (44.1%) and strongly agreed (37.3%). The high mean score of 4.07 indicates strong positive agreement, with a standard deviation of 0.958 showing heterogeneity in responses.

Overall, the mean score of 4.10 with a standard deviation of 0.913 indicates a generally positive agreement among respondents regarding the effect of monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation on Building Learning Foundation (BLF) project performance.

The findings align well with the emphasis of Barasa (2019) that expert involvement in budget estimation and thorough documentation are critical for project performance. This supports the findings that M&E budget allocation plays a crucial role in achieving project goals, emphasizing the importance of proper budgeting for accountability and success.

The Theory of Change, by Carol Weiss, guides how project actions lead to desired outcomes. It emphasizes monitoring and evaluation to ensure activities align with goals. It helps ensure objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. By evaluating outcomes, it identifies deviations and enables corrective action, guiding education-funded projects toward success. It's utilized to explain how monitoring and evaluation budget allocation impacts project performance in Gasabo District's education funding.

Table 3

Perceptions of Respondents on Monitoring and Evaluation Risks Analysis

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
Various risks are being faced to affect performance of education funded project		6 5.1%	8 6.8%	46 39.0%	58 49.2%	4.32	.815
Changes in material storage costs affect the value of the final project		11 9.3%	6 5.1%	49 41.5%	52 44.1%	4.20	.911
A desired value of the construction project is directly related to the storage costs	6 5.1%	8 6.8%	12 10.2%	51 43.2%	41 34.7%	3.96	1.089
Improvement is needed and must be initiated to the storage cost management to ensure the performance of construction project		4 3.4%	26 22.0%	47 39.8%	41 34.7%	4.06	.840
Overall						4.13	.914

Table 3 presents the findings on the effect of monitoring and evaluation risks analysis on the performance of the education-funded project of the Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District.

A significant proportion of respondents strongly agreed (49.2%) and agreed (39.0%) that various risks are being faced to affect the performance of the education-funded project, resulting in a very high mean score of 4.32, indicating a very strong positive agreement. The standard deviation of 0.815 shows heterogeneity in responses to this statement.

Similarly, respondents strongly agreed (44.1%) and agreed (41.5%) that changes in material storage costs affect the value of the final project, with a high mean score of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.911, indicating strong positive agreement and heterogeneity in responses. Additionally, respondents agreed (43.2%) and strongly agreed (34.7%) that a desired value of the construction project is directly related to the storage costs. The high mean score of 3.96 and the standard deviation of 1.089 indicate strong positive agreement and some heterogeneity in responses.

Moreover, respondents generally agreed (39.8%) and strongly agreed (34.7%) that improvement is needed and must be initiated to the storage cost management to ensure the performance of the construction project. The high mean score of 4.06 indicates strong positive agreement, and the standard deviation of 0.840 shows heterogeneity in responses.

Overall, the high mean score of 4.13 with a standard deviation of 0.914 indicates a generally strong positive agreement among respondents and heterogeneous responses regarding the effect of monitoring and evaluation risks analysis on Building Learning Foundation (BLF) project performance.

The findings resonate with Masvaure and Fish (2022) emphasizing the importance of ongoing project analysis for success. Their approach stresses critical thinking during implementation and consistent assessment of project feasibility. Our findings align with this, highlighting the need for constant monitoring of risks and mitigation strategies to ensure project performance aligns with goals.

Realistic Evaluation Theory (RET) further used to explain the effect of monitoring and evaluation risks analysis. RET emphasizes understanding project results in specific contexts to identify necessary components for success. Monitoring and evaluation facilitate identifying environmental factors enhancing project efficacy, supporting goal achievement in education-funded projects.

Table 4 presents the findings on the effect of monitoring and evaluation trainings on the performance of the education-funded project of the Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District.

Table 4
Perceptions of Respondents on Monitoring and Evaluation Trainings

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
Monitoring and evaluation trainings indicates the performance of education funded project		9 7.6%	10 8.5%	44 37.3%	55 46.6%	4.32	.815
Monitoring and evaluation trainings allow proper reporting using reporting tools		14 11.9%	8 6.8%	41 34.7%	55 46.6%	4.20	.911
Monitoring and evaluation trainings provide enough knowledge on the project operations	6 5.1%	8 6.8%	11 9.3%	49 41.5%	44 37.3%	3.96	1.089
A continuous M&E training which has led to the performance of education funded project		3 2.5%	22 18.6%	37 31.4%	56 47.5%	4.06	.840
Overall						4.16	.959

A significant proportion of respondents strongly agreed (46.6%) and agreed (37.3%) that monitoring and evaluation trainings indicate the performance of the education-funded project. However, there were very strong positive agreement and heterogeneity in responses to this statement (Mean= 4.32, which is very high, Std.= 0.815).

Similarly, respondents strongly agreed (46.6%) and agreed (34.7%) that monitoring and evaluation trainings allow proper reporting using reporting tools. There was strong positive agreement and heterogeneity in responses to this statement (Mean= 4.20, which is high, Std.= 0.911). Moreover, respondents agreed (41.5%) and strongly agreed (37.3%) that monitoring and evaluation trainings provide enough knowledge on the project operations. There was strong positive agreement and heterogeneity in responses to this statement (Mean= 3.96, which is high, Std.= 1.089.) Furthermore, respondents strongly agreed (47.5%) and agreed (31.4%) that continuous M&E training has led to the performance of the education-funded project. There was strong positive agreement and homogeneity in responses to this statement (Mean= 4.06, which is high, Std.= 0.840).

Overall, the high mean score of 4.16 with a standard deviation of 0.959 indicates a generally strong positive and heterogeneous agreement among respondents regarding the effect of monitoring and evaluation trainings on Building Learning Foundation (BLF) project performance.

The findings resonate with Matimba (2023), emphasizing the importance of M&E practices for project performance. Despite their significant contribution, challenges like material support and skills shortages persist. This supports the notion that continuous M&E training enhances education project performance, aligning with global trends towards results-based accountability.

The objective of examining monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation's effect on project performance aligns with the Theory of Change, emphasizing how project activities lead to desired outcomes. It indicates M&E's role in assessing if project activities are on track, identifying deviations, and ensuring goals are achieved efficiently.

Table 5 below summarizes the findings on the effect of M&E accountability on the performance of the education-funded project of the Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District.

Table 5
Perceptions of Respondents on M&E Accountability

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
Accountability in the evaluation process improves project performance.		7 5.9%	11 9.3%	42 35.6%	58 49.2%	4.28	.866
Accountability contributes to achieving organizational outcomes.		13 11.0%	9 7.6%	45 38.1%	51 43.2%	4.13	.968
Accountability aids in the allocation of resources.	5 4.2%	8 6.8%	9 7.6%	56 47.5%	40 33.9%	4.00	1.037
Accountability improves resources management.		3 2.5%	25 21.2%	39 33.1%	51 43.2%	4.17	.850
Effective decision-making enhances the accountability of M&E to achieve the performance of education-funded projects.		15 2.7%	7 5.9%	41 34.7%	55 46.6%	4.15	1.009
M&E accountability of staff members increased assurance of achieving desired performance		15 12.7%	11 9.3%	50 42.4%	42 35.6%	4.02	.918
Overall						4.13	.941

A very high mean score of 4.28 showed a strong positive agreement among respondents that accountability in the evaluation process improves project performance (49.2% strongly agreed and 35.6% agreed). The standard deviation of 0.866 indicated heterogeneity in response. Similarly, a high mean score of 4.13 indicated a strong positive agreement among respondents that accountability contributes to achieving organizational outcomes (43.2% strongly agreed and 38.1% agreed), with a standard deviation of 0.968 indicating some heterogeneity in response. Furthermore, a high mean score of 4.00 indicated a strong positive agreement among respondents that accountability aids in the allocation of resources (47.5% strongly agreed and 33.9% agreed), with a standard deviation of 1.037 indicating heterogeneity in response. Moreover, a high mean score of 4.17 indicated a strong positive agreement among respondents that accountability improves resources management (43.2% strongly agreed and 33.1% agreed), with a standard deviation of 0.850 highlighting heterogeneity in response.

Additionally, a high mean score of 4.15 indicated a strong positive agreement among respondents that effective decision-making enhances the accountability of M&E to achieve the performance of education-funded projects (46.6% strongly agreed and 34.7% agreed), with a standard deviation of 1.009 indicating heterogeneity in response.

Lastly, a high mean score of 4.02 indicated a strong positive agreement among respondents that M&E accountability of staff members increased assurance of achieving desired performance (42.4% strongly agreed and 35.6% agreed), with a standard deviation of 0.918 indicating some heterogeneity in response.

Overall, the high mean score of 4.13 with a standard deviation of 0.941 indicated a generally positive agreement and heterogeneous responses among respondents regarding the effect of M&E accountability on Building Learning Foundation (BLF) project performance.

The findings on M&E accountability align with Kahilu (2019) emphasis on timely decision-making and project monitoring. Strong accountability ensures effective resource management and decision-making, leading to desired project outcomes. Kahilu indicates the importance of partner organizations' involvement in successful project monitoring, echoing the need for accountability highlighted in the BLF project findings. These findings support the importance of accountability in project success.

This objective aligns with Realistic Evaluation Theory (RET) by emphasizing the importance of monitoring and assessment procedures in achieving project goals. RET seeks to identify environmental factors that enhance intervention efficacy, highlighting the need for practical monitoring and evaluation activities to ensure the performance of education-funded projects.

Table 6 below outlines the performance of the education-funded project of the Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District.

Table 6*Perceptions of Respondents on Performance of Education Funded Project*

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
Feasible estimates of cost effectiveness determine the performance of education funded project		6 5.1%	15 12.7%	45 38.1%	52 44.1%	4.21	.856
The quality of deliverables is important measure of project performance of building learning foundation.		11 9.3%	9 7.6%	39 33.1%	59 50.0%	4.24	.949
Through M&E practices, the level of customer satisfaction remained important measure of performance	5 4.2%	6 5.1%	15 12.7%	46 39.0%	46 39.0%	4.03	1.054
The delivery of service is important measured of performance of building learning foundation.		1 0.8%	31 26.3%	37 41.5%	49 41.5%	4.14	.836
Overall						4.16	.924

A very high mean score of 4.21 showed a strong positive agreement among respondents that feasible estimates of cost-effectiveness determine the performance of the education-funded project (44.1% strongly agreed and 38.1% agreed). The standard deviation of 0.856 indicated heterogeneity in response.

Similarly, a very high mean score of 4.24 indicated a very strong positive agreement among respondents that the quality of deliverables is an important measure of project performance for the Building Learning Foundation (50.0% strongly agreed and 33.1% agreed), with a standard deviation of 0.949 indicating some heterogeneity in response. Additionally, a high mean score of 4.03 showed a strong positive agreement among respondents that through M&E practices, the level of customer satisfaction remained an important measure of performance (39.0% strongly agreed and 39.0% agreed). The standard deviation of 1.054 indicated heterogeneity in response. Moreover, a high mean score of 4.14 indicated a strong positive agreement among respondents that the delivery of service is an important measure of performance for the Building Learning Foundation (41.5% strongly agreed and 41.5% agreed), with a standard deviation of 0.836 indicating homogeneity in response.

Overall, the high mean score of 4.16 with a standard deviation of 0.924 indicated a generally positive agreement and heterogeneous responses among respondents regarding the performance of Building Learning Foundation (BLF) project.

The findings align well with the emphasis of the Government of Rwanda (2019) on the importance of project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for achieving goals, understanding desired outcomes, estimating budgetary needs, and resource allocation. This highlights the crucial role of M&E in ensuring the effectiveness of education-funded projects, as demonstrated in the study.

Table 7 provides the model summary for the regression analysis conducted to examine the relationship between several predictors (M&E accountability, M&E budgetary allocation, M&E trainings, M&E risks analysis) and the dependent variable (performance of Building Learning Foundation (BLF) project).

Table 7*Model Summary on Monitoring and Evaluation Practices and Performance of Education Funded Projects*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.861 ^a	.742	.733	.34900

a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E accountability, M&E budgetary allocation, M&E trainings, M&E risks analysis

The R value of .861 indicates a strong positive correlation between the predictors and the dependent variable. The R Square value of .742 represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is predictable from the predictors. In this case, approximately 74.2% of the variability in the performance of the BLF project can be explained by the predictors included in the model. The Adjusted R Square value of .733 adjusts the R Square value to account for the number of predictors in the model, providing a more accurate estimate of the proportion of variance explained. Overall, the model summary indicates that the predictors included (M&E accountability, M&E budgetary allocation, M&E trainings, M&E risks analysis) collectively have a strong influence on the performance of the BLF project, explaining a significant portion of its variability.

The findings are supported by Kennerly and Neely (2019), who highlight the crucial role of monitoring and evaluation in achieving project success and longevity. They emphasize that well-implemented monitoring and assessment systems lead to continuous improvement and high-quality project performance, aligning with the strong influence of M&E factors on the BLF project's performance.



Table 8

ANOVA^a on Monitoring and Evaluation Practices and Performance of Education Funded Projects

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	39.599	4	9.900	81.276	.000 ^b
	Residual	13.764	113	.122		
	Total	53.363	117			

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), M&E accountability, M&E budgetary allocation, M&E trainings, M&E risks analysis

Table 8 presents the results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the regression model assessing the relationship between predictors (M&E accountability, M&E budgetary allocation, M&E trainings, M&E risks analysis) and the dependent variable (Project performance) in the BLF project. The F-statistic of 81.276 is a ratio of the Sum of Squares for Regression to the Mean Square for Residuals, indicating the overall significance of the regression model. The associated significance level (Sig.) of .000 ($p < .05$) indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. Overall, the ANOVA results suggest that the regression model, which includes predictors such as M&E accountability, M&E budgetary allocation, M&E trainings, and M&E risks analysis, significantly predicts the performance of the BLF project ($p < .05$).

The findings are supported by Gilbert (2021), who emphasizes the dynamic nature of service delivery and its pivotal role in creating remarkable guest experiences (RGE). This aligns with the significant prediction of BLF project performance based on M&E factors, highlighting the importance of effective predictors such as M&E accountability, budget allocation, trainings, and risks analysis in achieving project success.

Table 9

Coefficients on Monitoring and Evaluation Practices and Performance of Education Funded Projects

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.266	.193		1.380	.170
	M&E budgetary allocation	.551	.074	.537	7.442	.000
	M&E risks analysis	.285	.081	.283	3.526	.001
	M&E trainings	.291	.076	.294	3.836	.000
	M&E accountability	.186	.078	.186	2.378	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

The model was used in the study took the form below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where: Y= Project performance

X₁= M&E budgetary allocation

X₂ = M&E risks analysis

X₃= M&E trainings

X₄= M&E accountability

α = Constant Term

β = Beta Coefficient –These measures how many standard deviations a dependent variable will change, per standard deviation increase in the independent variable.

The fitted model was thus:

$$\text{BLF project performance} = 0.266 + 0.551 \text{ M\&E budgetary allocation} + 0.285 \text{ M\&E risks analysis} + 0.291 \text{ M\&E risks training} + 0.186 \text{ M\&E accountability} + 0.193$$

In Table 9, the coefficients provide insights into the relationships between predictors (M&E budgetary allocation, M&E risks analysis, M&E trainings, M&E accountability) and the dependent variable (Project performance) in the BLF project. The significant p-values for all predictors indicate their individual contributions to project performance, affirming their relevance in the context of the study.

The constant term (α) is 0.266, indicating the expected value of project performance when all predictor variables are zero. The unstandardized coefficients (B) demonstrate the change in project performance for each unit change in the respective predictor, holding other variables constant. M&E budgetary allocation has a coefficient of 0.551, indicating that a one-unit increase in budget allocation corresponds to a 0.551 increase in BLF project performance. Similarly, M&E risks analysis, M&E trainings, and M&E accountability show coefficients of 0.285, 0.291, and 0.186 respectively, indicating their respective impacts on BLF project performance.

All predictor variables exhibit significant p-values, with M&E budgetary allocation, M&E risks analysis, and M&E trainings demonstrating statistical significance ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This emphasizes their crucial roles in influencing positive outcomes in the BLF project. It is evident that when these components are effectively managed, they significantly enhance project performance, validating their importance in the p BLF project performance.

The findings resonate with Moses and Erastus (2023), which explored the significance of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) accountability in NGO projects in Kenya. Their study highlighted the correlation between accountable practices and project success, affirming the importance of factors like M&E budgetary allocation, risks analysis, trainings, and accountability in enhancing project performance, as evidenced in the BLF project.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The general objective of the study assessed the role of monitoring and evaluation practices on performance of education funded project in Rwanda. A case study of Building learning foundation (BLF) in Rwanda. Specific objectives were to examine the effect of monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District, to determine the effect of monitoring and evaluation risks analysis on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District, to examine the effect of monitoring and evaluation trainings on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District and to assess the effect of M&E accountability on performance of education funded project of building learning foundation in Gasabo District. The descriptive findings showed a generally positive agreement among respondents regarding the effect of monitoring and evaluation budgetary allocation, monitoring and evaluation risks analysis, monitoring and evaluation trainings, and M&E accountability on Building Learning Foundation (BLF) project performance.

The rejection of all hypotheses (H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} , H_{04}) at a significance level of $p < 0.05$ indicates significant effects of M&E budgetary allocation, M&E risks analysis, M&E trainings, and M&E accountability on project performance. This indicate that these M&E components play crucial roles in influencing and improving the overall performance of the education-funded project. The findings highlight the importance of allocating sufficient budget, conducting thorough risk analysis, providing adequate training, and ensuring accountability mechanisms in order to enhance the effectiveness and success of educational projects like the Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District.

5.2 Recommendations

Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District should conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine the optimal budget allocation for monitoring and evaluation activities, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently to maximize project impact. Moreover, Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District is recommended to establish a dedicated team or committee responsible for conducting comprehensive risk analyses periodically throughout the project lifecycle. Furthermore, Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District should develop a structured training program tailored to the specific needs of project staff and stakeholders involved in monitoring and evaluation activities. Lastly, Building Learning Foundation in Gasabo District should establish clear accountability mechanisms, including roles, responsibilities, and reporting structures, to ensure that all stakeholders are held accountable for monitoring and evaluation activities.

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Fighting Inequality Through a Progressive Tax System for a Just Future in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

The problem of inequality is one of the economic problems that developing countries still face including Tanzania. This research therefore focuses on presenting the status and trends of inequality and the progressive tax system to pay for a just future in Tanzania. Research was anchored on the Ability-to-Pay Principle. The study was typically a desk research whereby it dwelled on analyzing and synthesizing large amounts of complex secondary data/information and literature concerning the issue of inequality in Tanzania. The target population for this study consists of secondary data sources, which included Peer-reviewed journal articles on taxation and inequality Government reports and taxation data from the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA). A purposive sampling methodology was employed to choose relevant studies and reports. This approach ascertained that only sources directly related to the research goals were included. The sample consisted of 20 sources, selected based on criteria such as: Year of publication. Content analysis was adopted in analyzing data to discover themes, patterns and trends related to progressive tax systems, income inequality reduction, and wealth distribution. Key variables such as tax policies, inequality measures (Gini coefficient), and wealth distribution patterns were extracted and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of progressive taxation in Tanzania. Findings revealed that while progressive taxes can be a remedy, the presence of large informal sectors, as in Tanzania, hinder their reach. Thus, while Tanzania's progressive tax structure holds potential, more reforms are in need to boost implementation alongside widening the tax base. Further, the study concluded that there is little wealth-related taxation in Tanzania. Also, assets such as land ownership or financial assets are hardly/not taxed. The study recommended that given the situation, there is a great need to improve the tax collection with a focus on the existing tax base in Tanzania.

Keywords: Developing Countries, Inequality, Progressive Tax System, Wealth Distribution

I. INTRODUCTION

Just and resilient societies depend on an adequate public funding base through progressive taxation system to provide important public goods, such as health care and education. It is generally believed that a progressive personal income tax is an effective instrument for enhancing income redistribution and, hence, reducing income inequality. It is a fact that the problem of inequality is one of the economic problems that developing countries still face including Tanzania (World Bank 2023, Thomas, 2020). The sustainable development goals that are to be attained by 2030 does give attention to the problem of inequality with its goal number 10 being “Reduced Inequalities” with organizations such as United Nations Development Program [UNDP] advocating to address challenges of equity.

Kapera (2017) noted that since 1990s, domestic resource mobilization in Tanzania has been relying upon two common taxes, namely income tax (direct tax) and value added tax (an indirect tax). Indirect taxes account for about 60 per cent of tax revenues, which is almost twice the amount of direct taxes. Direct taxes usually target higher incomes and this is relevant in Tanzania since most people are informal workers.

The standard rate of Value Added Tax [VAT] is 18% in Mainland Tanzania and 15% in Tanzania Zanzibar. When measuring value added tax (VAT) as a percentage of income, VAT is regressive, meaning that people with lower income pay a higher share of their income in VAT than higher income individuals (Benedek et al., 2019). Measuring VAT relative to expenditures, VAT appears to be roughly proportional, or even slightly progressive. It is worth noting that Few reduced VAT rates or exemptions can produce a small degree of regressivity –Tanzania have no reduced VAT. Morocco and Madagascar had the highest value-added tax (VAT) rate on goods and services in Africa in 2022, each standing at 20 percent. Cameroon followed with the VAT rate set at 19.25 percent. On the other hand, goods and services in Nigeria were taxed at 7.5 percent, the lowest rate on the African continent. The highest standard VAT (Value Added Tax) rate in the world is 27% in Hungary. Some other countries, such as Sweden, have a standard VAT rate of 25%. Andorra has the lowest VAT rate in the world with a standard VAT rate of 4,5% (Duncan & Peter, 2016).

According to Baer and Hodge (2020), apart from taxes applied to everyone (such as income tax and VAT), there are no specific net wealth/worth taxes in Tanzania. Rather property/wealth owners are charged a flat levy on their



property such as housing and land observably, there no a personal exemption for low-income earners. As per the Income Tax Act, 2004, gain or profit from property is chargeable to income tax, for example rented houses by National Housing Corporation (NHC) or National Social Security Fund (NSSF) buildings for commercial business are supposed to pay income tax. Gain or profits for use or occupation of any property includes any royalties, rent, and premium or like consideration received for the use or occupation of property example rent from property owned by any person. Private renters pay rent to the NHC and despite NHC rent the houses to the government owned institutions, who pays the rent has remained unclear because most of these public institutions don't pay it. This rent is taxable in both cases. This means the tax base in Tanzania covers buildings only, not like in other countries where the property tax base may include the land and the building or other assets (Gale and Thorpe, 2022).

The Finance Act, of 2023, for example, permitted the Local Government Tax Authority (LGTAs) to increase the property tax – from TZS 12, 000 (4.65 USD) to TZS 18, 000 (6.97 USD) for normal buildings and TZS 60,000 (23.25 USD) to TZS 90,000 (34.88 USD) for each storey building per month. Charging a uniform rate for buildings irrespective of their valuation or revenue productivity is unprogressive (Kapera, 2017). In addition, the single, uniform system of taxation of property and the fact that wealth/property taxes lacks a mark-to-market accounting or valuation of all assets such as capital value of land and/or buildings fuels tax avoidance opportunities. This suggest that property tax is not fully collected and property tax revenue falls short of its potential, irrespective of being recognized as the major source of revenue for the government (Bachas et al., 2021).

Polacko (2021) asserted that public finance theory suggests that property tax is an ideal local tax. Arguably, it is also a 'data-hungry' tax, making it difficult and costly to administer properly-thereby denying the government much revenue that would have otherwise been used to improve social services delivery i.e. health, education, infrastructure etc. Given the available potential in property taxation, the wider use of more effective property tax systems is recommended to generate enough revenues to fund the provision of many public goods and services which are critically needed.

Likewise, Mwenda & Kimuyu (2019) observed that there are no inheritance, estate, or gift taxes in Tanzania. In Tanzania, wealth is taxed only when it is changing hands of ownership. That is, the realization of an investment asset (e.g. shares and securities, land, buildings) is a taxable event for income tax purposes. Where there is a disposal of an investment, then in arriving at the taxable 'net gains' a deduction can be claimed in relation to various costs i.e. those related to acquisition, improvement, and disposal. As such, the absence of taxation on an individual's net worth could suggest that "the current tax regime is thus over-taxing trade and under-taxing wealth, leading to a regressive impact.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

An important factor to take into account when considering pros and cons of introducing progressive taxation of income and wealth is the level of informality in the economy. In some countries, the barrier for effective implementation of a progressive income tax lays in the fact that tax administrations cannot access some information on real / full income of the rich, and thus cannot tax them effectively (Shumba, 2017). Currently, wealthy taxpayers in Tanzania enjoy multiple opportunities for tax avoidance and evasion, including disguising the real type of their income, transferring it to offshores, bank secrecy, etc. In some cases, such data becomes very difficult, or even impossible, to trace, and home tax administrations simply cannot access it to enforce relevant tax legislation effectively due to lack of technical capacity. Where a country is facing significant levels of informality, it might be a bigger problem, and a flat income tax rate might be preferable. Some factors might be specific to the country or the region in question, and understanding of the local context is critical for the impact assessment (Vellutini and Benítez, 2021).

Progressive taxation of income and wealth can be a powerful tool for nurturing more equitable and stable societies, but such policy decisions are very context-dependent and must not be recommended automatically without proper consideration (Stiglitz, 2015). It is against this background that this paper therefore focuses on presenting the status and trends on inequality and progressive tax system to pay for a just future in Tanzania across some selected taxable source. The aims to provide a decision maker with an overview of an issue or problem, targeted analysis, and, often, actionable recommendations in the area of under resource mobilization in Tanzania in a bid to articulating out and tackling problem of under resource mobilization in the country, which leads to poor service delivery and undermining government capacity to deal with poverty reduction efforts.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To assess the effect of a progressive tax system on reducing income inequality in Tanzania
- ii. To analyze the effectiveness of current tax policies in enhancing equity in distribution of wealth and social justice in Tanzania.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Ability-to-Pay Principle

This describes a core theory in public finance and taxation. This theory was advanced by Edwin Seligman in mid-20th century.. This concept posits that citizens in a country should be taxed based on their capacity to pay. Those earning higher incomes should contribute a larger proportion of their wealth to public revenue (Seligman, 1914). This theory aims to enhance progressive taxation systems, where rates of tax expand as income increase. This intends to minimize income inequality by redistributing wealth (Musgrave, 1959).

This theory is applicable to this present research as it offers a basis for assessing the function of a progressive tax system in addressing inequality in Tanzania. By taxing higher-income persons at a higher rate, the government can generate resources for social projects, public services, and infrastructure that benefit the general population. This will boost a more just and equitable society (Stiglitz, 2015). This theory thus assists in analyzing whether Tanzania's tax policies conform with this concept and combat inequality effectively.

2.2 Empirical Review

A Study on Taxation and Inequality in South Africa by Baer and Hodge (2020) revealed that progressive tax systems were of essence in minimizing income inequality in the nation. Outcomes of research hinted that progressive taxation, particularly income taxes, had a substantial effect on curbing income disparities when properly implemented and integrated with wealth redistribution initiatives.

In 2021, Osei and Quartey performed research focusing on developing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, to assess how progressive tax systems influenced income inequality. Their research outcomes posited that, while progressive taxes had the potential to reduce inequality, administrative inefficiencies and tax evasion considerably undermined their effectiveness.

In their study performed in 2019, Mwenda and Kimuyu evaluated tax reforms in Tanzania and Kenya, focusing on how effective these policies were in promoting wealth redistribution. The study results indicated that despite progressive tax rates, loopholes in addition to tax exemptions for the wealthy diminished the system's effectiveness in attaining social justice objectives.

Mkumbo and Matata (2022) explored the connection between tax policy and wealth distribution in Uganda. The research summarized that while the country had adopted progressive tax policies, the constrained capacity of tax administration and the existence of informal sectors restricted their ability to enhance substantial redistribution of wealth.

These past empirical studies offer evidence for the function of progressive taxation in minimizing inequality and assessing the effectiveness of tax policies in wealth distribution and promoting social justice in Tanzania.

III METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a desk review research design. According to Esterberg (2002) this methodology entails systematically reviewing and analyzing existing literature. This encompasses academic publications, government reports, policy papers, and statistical data all which are linked to progressive taxation and inequality reduction in Tanzania. The desk review method is appropriate as it enables collation and synthesis of different sources to gain a thorough insights into the subject (Krippendorff, 2004a).

3.2 Target Population

The target population for this study consisted of secondary data sources, which included Peer-reviewed journal articles on taxation and inequality Government reports and taxation data from the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA). Other sources included publications from international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and United Nations. Also included were Policy briefs, working papers, and case studies on taxation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A purposive sampling methodology was employed to choose relevant studies and reports. This approach ascertained that only sources directly related to the research goals were included. The sample consisted of 20 sources,



selected based on criteria such as: Year of publication (focused on articles published from 2015 onwards) Relevant journals related to progressive taxation, inequality, and wealth redistribution in Tanzania.

3.4 Analysis of Data

Content analysis was adopted in analyzing data to discover themes, patterns and trends related to progressive tax systems, income inequality reduction, and wealth distribution. Key variables such as tax policies, inequality measures (Gini coefficient), and wealth distribution patterns were extracted and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of progressive taxation in Tanzania. Comparative analysis with other Sub-Saharan African countries was also performed where applicable (Krippendorff, 2004a).

IV FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Effect of A Progressive Tax System on Income Inequality Reduction in Tanzania

The desk review posited that Tanzania has made efforts to enforce a progressive tax system aimed at minimizing income inequality. The country's taxation models entails progressive income tax rates, where higher-income earners are taxed at higher rates in comparison to low-income earners. However, their effectiveness in curbing income inequality has been constrained by several elements e.g. tax evasion, the informal economy, and a narrow tax base.

4.1.1 Progressive Taxation Structure

Tanzania's tax system shows progressivity, more so with its individual income tax. Nonetheless, the contribution of progressive taxation in decreasing inequality has been hampered because of loopholes that enable wealthier persons and corporations to minimize their tax obligations.

4.1.2 Inequality Trends

In spite of these measures, the Gini coefficient, a common measure of inequality, indicates that income inequality in Tanzania remains relatively high. While there has been some marginal reduction in income disparity, it has not been substantial enough to close the gap between the wealthy and low-income earners.

4.2 Effectiveness of Current Tax Policies in Promoting Equitable Wealth Distribution and Social Justice in Tanzania

The review of existing data and literature indicates that Tanzania's tax policies, while designed with progressive elements, face significant challenges in achieving equitable wealth distribution. The tax burden still disproportionately falls on middle-income earners and small businesses, while wealthier individuals and corporations often benefit from exemptions and tax incentives.

4.2.1 Wealth Distribution

Wealth remains concentrated at the top, with limited redistribution to lower-income groups. Programs funded by tax revenue, such as social welfare and education, have seen improvements but have not significantly narrowed the wealth gap.

4.2.2 Tax Policy Effectiveness

While Tanzania's tax reforms have aimed at wealth redistribution, they are limited by administrative shortcomings, weak enforcement mechanisms, and an over-reliance on indirect taxes (such as VAT), which tend to disproportionately affect lower-income households.

4.3 Discussion

Outcomes conform with research by Baer and Hodge (2020), which asserted that while progressive tax systems have the capacity to decrease inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Tanzania, their impact is often hampered by administrative inefficiencies and tax evasion. In the same vein, Osei and Quartey (2021) contend that while progressive taxes can be a remedy, the presence of large informal sectors, as in Tanzania, hinder their reach. Thus, while Tanzania's progressive tax structure holds potential, more reforms are in need to boost implementation alongside widening the tax base.

Similarly, outcomes of the second objective support the conclusions of Mwenda and Kimuyu (2019), who highlighted that tax policy in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Tanzania, has had limited success in promoting wealth redistribution due to tax loopholes and exemptions that benefit the wealthy. At the same time, Mkumbo and Matata



(2022) alluded that the limited capacity of tax administration and the informal economy in Tanzania hinder the redistributive goals of progressive taxation. The two studies hint that while Tanzania's tax policies have the correct intentions, they demand stronger implementation/enforcement and improved targeting of wealthier people to realize more equitable outcomes.

V CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

From the study findings, it is clear that there is little wealth-related taxation in Tanzania. On the one hand, Tanzania is home to very rich people, on the other hand, a large part of the population is affected by extreme poverty. There are ways for higher earners to avoid taxes as assets such as land ownership or financial assets are hardly/not taxed. Thus, the poor and the working population bear the main burden, and in search for justice, this is unfair.

5.2 Recommendations

Public services such as social security and education are essential for making society resilient in the long term, but they require appropriate funding. The Tanzanian government needs sufficient revenue to adequately fund public goods and services; however, it is becoming increasingly clear that the source of that revenue also matters. Given the situation, there is a pressing need to improve tax collection, focusing on the existing tax base in Tanzania.

Taxes on wealth serve as a policy instrument to address wealth inequality and could generate substantial revenue while strengthening the structural weaknesses in the current income tax system. They represent an additional method to raise revenue and address wealth inequality through budget justice. Nevertheless, it is evident that there is little wealth-related taxation in Tanzania.

Moreover, creativity in seeking new sources of revenue, rather than repeatedly focusing on areas that directly burden ordinary Tanzanian citizens, is critical. This means innovating new sources of taxes, such as broad-based wealth and property taxation. Currently, there are no net wealth taxes in Tanzania, which are typically assessed on the net value of a taxpayer's taxable assets. Potential resistance to wealth taxes can be addressed through exemptions, such as allowing for exempt assets (e.g., one house or a part of a house or a plot of land). Families would only pay the tax if their wealth exceeds the exemption threshold.

To address the poor understanding of wealth and property taxation in the country, there is a strong need to broaden the definition of property to include the digital economy and betterment tax (i.e., quantifying the land value increment resulting from infrastructure investment). In terms of tax rates for High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs), the capital gains tax rate should not be lower than the income tax on salaries and wages; the very rich should not pay lower rates than everyday earners.

Focus should be directed toward closing any loopholes that could lead to revenue loss from this sector. The government should aim not only to obtain a larger share of profits but also to exert stronger control over natural resources, ensuring that tax revenue from the mining industry is effectively connected to poverty reduction via the provision of quality public services. This will enable the development of other sectors for the benefit of both present and future generations. Additionally, the government should sharply increase tax collection by reviewing and eliminating tax exemptions and deductions for corporations and wealthy individuals, while also clamping down on tax evasion. Governments have vastly improved their ability to track offshore assets through enhanced data-sharing protocols with other tax authorities.

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Roles, Objectives, and Structural Framework of the East African Community Regional Force's Intervention in Managing the Democratic Republic of Congo's Intractable Intra-State Conflict

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ABSTRACT

The protracted new generation warfare in the Eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the intervention by the EAC Regional Force are indicative of the need for comprehensive security strategy and the vitality of regional efforts. Intra-state conflicts in eastern DRC have been protracted since its independence in 1960. The conflicts have varied from political, ethnic to resource use-based. They have rendered the Eastern part of the country ungovernable and contributed to a huge influx of refugees into neighbouring countries as well as millions of internally displaced persons. This paper sought to investigate the Roles, Objectives, and Structural Framework of the East African Community Regional Force's Intervention in Managing of DRCs intractable intra-state conflict. The paper is anchored on interpretivism research philosophy and buttressed by neo functionalism theory to explain the interplay of its variables. The study adopted two research designs- descriptive survey and historical longitudinal research designs. The target population was 297 from which a sample of 177 was derived. Sampling techniques included census, simple random, snowballing and purposive sampling. Primary data were collected using an interview guide and questionnaire. Analyses of quantitative data were conducted utilizing descriptive statistics, including percentages and frequencies. Version 28 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to conduct the analysis. The findings were visually represented through the use of tables, pie charts, photographs, and graphs. Qualitative data were analysed through content analysis, which involved an examination of aspects of the information gathered through open-ended queries, interviews, and observation. Findings of this paper indicated that East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) major role is military coordination of 85(56.66%) of the respondents, rapid deployment of troops is 40(25.66%) while capacity to respond in Crisis is 25(16.66%). However, military coordination challenges occur as a result of intervening state interests in the DRC conflict, therefore, deployment of these troops in DRC is seen as a ploy to undermine conflict management efforts. The paper concludes that EACRF's efforts to restore peace and security in the DRC have been hampered by inadequate personnel deployment structures. This could potentially result in their overall responsibility being limited to peacekeeping due to the presence of structural capacity deficits. The EAC peacekeeping force is a multifaceted organization that, in a sense, works in tandem with various militia and military entities present in the region. The paper recommends expended role and structure for East African Community Regional Force. Besides the military and political wing, there is need to include local police and civilian's role to effectively and comprehensively manage the conflict. This means the one-year period of deployment was inadequate to realize peace in DRC.

Keywords: Conflict, DRC, Dynamics, EACRF, Intractable, Intervention, Intra-state, Management

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the Cold War ended, the ability of international and regional organizations to control conflicts has hinged on their access to economic, diplomatic, and military resources, as well as their determination to use these tools strategically. This triad of resources, determination, and strategy continues to be an essential element with regard to the organization as a whole (Shepherd, 2018). The inadequate progress and engagement of numerous regional and international organizations (IO) in conflict regulation can be attributed to a dearth of determination and strategic planning, as opposed to a mere scarcity of resources (Parker, 2024). Furthermore, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) serves as a potential example of how the effective management of conflicts requires a synergy of resources, determination, and strategy. Although the outcome of Afghanistan remained uncertain, NATO has unequivocally achieved success in six of the seven operations it has conducted since the end of the Cold War: Libya, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, and two anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the Horn of Africa (Parker, 2024). The significance of internal consensus and leadership in facilitating the efficient allocation of resources is further exemplified by the achievements of NATO (Moe & Geis, 2020). They directed their attention towards the aspect of

mutual interest in conjunction with the potential for effective interventionism by forces within the region. An important omission of the present research, however, is the examination of competing interests and the profound impact this has on the conflict.

African continent has been undergoing perpetual socio-spatial transformations ever since the era of colonialism. In addition to the ramifications of migration, climate change, and the global pursuit of natural materials, violent conflict continues to be a significant catalyst for these transformations (Hentz, 2014). Examining the domain of African peace and security with a spatial perspective not only engages with the principles of traditional political science, but also contributes to the discourse surrounding the emergence of 'new regionalism' in the 1990s. This discourse has contributed to the progress of the discipline by challenging fundamental tenets of the "old regionalism," specifically the (neo-)functionalist perspective on European integration. It argued that since the end of the Cold War, new, frequently expansive forms of regionalism have emerged in the Global South (Hettne, 1999). Concurrently, an emerging field of research known as "comparative regionalism" is spearheading a third iteration of studies on regionalism (Söderbaum, 2016a).

There have been attempts to get the African nations together and create a regional platform for them to talk things out for decades. In 1963, the principal goal of the Organization for African Union (OAU) was to promote unity and collaboration among African states for the benefit of the African people. Ngendahimana (2023) made reference to the idea of peaceful conflict resolution. Following its 2002 dissolution, the African Union (AU) took over; its goals were largely unchanged from its predecessor, but its commitment to peaceful conflict resolution remained unchanged. The AU's charter and organization are more precisely defined than the OAU's, according to Jerome (2016), when it comes to a regional approach to dispute resolution.

The eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a fluid conflict zone that has experienced protracted conflict since its independence in 1960 (Marks 2011, Shepherd 2018, Parker 2024). The fluidity has influenced the failure of subsequent interventions that have largely followed the conventional script of conflict management animated by coercive intervention strategies. According to the Centre for Preventive Action (2024) six million deaths have been recorded since 1996. The severity of the conflict has seen almost 400,000 people in internally displacement camps in the first two months of 2024 (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA] (2024). The conflict has involved numerous internal and external actors whose convergence has only but fueled further conflict in the region (Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, 2017). The conflict manifests the basic attributes of New Warfare that have taken root in the Post-Cold war era. The New Warfare in the region has for all practical purposes exceeded the intervention capacities of the state, multilateral as well as unilateral security actors.

The paper analyses the dynamics of the emerging region-centric intervention in New Warfare in eastern DRC with a specific focus on EACRF. Though a regionally sanctioned intervention mechanism, (Manana at al. 2024) The EACRF also comprises partner states that portray vested interest traits in terms of cultural affinity, informal resource exploitation propensities, and pursuit for resident non-state combatants. In this context, the paper examines the capabilities and mechanisms of the EACRF in the intervention in the DRC. It further analyses the EACRF structure and composition, the physical and relational capabilities, and the contribution of conflict of interest among the EAC partner states in the management of New Warfare in eastern DRC.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The DRC conflict manifests the basic attributes of New Warfare that have taken root in the Post-Cold war era. The New Warfare in the region has for all practical purposes exceeded the intervention capacities of the state, multilateral as well as unilateral security actors (Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, 2017). There has been UN intervention missions since the 1960s and the 1990s unilateral state interventions in the post-Mobutu dispensation have to all practical purposes been incapable of reigning in the intermittent conflicts. Any lull in the fighting is just a prelude to future escalation in the conflict. Since 1998, however, the eastern region of the DRC has attracted dedicated regional military intervention by Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries focused on a mixture of coercive engagement as well as mediation (International Crisis Group, 2020). This has to a certain extent involved the Coalition of the Willing (CoW) within the regional body and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). It is apparent that the security problematic of the region is such a complex web that requires a new approach from the erstwhile conventional coercive strategies and arrangements. This is justified by the changing nature of warfare in terms of tools, alliances and methods. The Eastern African Community Regional (EACRF) has been one of the latest entrants in this theatre of war.

According to Stefan & Oya (2012) examples of circumstances where intervenism caused changes include the conflicts conducted in southeast Turkey between the Turkish Army and Kurdish forces in northern Iraq. In addition, Turkey has a dominant position in the conflict in neighboring Syria. Iran's sustained engagement in the armed conflict in Syria and its significant role in shaping the dynamics of the armed conflict in Iraq can be attributed to its influence

over multiple Shia militias. A significant role was held by the United Arab Emirates and Riyadh in the international coalition involved in the armed conflict in Yemen. Riyadh has consistently upheld its position of leadership.

Moe & Geis (2020) asserted that the potential effectiveness of the NATO operation in Afghanistan relies on many crucial factors: the availability of financial resources, the degree of political resolve demonstrated by the Allies, and the existence of the requisite tools to facilitate cooperative military efforts. However, the issue of coordination both within and beyond the alliance is regarded as troublesome. However, the main challenge regarding the Alliance's efforts in Afghanistan revolves upon the intricacy of developing a clearly defined strategy for ISAF. According to Moe and Geis (2020), the NATO operation is perceived as a supplementary endeavor to a comprehensive nation-building initiative led by the United Nations.

This study analyses the dynamics of the emerging region-centric intervention in New Warfare in eastern DRC with a specific focus on EACRF. Though a regionally sanctioned intervention mechanism, the EACRF also comprises partner states that portray vested interest traits in terms of cultural affinity, informal resource exploitation propensities, and pursuit for resident non-state combatants. Manana et.al (2024) In this context, this paper examines the capabilities and mechanisms of the EACRF in the intervention in the DRC. It further analyses the EACRF structure and composition, the physical and relational capabilities, and the contribution of conflict of interest among the EAC partner states in the management of New Warfare in eastern DRC.

1.2 Research Objective

This paper sought to examine the role, objectives and structure of EACRF intervention in management of DRCs intractable intra-state conflict

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

For the purpose of this study, the paper triangulated Neo-Functionalism theory to bring the study in to perspective in respect of the role, objectives and structural framework of EACRF intervention in management of DRCs intractable intra-state conflict

2.1.1 Neo-Functionalism Theory

Prominent proponents of neo-functionalist theory consist of Ernest B. Haas and Joseph S. Nye. According to Haas (1964) the entirety of politics entails allegiances, anticipations, and political engagements with a novel centre whose institutions request or exercise authority over an extant national state. The theory posits that the concept of integration in one domain may serve as a catalyst for integration in another, thereby instigating a domino effect by virtue of its practicality in specific domains. Explanation of this is sufficiently provided by the spill-over effect. Furthermore, this theory is noteworthy for its ability to influence the elite to embrace the concept, which will result in them assuming a pivotal role in disseminating the idea to the general populace and, more significantly, in fostering an expansion of integration. Through the gradual implementation of policies that reorient allegiance to a new centre, neo-functionalism facilitates the formation of supranational regional organizations; furthermore, the feedback loop between the newly formed centre and society will be strengthened, whereas the one between the state and society will be weakened. This theory is pertinent because it acknowledges the significance of supranational structures in addressing intrastate conflicts such as the one in the DRC. According to this hypothesis, the EACRF is a regional force capable of establishing peace in the DRC under specific conditions.

2.2 Empirical Review

Stefan & Oya, (2012) examined the manner in which regional organizations handle intrastate conflict in the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, complications arise concerning the definitions, significance, and application of the term "conflict" in relation to its prevention, management, and resolution. The instruments and policies utilized for conflict regulation, that is, the approaches taken to address conflicts, vary considerably between regions and International Organizations thus presents a further challenge

According to Brown, (2012) the EAC has collaborated with Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and African Union (AU), all of which operate early warning systems of different types and levels, to develop its own Early Warning System (EWM), which is regarded as a critical cornerstone in the prevention of conflicts and crises. Additionally, the EAC established the Nyerere Centre for Peace Research in Tanzania with the purpose of furnishing the EAC with well-informed policy alternatives, training, and research in the domain of peace and security. Its primary objective is to advance peace and security as fundamental prerequisites for regional integration and development (Brown, 2012)

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In order to attain and ensure the valid research results, the study adopted two research designs- descriptive survey and historical longitudinal research designs. These two were triangulated to achieve valid research results. Historical research design was used to collect, verify as well as synthesize past evidence with regards to intervention in the Management of Democratic Republic of Congo's Intractable Intra-State Conflict. Specifically, the historical longitudinal research design was adopted for this study. The design was used to gather primary data from EACRF personnel, local authorities, and affected populations. It also used documentary evidence, official records as well as reports among other historical sources of data to interrogate the research problem. This design was particular used in the second specific objective of the study.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The philosophy employed in this investigation was interpretivism. The origins of this approach can be traced back to the Chicago School of thought, which was established in the early 20th century and was spearheaded by Max Weber, Erving Goffman, Martin Bulner, and others (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). It primarily entails a comprehensive analysis of the research elements, thereby introducing human interests into the investigation. Social perceptions, including language, shared meanings, and consciousness, are hypothesized to be the foundation of any potential path to realities. Furthermore, the study employs qualitative approaches to gather data in order to encompass a broader spectrum of perspectives regarding the subject matter (Chowdhury, 2014). By employing this methodology, the researcher was able to decipher the perspectives of individuals in order to determine the intricacies of the East African Regional Forces' intervention in the DRC's intra-state conflict management. Through the utilization of various data acquisition methods, the researcher was capable of conducting a comprehensive analysis of the research subject. This contributed to the accomplishment of the study's objectives.

3.3 Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The target population 297 from which a sample of 177 respondents was derived from among: EACRF ground personnel, military attachés, members of the local community, leaders of rebel groups and refugees who were sampled using census, simple random, snowballing and purposive sampling techniques.

Table 1

Sample Size Determination Techniques

Category	Sample Frame	Sampling Technique	Sample Size
EACRF Director of Coordinating Mechanism (KII)	1	Purposive	1
EACRF, Chiefs of Defense Committee (KII)	7	Purposive (Best and Khan (2001) 30 – 50%	4
EACRF ground personnel (Questionnaire survey)	235	Krejcie & Morgan Table 1979 Confidence level of 95% and margin of error 5%.	152
Local population in Goma (Community based organizations) (FGD)	10	Purposive (Best and Khan (2001) 30 – 50%	4
Local authority in Goma (Chiefs and their assistants) (KII)	13	Purposive (Best and Khan (2001) 30 – 50%	6
IDPs (Goma camp) (FGD)	8	Purposive (Best and Khan (2001) 30 – 50%	2
Congolese refugees groups in Nyamagabe in Rwanada, Kyangwali in Uganda , NBI in Kenya (FGD)	13	Purposive (Best and Khan (2001) 30 – 50%	4
Military Attaché, High Commission in EAC member Countries (KII)	7	Purposive (Best and Khan (2001) 30 – 50%	3
Heads of Rebel/militia groups (KII)	3	Purposive (Best and Khan (2001) 30 – 50%	1
Total	297		177

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Primary data were collected using an interview guide and questionnaire. Secondary data were obtained from a review of published materials on the DRC Conflict.



3.5 Data Analysis Methods

The questionnaires underwent a preliminary coding and editing process prior to the initiation of any analysis. Qualitative and quantitative data were utilized in order to maintain objectivity. Analyses of quantitative data were conducted utilizing descriptive statistics, including percentages and frequencies. Version 28 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to conduct the analysis. The findings were visually represented through the use of tables, pie charts, photographs, and graphs. Qualitative data were analysed through content analysis, which involved an examination of aspects of the information gathered through open-ended queries, interviews, and observation. Baulcomb (2003) asserts that content analysis achieves valid and replicable inferences regarding the context of data through the use of a set of categorizations. The information was presented in various graphical and pie chart formats, tables, narratives, and verbatim.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Roles, Structures and Objectives of EACRF

A total of 152 questionnaires were sent to the EACRF ground personnel. The return rate for the questionnaires was 150. This constituted a response rate of 98.5%. According to Saleh and Bista (2017), it is deemed suitable to conduct data analysis with a response rate exceeding 75%.

The major role of ECRAF as shown in Table 2 responded as follows; military coordination 85 (56.66%), 40 (26.66%) Rapid deployment of troops, Capacity to respond in Crisis 25 (16.66%).

Table 2
EACRF Roles and Objectives

EACRF Roles	Frequency	Percent
Military coordination	85	56.66.
Capacity to respond in crisis	25	16.66
Rapid deployment of troops	40	26.66
Total	150	100

4.1.1 Military Coordination

Coordinating EAC military operations and airlifting personnel to associate states afflicted by conflict, such as the DRC, is the primary responsibility, as shown in Table 2. Nevertheless, the coordination function is hindered by the presence of established intervention parties in the DRC Congo Conflict, as illustrated in Figure 1.

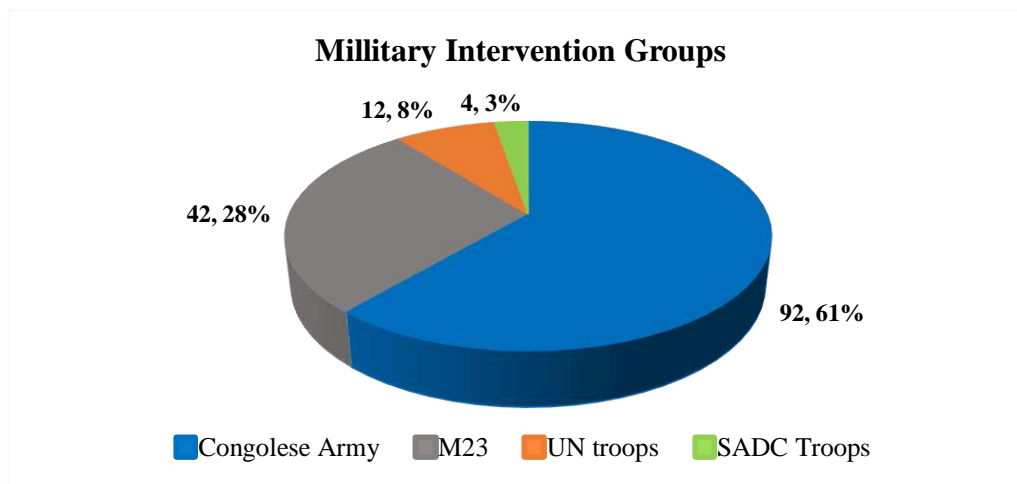


Figure 1
EACRF Partners

Study findings revealed that 92 (61.33%) of respondents thought that the Congolese army is the most powerful participant in the conflict, with 42 (28%) agreeing that the rebel outfit M23 is a prominent player. UN troops also plays a role with 12 (8%) agreeing to it. Although 4(2.66%) stated that DRC is a SADC partner state, its participation is not readily apparent.

According to Table 2 the primary responsibility is to organize the EAC military and transport them to partner states that are prone to conflicts, such as the DRC. This coordination function is, nevertheless, confounded by the existence of intervention groups in the DRC Congo. The results corroborate those of Ngendahimana (2023), who classified the Congolese government and army as internal protagonists in the Congolese conflict in his analysis. He noted that the colonial system, post-independence political unrest, and Mobutu dictatorship are the origins of the DRC's problems. The history of the DRC is marked by a catalogue of oppression, and the government of the DRC has never failed to adequately represent or protect its people. In contrast, it has frequently functioned as a catalyst for individual affluence and unrestricted authority. Notwithstanding the Congolese army's prominent involvement in the Congolese conflict, the government fails to provide assurances regarding the safety and security of its populace. According to Ngendahimana (2023), the eastern Congo will continue to be a battleground with innocent civilians paying a terrible price as long as the Congolese government is unable to govern the country, provide basic services, or adequately safeguard its people. This is because various armed groups in the region benefit from the illegal trade of natural resources and intricate regional alliances.

In addition to the EAC regional peacekeeping force, various military organizations are engaged in the conflict albeit with distinct functions. The primary objective of the Congolese Army is to eradicate the M23 militia in order to re-establish dominion over the Eastern Congo region. The purpose of the United Nations forces is humanitarian and peacekeeping. In such a scenario, the EACRF joint force's units would primarily consist of reinforcements for soldiers that have been deployed to the DRC within the past few months; each contributor would be assigned a unique mission. In North Kivu and Ituri, for instance, Ugandan soldiers who are members of the EACRF joint force are tasked with assisting their compatriots in combat against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a Ugandan rebel coalition whose largest faction has sworn allegiance to the Islamic State.

This indicates that Uganda is actively seeking a dissident group and may not place a high priority on the restoration of peace in the DRC. The potential for divergent interests among numerous military factions in Congo restricts the ability to effectively address the internal conflict. The function of rebel groups and militias that traverse EAC borders is a related point, as posited by a member of the chief of defense committee:

The Kinsasha government and the EAC Partner states have experienced an increase in mistrust following the intervention of the East Africa Regional Community Force (EARCF) in the DRC conflict. This mistrust stems from the Kinsasha government's allegation that certain Partner states are engaging in coordination with M23 and FDLR rebel groups. As a result, the mandate of this regional organization in its efforts to combat Congolese armed groups has been jeopardized. (Interview held with a member of chiefs of defense committee, Kenya, 7th September, 2023 in Nairobi).

Another respondent reinforced the peculiarity of several actors in the DRC conflict by asserting the following;

The DRC war is a longstanding issue in Africa. Indeed, this struggle may be traced back to the merciless governance of the Belgians. During the initial Congolese war, we observed the involvement of foreign entities, including major powers at the time, as well as other actors such as the United Nations. Nevertheless, notwithstanding these answers, I believe their primary intentions were to exploit the undiscovered resources of the Congo. Following the conclusion of the Cold War, the African continent found itself in a state of isolation. During this period, we observed the increasing influence of regional organizations as they actively participated in reshaping and realigning the regional security framework. The Second and subsequent Congolese conflicts have garnered heightened attention from regional organizations such as the Southern African Development Association (SADC) and, more recently, the East African Community (EAC) partner states, facilitated by the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF). These organizations, in my view, prioritize their own strategic interests, particularly economic interests, rather than focusing on stabilizing the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). (Interview with military attaché, 7th, August, 2023).

This dialogue exposes a profound mistrust in the peacekeeping mission, as the host state is equivocal regarding joint military operations, particularly those originating from the EAC region. This result supports the contentions made by Bischoff et al. (2016) that the role of joint force coordination is diminished by a significant number of participants. Kenyan troops, for instance, pursue additional insurgents in North Kivu, where the nation already has personnel stationed with the United Nations force (although the two contingents will have separate objectives). Conversely, operations by Tanzanian and Burundian forces in South Kivu effectively formalize the Burundian army's presence in the region, where it has been engaged in combat with the RED-Tabara militia. A small South Sudanese contingent is tasked with combating the remnants of the Lord Resistance's Army in Haut-Uélé. However, the results of these studies contradict the claim made by Bischoff, Aning, and Acharya (2016) that partner states coordinate effectively. To begin with, the partner states deployed their forces every two months as a result of resource constraints. Furthermore, the results suggest that EACRF forces are stationed in Congo for reasons unrelated to the restoration of peace in the country.

The area gathered between 6,500 and 12,000 soldiers for the deployment, which was authorized to "contain, defeat, and eradicate negative forces" in the eastern DRC for a period of six months, renewable, and subject to a



bimonthly strategic review by the involved parties. Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, and South Sudan all contributed personnel to engage in combat alongside Congolese forces (Bischoff, Aning, & Acharya 2016).

Nonetheless, the paper uncovered numerical military voids, which undermines the very purpose of the Joint Area of Operation, which is to cover a vast region with numerous long-range patrols. Nevertheless, the command structure, extending from the Force Headquarters to the contingents, is effective and efficient. An EAC coordination military officer expressed regret in an interview that the participation of numerous military organizations has resulted in power asymmetry among certain member states, consequently diminishing the effectiveness of the force. The presence of numerous military opposition groups in Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda hinders EACRF efforts in the DRC. He provided the following explanation:

The primary objectives of our force's deployment in the war-ravaged region are to prevent the conflict from escalating further and to establish a lasting peace. In accordance with the security mechanisms that have granted legitimacy to this operation, every partner state is duty-bound to provide military personnel in support of our endeavor. As a result, they have responded to this appeal. Nonetheless, the ongoing Congolese conflict has been marked by the participation of numerous militia factions, some of which have established ties with the partner states. The ongoing existence of these militia groups has significantly hindered our ability to carry out this laudable operation efficiently, as the balance of power in terms of capabilities remains elusive. (Interview, EAC Military coordinating officer, 7th August, 2023).

The various strategies employed by distinct divisions appear to be operating against the regional force's objectives. It is unclear whether this is the result of ineffective coordination or a strategy. FARDC and the Ugandan Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) are conducting a joint offensive operation in the northern regions (North-Kivu and Ituri) to trace the ADF-NALU rebel group. Boundary-strong, the Burundian army is currently stationed in the south-western region of the province of North Kivu, where it is impeding the M23's progress. It appears that Kenya has adopted a more diplomatic stance. Angola is poised to deploy a military contingent to the area subsequent to the ceasefire it mediated between the Congolese army and the M23 insurgents failing to materialize. The manner in which MONUSCO operations can be practically applied to other forces is still unknown.

It is evident from this discourse that the very structures of the EACRF betray its immediate duties and objectives in relation to joint missions, as divergent state interests of some EAC states have negative repercussions on the EACRF mission. It is possible to classify the efforts of Burundi, Uganda, and Rwanda to combat militia groups operating within their borders as a conflict of interest. Limited coordination and the presence of numerous military factions further jeopardize the EACRF's goal of restoring peace in the DRC. Additionally, duty multiplication, as a portion of their forces are integrated into the United Nations peace mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is apparent that the primary focus of the EACRF's mandate has been peacekeeping rather than peace enforcement.

4.1.2 Role of EACRF Affiliated Structures in DRC Intrastate Conflict

The researcher aimed to comprehend the function of EACRF affiliate structures and the manner in which they contribute to the EACRF's objectives in the DRC conflict. The researcher requested that the EAC Director of Coordinating Mechanism and Military Attaches, as well as the EACRF logistical, operational, and strategy teams, ascertain the functions performed by EACRF affiliate structures in the administration of intrastate conflict in the DRC. The total count of participants was 150. The return of two questionnaires was absent. The results are summarized in Figure.2

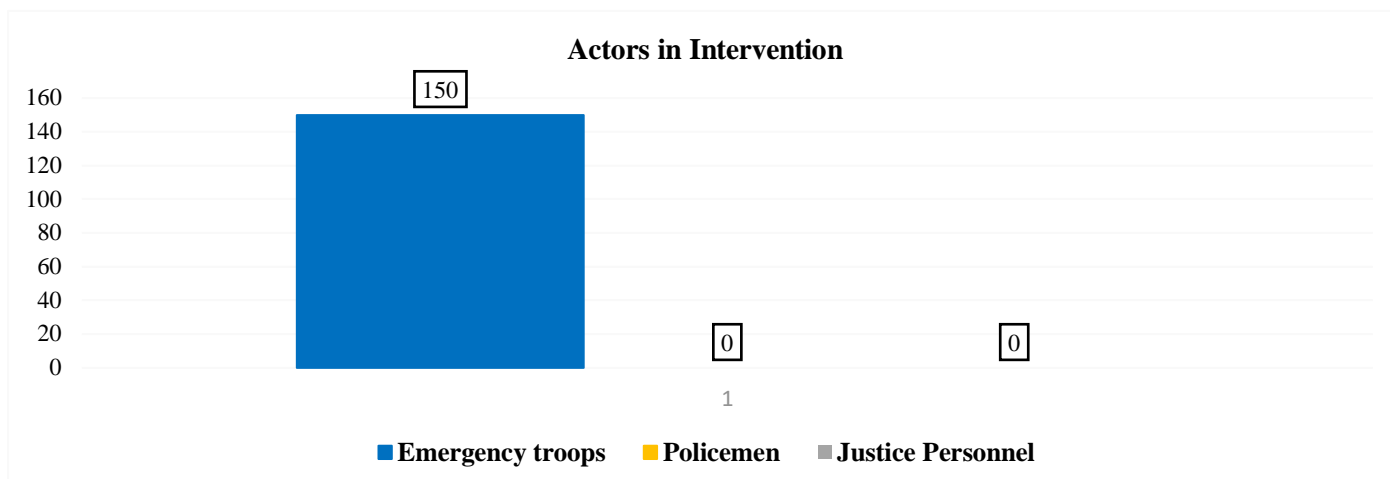


Figure 2
EACRF Intervention Personnel

One hundred and fifty respondents (100%) supported the deployment of emergency personnel in the war-torn DRC. Police and justice personnel were not accepted by any of the respondents as part of the EACRF conflict management process. During times of crisis, emergency forces are mobilized; nevertheless, the implementation of the EAC regional peacekeeping force has been sluggish.

Due to the inherent characteristics of its structure, the EACRF has been constrained to its primary responsibilities of peacekeeping and conflict prevention in the DRC's internal affairs. It was disclosed that regional forces have accomplished little in recent months with regard to peace building and enforcement. During a recent interview, a member of the chiefs of defence committee addressed:

Our mandate, as prescribed by the political faction of the region, is limited in scope and is founded upon specific objectives. In this regard, EACRF activities are limited to member state collaboration and joint exercises. Therefore, in order to restore peace, the treaty requires joint forces to collaborate with local law enforcement and civilians. It fails to account for the critical role that justice personnel play in the peacebuilding process. (Interview held with a chief of defense committee member, 14th October, 2023 in Goma, DRC, Uganda Cohort).

The statement alludes to a more comprehensive intervention framework that extends beyond the mere deployment of emergency troops. This is consistent with Article 13.1.1 of the Protocol of Africa Standby Force, which stipulates that the ASF shall be comprised of multidisciplinary contingents on standby in their respective countries of origin, consisting of civilian, police, and military personnel, prepared for immediate deployment. Hence, EACRF constitutes a multifaceted entity comprising elements from the military, security, and civilian sectors. This indicates that certain portions of the EAC chatter on the EACRF structure are deactivated or mute. A military officer in charge of EAC coordination argued in an interview:

Among the many factors that have contributed to the politicization of ethnicities and the ongoing exploitation of resources is the Congolese conflict. This provides a strong correlation between the DRC's resources and its development. Conflict in the eastern DRC is intricate and at times time-consuming, necessitating the participation of all parties involved. For the disarmament of armed groups, the political process must continue to advance at an accelerated rate. Additionally, it is imperative that the intervening actors exhibit a genuine commitment to bringing an end to the conflict, rather than engaging in further illicit activities that I am unable to divulge but which are circulating in local and international media outlets on account of their sensitive nature. (Interview held with a EAC coordination military officer 4th November, 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya).

This statement provides further support for the inclusion of civilians and law enforcement in the EACRF intervention structure. The joint force intervention may not produce significant results if certain crucial elements are omitted, as evidenced by the following findings. However, the defunct EACRF utilized this framework to delineate the responsibilities of each segment. In 2011, the EACRF Standby Roster acknowledged the registration of 176 civilian personnel, in addition to the training of 635 police officers. At the defunct EACRF 2012 Exercise Njiwa, which focused on capacity building for institutions upholding the rule of law, more than a hundred police and civilian participants participated. In addition to the force's multidimensional nature, EACRF acknowledges and endeavours to partially execute UNSC resolution 1325 concerning gender mainstreaming. 209 out of 635 trained police officers were female in 2011.

EACRF has accomplished a remarkable feat in terms of training its personnel both collectively and individually, both within EACRF structures and in member nations. The culmination of these training programs has been the successful EACRF in order to standardize doctrine and training in accordance with the United Nations' requirement for doctrine and training for multidimensional forces, COM collaborates with regional training institutions such as the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC). However, in the case of the EACRF, this standardization also accounts for African realities. In order to ensure the effectiveness of collaborative peace support operations, three regional centres of excellence for peacekeeping training in Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda provide forces contributing from member countries with common joint pre-deployment training.

EAC has collaborated with ECOWAS, IGAD, and AU, all of which operate early warning systems of varying varieties and levels, to develop its own Early Warning System (EWM), which is regarded as a cornerstone of crisis and conflict prevention. Furthermore, the EAC established the Nyerere Centre for Peace Research in Tanzania with the purpose of furnishing the EAC with well-informed policy alternatives, training, and research in the domain of peace and security. Its primary objective is to advance peace and security as fundamental prerequisites for regional integration and development. It is estimated that over a hundred-armed organizations are active in the eastern region of the DRC. Notwithstanding the existence of over 16,000 peacekeepers from the United Nations, these factions persist in instilling fear among populations and exerting authority over porously governed regions. Moreover, a considerable number of these armed factions maintain affiliations with firmly established terrorist organizations, including Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabab, thereby enabling them to function from a firmly established base equipped with ample resources (International Crisis Group, 2020).

Further exacerbating the problem of extensive violence inflicted by armed factions in the eastern DRC is the propensity of the Great Lakes region nations, notably Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda, to actively facilitate and support armed groups in the DRC with the intention of instigating proxy conflicts against one another. Concurrently, President Félix Tshisekedi of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is contemplating inviting these nations into the country to combat factions that they oppose. If invited into the DRC, these three nations, whose animosity is intensifying, might increase their support for allied militias while focusing on adversaries. A new proxy conflict has the potential to destabilize the DRC even further and even spark a regional security crisis.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The study's findings in discussion above the paper concludes that management of the intractable conflict in eastern DRC is contingent on synchronizing the internal DRC political dynamics with the regional interests especially of her immediate neighbours. The populist call for the exclusion of the interests of her neighbours provides a temporal solution that disregards the complexity of the conflict web. In the context of regionalism EACRF is the most suitable intervention mechanism and guarantee for sustainable peace in eastern DRC. The paper further concludes, EACRF's efforts to restore peace and security in the DRC have been hampered by inadequate personnel deployment structures. This could potentially result in their overall responsibility being limited to peacekeeping due to the presence of structural capacity deficits.

5.2 Recommendations

From the conclusion above the paper proposes an expanded role and set of objectives for the EACRF, in accordance the objective. These objective include increasing investments in conflict prevention and transformation as means to establish enduring peace and security in the DRC conflict. Additionally, joint structured troop deployment is required

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Social Movements and National Security in Nigeria: A Study of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria has been engulfed in crises of national question regarding its corporate existence as a sovereign state entity by the emergence and agitators of groups such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). The ability of the separatist movement to mobilise actions has increased the volatility of insecurity in Nigeria's South East/South-South zones. The study aims to examine the nexus between IPOB threat and national security so as to identify the factors behind IPOB movement. Based on the descriptive study design, the study adopted the opportunity structure perspective as its theoretical framework. The literature is descriptive in nature and adopted secondary method of data collection. The data was collected from secondary sources such as internal publications, newspaper reports, journal articles, official reports documentations and documentaries, and textbooks and commentaries. The findings of the study revealed that although the IPOB movement is fueled by a feeling of victimisation and marginalisation among the Igbos, the movement constitutes a threat to national security. In conclusion, the study recommends the need to engage the genuine IPOB agitators in meaningful dialogue and also fish out the criminal elements whose activities threaten national security.

Keywords: Insecurity, IPOB, National Security, Separatist Movement, Social Movement, Southeast Zone

I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, social movements had manifested in varied forms as groups felt dissatisfied with their mother entities. The history of Nigeria is replete with cases of militarised ethnic or sectarian groups threatening the continued existence of the state (Njoku and Sidhu, 2021). Currently, Nigeria is on a shaky ground as there are varied forms of movements in all the geographical regions of the country. From the Yoruba enclave for instance, echoes of separatism come in varied forms ranging from a direct call for Oduduwa Republic/Yoruba Nation to the group that is negotiating for a sovereign national conference (Adebulu, 2021). From the Northern hemisphere comes intermittent demands for Arewa Republic. Apart from the demand for Niger Delta Republic, pockets of separatism are embedded in the demands for resource control by regional activists in the Niger Delta Region (Achonwa, 2024).

Adibe (2017) argues that in a diverse country like Nigeria, the desire for different groups to participate in social movements and demand various forms of self-determination is intensified. This is due to the tendency for suppressed emotions during periods of dictatorship guaranteed under the liberal democracy's freedom of speech. Since the restoration of civil rule in 1999, the Igbos have been actively involved in various social movements aimed at bringing about change in Nigeria's geopolitical structure. These movements have been carried out through several Igbo socio-cultural groups such as the Igbo Concerned Citizens, Igbo Elders' Forum, Igbo Renaissance Movement, Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM), and the IPOB, among others. Among these groups, IPOB has gained the most prominence in the Biafra agitation (Nwangwu, 2022).

The movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), founded in 1999 by Chief Ralph Uwazuruke, was the forerunner in the neo-Biafra secessionist struggle before Mazi Nnamdi Kanu's 2012 formation of the IPOB (the most recent group and manifestation of the neo-Biafra separatist movement in Nigeria). MASSOB was successful in gaining the support of a vibrant international Igbo organisation network. Nonetheless, a

combination of government repression and factionalisation weakened MASSOB, leading to serious cracks (Ezea, 2017). These challenges paved the way for the emergence and thriving of IPOB.

The IPOB appeals directly to the marginalised underclass, primarily of Igbo descent, using its digital communication channels, with Radio Biafra being the most widely known. The IPOB is based on the principle of non-violence. The establishment of the Eastern Security Network (ESN) as the paramilitary wing by the IPOB on 12 December 2020 marked a significant shift in the group's separatist approach from non-violent means to armed resistance. According to Nwangwu (2022), the prevailing sentiment within the IPOB, ESN, and other radical separatist groups is that the governance challenges in Igboland stem from the repressive Nigerian state and the collaborationist role of conservative Igbo nationalists.

As the paramilitary unit of the IPOB, the ESN's mission is to protect Biafran territory by countering the violent attacks of marauding armed Fulani herdsman targeting peasant farmers and local communities. Osa-Brown and Alake (2021) also contended that IPOB established the ESN in order to safeguard the oil-rich South-East region from encroachments by ethnic Fulani herders, whom it accuses of trespassing on farmlands and perpetrating crimes against the local communities. Hence, this study is set to examine the nexus between IPOB separatist movement and national security in Nigeria.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The IPOB's agitation has persisted longer than anticipated. And the fact that a group built on the principle of non-violence is now portrayed in many literary works as a radical separatist organisation with questionable character is extremely concerning. Undoubtedly, this image contributed to IPOB's 2017 proscription as a terrorist organisation (Adesomoju, 2018), a proscription that was nullified in 2023 (Oko, 2023). The Federal Government of Nigeria has previously conducted searches and detained IPOB leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu for treason, terrorism and inciting remarks that were seen to be at odds with national security (Asadu, 2023).

Divergent views exist on the role, tactics, and composition of the Eastern Security Network – the paramilitary wing of IPOB. While some opinions favour the group for working in tandem with the goal which it was established, others argue that the group has been infiltrated by criminals who hide under the cloak of Biafra movement to commit acts that conflict with national security. Hence, the current composition and activities of IPOB and its paramilitary wing Eastern Security Network leaves us with questions such as: What factors have sustained the persistent separatist agitation by IPOB and its forerunners? Knowing the most studies on the IPOB focus on factors that gave birth to the movement, the researchers attempt to establish a nexus between IPOB movement and national security. Through these questions, the study aims to identify the factors behind IPOB movement and examine the nexus between IPOB movement and national security.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Opportunity Structure Perspective

The opportunity structure perspective contends that social movement may rise and thrive because the opportunities exist with the required structure. Essentially, the state may also provide some of the opportunities for individuals to mobilise such as regime instability, lessening of repression, and division among elites, which can be analysed by measures of political effectiveness and political legitimacy (McAdam 2001). Within the opportunity structure perspective are the modernisation theory, relative deprivation theory, and the rational choice theory.

Huntington (1968) contributed greatly to the Modernisation theory when he argued that instability in the form of social movement surfaces when institutions cannot keep up with societal and economic changes; consequently, society will strive to replace the current institutions with ones that can meet current social and political demands. However, Gurr (1968, 1970) adds relative deprivation to fill in a gap in modernisation theory. Gurr argues that even if institutions are able to catch up with societal and economic changes, the feeling of relative deprivation will also lead people to mass organise. Relative deprivation argues that, people are motivated to organise out of a sense of deprivation or inequality brought forth by a comparison to others, or in relation to their own expectations. In this case, people will join social movements because their expectations will have outgrown their actual situation (Gurr-1968, 1970).

The increasing gap between an individual's expected value and what they actually attain will lead to growing social frustration. This disparity or gap is determined by the situation of an individual's neighbour. If everyone in a particular area is facing similar challenges in achieving value, then relative deprivation will not arise (Gurr 1970). Therefore, both relative deprivation and modernisation theory explain that social mobilisation is driven by individuals' grievances and anger. Rational choice theory also emphasises that individuals are rational decision-makers who consider

the costs and benefits of different actions to maximise their own benefit (Olson 1965). Importantly, all these theories provide initial explanations on social movements, illustrating how social, institutional, and economic factors lead to the emergence of social movements. Thus, opportunity structures drive movement organisation through their social, economic, and institutional contexts. These fundamental conditions support social movements by fostering individual grievances. These conditions primarily focus on the external environments that drive social movements. Social movements stem from individuals feeling deprived of certain goods, resources, or services. People are motivated to organise due to a sense of deprivation or inequality, either in comparison to others or in relation to their own expectations (Gurr, 1968, 1970).

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Social Movement

A social movement is the result of many individuals acting together, either through activity or protest. Online petitions, hashtag usage, and well-planned social media campaigns are typically used to accomplish it (Williams and Houghton, 2023). Social movements are structured but informal social groups that participate in extra-institutional conflict with a specific objective. These objectives may be more widely directed at political or cultural change, or they may be more narrowly focused on a particular policy (De la Porta & Diami, 2006). Social movement is also used specifically to describe a collective group of people who share a common political or social agenda and use coordinated action to bring about social change (Williams and Houghton, 2023). Similarly, Godwin and Jasper (2003) defined social movement as conscious, concerted and sustained efforts by ordinary people to change some aspect of their society by using extra-institutional means. McAdam (1988) noted that social movements can be important vehicles for social and political change and have the potential to transform the systems of institutionalised politics in which they occur. Social movement is usually a form of collective action with common cause or agenda, triggered by various events, including economic conditions, cultural norms and changes in the social environment. Similarly, it usually has a horizontal leadership structure with some leaders being more prominent than others (Diani, 2012). And these movements are distinct from political parties, they may be less formal and unpredictable than political parties (Williams et al, 2023). They can be alternative, redemptive Movement or reformatory in nature (Aberle, 2023).

2.2.2 National Security

National security examines how the state protects the physical integrity of its citizens from threats such as invasion, terrorism and violence (Achonwa, 2024). National security is characterised by the absence of internal or external threats to the government, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, well-being of the population, ongoing economic and social progress, and other vital interests of the country, as well as the ability to uphold a continual state of security. (Zhao, 2024). National security is permanently the absolute national interests of every state pursued mainly through coercive techniques of power and use of force (Karen, 1999).

Morgenthau (1978) portrayed national security as the integrity of national territory and its institutions. Asobie (2007) detailed it as the protection of the physical, political and cultural identity of the nation against encroachment by other nations. Udentia (2005), Asobie (2007) strongly contend that besides national security, all other interests are peripheral and cannot be achieved unless the former is guaranteed. National security is the ability of a state to cater for the protection and defence of its citizenry and national sovereignty. Singh (2014) similarly defines national security as the safeguarding of a country's territorial integrity. In this view, it is the job of defence strategy to promote national security which is accomplished by relying on the acquisition of military hardware and the strengthening of the country's defence forces which is in reality military security. Michael cited in Singh (2014) simply captures national security as the state of being free from external physical threats.

National security is of utmost importance to every modern government. Nigerian government places much premium on national security. Hence Section 14 (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of governments and in so doing, the Nigerian government is saddled with the herculean task of responding to any external or internal threat.

Following its over ten years' secessionist movement in Nigeria (BBC, 2021), there is no dearth of literature on how the IPOB impacts Nigeria's national security. For instance, scholars such as Esho (2022) analysed the socio-political and religious interplay between the Nigerian state and IPOB while Tanko (2021) described IPOB as one of the five different security threats in Nigeria. In line with Tanko's views, Onuoha et al, (2021) observed that Biafra separatism remains one of the greatest threats confronting Nigeria's unity. In their views, Henry et al, (2020) believe that the IPOB agitation is a crack on Nigeria's national integration while the Council on Foreign Relations argue that perceptions of discrimination by the federal government and highhandedness of security operatives are largely responsible for driving IPOB sentiment (CFR, 2021). This collaborates Amnesty International Reports on the killing of

at least 150 and 115 peaceful pro-Biafra activists in Nigeria's Southeast in chilling crackdown by security forces in 2016 and 2021 respectively (Amnesty International, 2016 & Amnesty International, 2021). Considering these and other numerous literature that have provided sufficient explanations on the emergence, ideology, operational methods of the IPOB, state repression and its implications on national security, this research considers it redundant to review these issues exhaustively.

2.2.3 IPOB's Desire for an Independent Biafra

A review of relevant literature identified disunity in Nigeria (Chiluwa 2018), traumas and documentaries associated with memories of civil war (Ugwueze, 2019), the lopsided structure of Nigeria's federalism (Adibe, 2017), ineffective implementation of the post-war peace building initiatives (Johnson and Olaniyan, 2017), fear of planned Islamisation of the south east (Achonwa 2024, Adibe 2017) perceived marginalisation and feeling of collective victimhood amongst the Igbo (Ibeanu et al., 2016), as the factors behind the IPOB movement. Nnam (2024) strongly argued that social injustice and marginalisation remains the primary factor behind IPOB's separatist movement.

Table 1

Showing appointments into The Top Echelon of Military Architecture by President Buhari, 2015-2023

S/N	Military Officeholder	Designation and Region
1a	General Abayomi Olonisakin, Chief of Defence Staff	Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff (SW)
1b	General Lucky Irabor, Chief of Defence Staff (2020-2023)	Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff (SS)
2a	Lt. Gen. I. Attahiru, Chief of Army Staff, 2019-2020	Commander/Head of the Army (NW)
2b	Lt. Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai, Chief of Army Staff 2020-2022	Commander/Head of the Army (NW)
3a	Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ekwe Ibas, Chief of Naval Staff	Commander/Head of the Navy (SS)
3b	Rear Admiral Awwal Zubairu Gambo (2021-2023)	Commander/Head of the Navy (NW)
4	Air Marshal Siddique Abubakar, Chief of Air Staff	Commander/Head of the Air Force (NE)
5	Chief of Defence Staff -Intelligence	Head of Intelligence
6	The Inspector General of Police	Commander/Head of the Police Force
7	National Security Adviser (NSA)	Coordinator of Security Council

From the above table, there is no military Chief from the Southeast geopolitical zone from 2015 – 2023. These lopsided appointments by President Buhari contributed in fanning anger and feelings of marginalisation among the people of the southeast. The former president was accused of deliberate exclusion and marginalisation when he coined the "97 versus 5 per cent" term (Fasan, 2015). This and other social, political, and economic challenges that have largely sustained the IPOB movement and other similar groups in Nigeria (Njoku & Sidhu, 2017).

Table 2

Showing President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Selected Political and Military Appointments

S/N	NAME	APPOINTMENT	Ethnic Group
1	President Bola Tinubu	Minister of Petroleum	Yoruba
2	Mr. Wale Edun	Minister of Finance & Coordinating Minister for the Economy	Yoruba
3	Mr. Gboyega Oyetola	Minister of Marine & Blue Economy	Yoruba
4	Dr. Olayemi Cardoso	Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)	Yoruba
5	Dr. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo	Minister of Interior	Yoruba
6	Bosun Tijani	Minister of Communication, Innovation & Digital Economy	Yoruba
7	Zacch Adedeji	Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS)	Yoruba
8	Dele Aleke	Minister of Solid Mineral	Yoruba
9	Engr. Bisoye Cooker Odunsote	National Identity Management Commission (NIMS)	Yoruba
10	Mr. Adebayo Adelabu	Minister of Power	Yoruba
11	Mr. Adewale Bashir Adeniyi	Comptroller General of Nigerian Customs Service	Yoruba
12	Mr. Lateef Fagbemi	Minister of Justice/Attorney General	Yoruba

Similar to the exclusion of the Southeast by the former President, the administration of President Tinubu has also inadvertently given credence to the allegation of marginalisation and exclusion of the Southeast through lopsided



appointments into government agencies and parastatals as shown in table 2 above. Through skewed appointments that favours his ethnic group (Yoruba) against other groups (especially the Southeast), the IPOB movement has been given more reasons to justify their cries of marginalisation.

Table 3

Showing the 6 Geopolitical Zones/Regions of Nigeria with Number of States per Region

S/N	Geopolitical Zone/Region	Number of States
1	Southeast	5 States of: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo
2	South-south	6 States of: Akwa Ibom; Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, River State
3	Southwest	6 States of: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo,
4	Northeast	6 States of: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe
5	North Central	6 States of: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau
6	Northwest	7 States: Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara

Table 3 shows that the allegation of marginalisation of the Southeast is much more than appointments. While other zones in Nigeria have six states (the North West with seven states), the Southeast is the only region with the least number of states. This means that the Southeast receives the least share of federal allocation. The Southeast also has the least number of local government areas in Nigeria. For instance, while the Northwest and Northeast have 186 and 113 LGAs respectively, the Southeast comprises 95 LGAs only. Of all the major ethnic groups in Nigeria, it is also the only group that has not had its turn of producing the president of Nigeria in recent times. From the IPOB's perspective, the marginalisation of the Southeast is largely perpetuated through structural imbalance.

Table 4

Showing Federal Executive Council, 2023 – Present

S/N	Ministerial Appointments Per Geopolitical Zone/Region	Number of Ministers
1	Northwestern Zone/Region	10 Ministers
2	North Central Zone/Region	8 Ministers
3	Northeastern Zone/Region	8 Ministers
4	Southwest Zone/Region	9 Ministers
5	South-south Zone/Region	8 Ministers
6	Southeast Zone/Region	5 Ministers

From the above table, southeast is the least represented in both elected and appointed political offices at the federal level. Similarly, the zone is poorly represented in the federal public service, as well as the zone with the least number of Ambassadors and heads of government parastatals/government boards or councils (Oluwabunwa, 2017). In his letter to President Tinubu in June 2024, Edwin Clark highlighted the alleged marginalisation of the Southeast during the administration of former President Buhari. According to the elder statesman, even though the Southeast has three oil-producing states – Abia, Anambra and Imo, the then President did not appoint anyone from the zone in constituting the Board of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (Shotayo, 2024). In his words, “President Buhari did everything to subjugate the Igbos for reason best known to him.” Wondering how President Tinubu intends to justify his appointment of 10 ministers from the Southwest while appointing only five ministers from the South-East, Clark noted that injustice, discrimination and marginalisation against Igbos still permeates under Tinubu's administration (Shotayo, 2024).

III. METHODOLOGY

The study is literature based and descriptive in nature. It adopted secondary method of data collection. And secondary sources in this study include internal publications, newspaper reports, journal articles, official reports, documentations and documentaries, Legal and policy documents, textbooks and media publications. By comprehensively appraising these sources on ethnic nationalism, separatists' movements, state responses and national security, the study contributes to the academic discourse on separatist movements and their implications for national unity. By employing a descriptive research design and identifying themes and patterns relating to the IPOB's movement and national security, the study categorised the data into key areas such as social movement, national security and



IPOB's desire for an independent state of Biafra so as to create a structured narrative and provide an all-inclusive overview of IPOB movement and its implication for Nigeria's national security.

Tables were used to show trends in the IPOB and national security incidents over time and the perceived marginalisation of the Southeasterners. The lopsided appointments at the federal level (that tend to lend credence to IPOB's sense of marginalisation) and suspected cases of IPOB violent attacks on state institutions and personnel (as threat to national security) are also presented in a tabular form.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The findings show that IPOB has weakened Nigerian common position and strength in foreign policy and National interest matters. Hence, her economy is weak; military strength worn out, diplomatic advantage lost – all these factors of National power in pursuit of National interest are affected. The movement for a separatist Biafra as championed by the IPOB currently constitutes a threat to national security. The movement has assumed a violent, destructive and damaging dimension distinct from its initial peaceful and non-violent approach. The violence of the group has not only put the government on its toes but has kept the group on international searchlight.

The activities of the IPOB has raised concerns amongst scholars and opinion analysts as regards the implications of the movement to national security. Achonwa (2024) argues that recurring agitations for Biafra by IPOB constitutes a serious threat to regional and national security. Onuoha et al. (2021) posit that the IPOB movement has been re-enforced in such a way that Nigeria's security environment appears to have become more volatile than ever before.

This led to the proscription of IPOB which also generated more national questions. IPOB and other separatist movements within the South-East and South-South regions seem to constitute threat to national security in the views of the State and Federal Government of Nigeria. The then Senior Special Assistant to President Muhammadu Buhari on Media and Publicity Garba Shehu while presenting a paper at the 10th anniversary of the Federal University Dutsin-Ma (FUDMA) Katsina, expressly stated that the IPOB pose a significant threat to the safety and security of Nigeria citizens (Israel, 2021).

Ibeanu et al. (2016) argues that the increasing capacity of IPOB separatists to mobilise potential protesters could fuel armed violence and worsen the existing levels of insecurity in the South East region of Nigeria. Ekpenyong (1989) drew our attention to the first three decades after the civil war noting that the problems of armed robbery and carjacking were the most serious forms of security challenges in the South East. Smith (2001) hence submits that since the late 1990s, these problems have been worsened by the spike in kidnapping and other forms of armed banditry as well as the more persistent struggle between vigilante and criminal networks. Ibeanu et al, (2016) further notes that in the early 2000s, vigilante violence became widespread in the region with the most prominent militant vigilante group, the Bakassi Boys active in the major commercial centers. There is a strong potential for the increasing separatist agitation in the South East to further complicate the security situation in the region by providing a basis for potential criminals to become part of the protestors and switch early from being Biafra protestors to armed bandits without any stable means of livelihood, these protestors could constitute serious threats to security in the region.

Oyedeki (2022) submits that apprehension, fear and uncertainty are the prevailing sentiments in the Southeast region of Nigeria. The random killings by unknown gunmen, the sit-at-home order declared by the IPOB on the 9th of August 2021 and the military's intervention in the state have contributed to a heightened sense of danger. Hence, Njoku (2022) agrees that insecurity created by unknown gunmen is on the rise in the region and stressed that the activities of gunmen who move about almost unchallenged, attacking targets and dispossessing security personnel of their weapon and killing them in the process, constitute serious security problems in the Southeast region.

Onuoha et al, (2021) contends that the Nigerian government sees IPOB's use of inciting remarks and hate speech on Radio Biafra to garner support as a security breach. Consequently, the Federal Government consistently airs documentaries on a number of radio and television channels, such as Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) and Nigeria Television Authority (NTA), in which it is stated unequivocally that hate speech constitutes terrorism for which individuals are held accountable. The leader of the IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu, was believed to have stated, through the Radio broadcast, that "if they (referring to the leadership of Nigeria) fail to give us Biafra, Somalia will look like a paradise compared to what will happen to the zoo (Nigeria). It is a promise, it is also a pledge and it is also a threat to them." Also, on the 28th of June 2015, through his official Facebook page, Nnamdi Kanu said "when we speak, the zoo trembles. This is what happens when a cattle-rearing terrorist is your ruler. Hardcore Biafrans, if you see anyone in your village kill the baboon, Hausa or Yoruba".

In the same vein, the Sahara Reporters of 21st July 2017 captured an inciting statement credited to Nnamdi Kanu, saying "if the Government of Nigeria does not agree with us on a date for referendum, there will be no election in the South East starting with Anambra State come November 2017." The statement heightened political tension in the



South-East and dissuaded people from coming out to cast their votes for fear of molestation from IPOB foot soldiers. Onuoha et al, (2021) further reported that on 1st October 2017, Kanu said “I will go to Abuja and when I’m coming back, I will bring back Buhari’s head”. Also, while speaking during World Igbo Congress in Los-Angeles, Nnamdi Kanu said “Anyone who voted or supported Buhari, give me a gun, I will shoot the person dead and go to prison”. A report credited to Sahara Reporters of 6th July 2017 also indicated that the IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu threatened to kill Obasanjo, march with over two million of his men to overrun the nation’s capital Abuja and consistently warned that Nigeria would burn. Hence, according to Nigerian Bulletin of 14th September 2017, in what looks like a grand design, on September 14th 2017 suspected members of IPOB destroyed the Ariaria Police Station in Aba, Abia State.

In the process, they injured policemen, carted away the pump action rifles, attacked MOPOL Patrol vehicle with petrol bomb, destroyed commercial vehicles, set bonfires on the road, attacked a commercial bank among other violent acts. These were considered serious security breaches that considerably impinged on the national security of Nigeria. Hence, according to Onuoha et al (2021), IPOB’s anti-establishment rhetoric constituted a serious breach to Nigeria’s national security. Such activities resulted in the invocation of Terrorism Prevention and Prohibition Act (TPA) 2011 as amended in the proscription of IPOB as a terrorist organisation. There has been spike in the waves of insecurity in many parts of the five states that made up the South East. This has been epitomised by the spate of killings, arson and other forms of violent crimes in the region particularly Anambra State.

The prevailing security situation in the Southeast where individuals are not allowed to carry out their lawful activities due to the fear of being harmed or killed by unknown gunmen due to the imposition of sit-at-home orders by the IPOB while elected government officials offer no protection begs the question of government’s competence (The Guardian, 2021). Hence, Achonwa (2024) agrees that recently the wave of insecurity in the South East region of the country has reached an alarming rate with blood chilling incidents of daylight killings. He further contended that two states in the zone (Imo and Anambra States) have taken the lead with heightened state of insecurity. While some of these security issues are attributed to cultism and other social deviance, the separatist agitation by the IPOB is largely responsible for these cases. Onuoha et al, (2021) argues that a worrisome dimension on IPOB’s separatist movement that impinges on national security is the establishment of parallel security guards in Nigeria different from the Nigerian security formation.

The IPOB leader, Nnamdi Kanu formed illegal and unlicensed security outfits such as the Biafran Secret Services (BSS) and the Biafran National guard (BNG) in preparation for the independence of Biafra. Ibeanu et al, (2016) avers that while the activities of the pro-Biafra movements intensify and widen, the capacity of the security agencies to handle the movement in a peaceful and professional manner might decline. Hence Campbell (2021) argues that fighting between Government forces and an Igbo separatist group risks adding yet another challenge for the Buhari administration. The emergence for an Igbo paramilitary force highlights the growing break-down of any Federal Government monopoly on the use of force in the face of multiple challenges. Recurring agitation for Biafra can intensify existing security challenges at the national level (Ibeanu et al., 2016). Security challenges in Nigeria manifest in multi-faceted ways but the most disturbing form of insecurity is inter-communal, political and sectarian violence. Igbo community mainly in northern Nigeria is usually the victims of these recurrent attacks (Action on Armed Violence, 2013).

Such has created a deep sense of disaffection among the Igbo which can be exploited by the Biafra separatists. As inter-communal violence involving the Igbo continue to reoccur, Biafra agitators could utilise such attacks as basis to mobilise support, intensify their struggles and attempt to launch reprisal attacks (Achonwa, 2024). Nwangwu (2022) reported that on December 30, 2020, just two weeks after the ESN was founded, the Nigerian military raided some South-Eastern forests where ESN members were believed to be camping, using battle helicopters, gun trucks, and soldiers. The ESN militias and the Nigerian military turned Orlu communities in Imo State into a theatre of war. Njoku & Elekwa (2021) claim that during the conflict, a number of lives were lost and properties worth billions of naira were destroyed. Comparably, according to a study from the European Asylum Support Office, from January 1 to April 30, 2021 became the theatre of war between the Nigerian military and the ESN militia.

According to Njoku & Elekwa (2021), several lives were lost and billions of naira worth of properties got destroyed during the clash. Similarly, a report of the European Asylum Support Office indicates that from 1st January to 30th April 2021 a total of 32 security incidents comprising 14 battles, 1 incident of remote violence/explosions, 13 cases of violence against civilians and 4 incidents of riots were recorded in Imo State resulting in 59 deaths (European Asylum Support Office 2021).

Furthermore, following the initial confrontations between the Nigerian military and ESN combatants in January 2021, Imo State and other areas of Igboland faced grave security threats. For example, on April 5, 2021, gunmen who have not yet been identified—known as "Unknown Gunmen" in the media and public—launched a vicious attack on government buildings, including the Nigerian Correctional Center in Owerri and the Imo State Police Command freeing



1,944 inmates of the center (Akingbule & Parkmson, 2021; Ayitogo, 2021). The unknown gunmen also set the premises of the centre (including numerous vehicles) on fire whilst other soldiers were killed at Umuoji on the Owerri-Onitsha Expressway (Nkwo-Akpolu, 2021).

Every state in the South-East and other adjoining states in the South-South especially Akwa-Ibom, Delta and Rivers states have recorded widespread attacks on security formations, particular police stations and check points (Nwangwu, 2022). More than 16 police officers and four naval officers have died as a result of a string of violent attacks on security formations in Anambra state since February 2021, particularly at the Nkpologwu and Omogho communities in the Aguata and Orumba North Local Government Areas, respectively (Eze et al., 2021). With at least 15 police stations assaulted and/or raised throughout the state, Imo state has been the worst hit by unidentified gunman attacks (Nwangwu, 2022).

In particular, INEC offices and facilities have become the second most adversely affected only coming after police stations by attacks across Nigeria. Apart from attacks credited to arsonists who disrupted the 2020 #EndSARS protests (which were more evenly distributed in Southeastern Nigeria), subsequent attacks on INEC facilities by unknown gunmen since December 2020 have been concentrated in the South-East – the main domain of the neo-Biafra separatist agitations (Nwangwu, 2022). One of the greatest national question confronting the corporate existence of Nigeria in recent time is the separatist agitation of the IPOB social movement against the Nigerian state. The movement has inevitably become an albatross to the apparent claim of corporate entity of Nigeria as a sovereign state of the global community. The movement has been reinforced in such a way that Nigerian security environment appears to have become more volatile than ever before, putting paid to Nigerian government regular claim of being in charge and always on top of national security matters.

The IPOB movement not only exacerbates tensions and violence in Southeast region but also poses a significant threat to national security. Excessive militarised response of the state security forces also radicalises IPOB members, resulting in more extreme actions such as terrorist activities and armed insurgency (Adebayo, 2022; Ani, 2017).

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The IPOB separatist movement is fueled by a feeling of collective victimisation among the Igbos. And the movement constitutes a threat to national security. Findings of the study reveal that the social movement in Nigeria championed by the IPOB and which is geared towards the actualisation of sovereign state of Biafra has changed gear.

IPOB eclipsed all other pro-Biafra groups in the struggle to address a feeling of collective victimisation among the Igbos. The movement which started on a peaceful and non-violent footing is today associated with violent trajectories. In spite of being reckoned with peaceful protests, some members of IPOB currently engage in armed attacks on the government/government facilities, security agencies, and even defenseless citizens of the Nigerian state. The violent and criminal disposition of IPOB today hence poses a serious threat to national security. Fear, apprehension arising from some clandestine activities of some IPOB members has dwindled the degree of acceptance which it had hitherto enjoyed among the Igbos whose course it is championing.

The series of attack on establishment of Nigerian security and paramilitary agencies – Army, Police, Immigration, Custom, NSCDC as symbol of National security and defence has weakened and eroded the morale and strength of National security.

It has equally weakened citizens' public trust and confidence on the government of the state to protect and safeguard their life and property as guaranteed by laws, as the purpose of the state in its social contract with the citizens.

The increase in the emergence of agitating groups in the North and other parts of Nigeria, provoked by the IPOB media awareness on the crisis of identity and domination of one group over the others constitute serious threats to National security. It has provoked outburst of agitations from gravely peaceful groups in the North on issues of right of indigenous identity and recognition in fair and just representation in National allocation and distribution of socio-economic and political values.

5.2 Recommendations

The government should cautiously make use of carrot and stick approach in the handling of the Biafra movement, engaging the genuine IPOB led agitators in meaningful dialogue while at the same time fishing out the criminal elements whose activities threaten national security. The ordinary citizens should assist security operatives in fishing out the criminal elements who hide under the cloak of IPOB movement to commit acts that threaten national security.



The print and electronic media should create strong messages aimed at discouraging the repressive strategy of Nigerian security agencies as well as re-orientating the radical IPOB members towards a peaceful disposition. Support for IPOB-led Biafra agitation by Igbos leaders should be made with appropriate statements rather than rhetoric that fuel extremism and threat to national security.

On the other hand, the war on the IPOB movement will not be won by military offensive alone. In other words, the Nigeria government must meaningfully address the range of social, political, and economic challenges that have sustained the IPOB movement.

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APPENDIX I

Due to perceived marginalisation, IPOB has employed various strategies such as sit-at-home (Ibeanu et al., 2016), propaganda (Adesomoju, 2022), protest letters (Achonwa, 2024, Adebayo 2022), lobbying (Adesomoju, 2021) and violent attacks to demonstrate its discontent over government victimisation and exclusion. The timeline of selected security threatening incidents are as follows:

Table 5

Showing Suspected Cases of IPOB Anti-State Establishment and Institution Attacks as Threat to National Security

S/N	Date of Incident	Location/State	Description of Crime Incident
1	22/8/2019	Imo	Gunmen went on rampage killing a retired police officer, four other persons in Ilile community in Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Area of Imo State.
2	23/8/2020	Enugu	The patrol team of the Department of State Security Services was attacked by members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Two of its operatives were killed by IPOB at Emene, Enugu State.
3	1 Feb. 2021	Abia	Omoba Police Station, Isiala Ngwa North LGA, A police inspector was killed.
4	23 Feb. 2021	Abia	Abayi Police Station, World Bank Housing Estate, Aba
5	24 Feb. 2021	Anambra	A police officer was killed and a patrol vehicle was razed down in Ekwulobia
6	25 Feb. 2021	Cross River	MCC in Calabar, Four police officers were killed.
7	26 Feb. 2021	Imo	A police station was razed down in Aboh Mbaise Divisional Police Station.
8	1 Mar. 2021	Akwa Ibom	In Essien Udim LGA, a police station was attacked, including vehicles and motorcycles parked within the station.
9	1 Mar. 2021	Ebonyi	In Iboko Divisional Police Station, Izzi LGA, The police station was attacked.
10	2 May 2021	Akwa Ibom	South-South region in Essien Udim LGA, Hoodlums/unknown gunmen attack
11	9 May 2021	Abia	South-East region in Ohafia LGA Arsonists/unknown gunmen attack
12	13 May 2021	Enugu	South-East region in Udenu LGA, Arsonists/unknown gunmen attacked
13	16 May 2021	Enugu	South-East region in Enugu State headquarters Unknown gunmen/hoodlums attacked
14	18 May 2021	Ebonyi	South-East region in Ebonyi, Ezza North and Izzi LGAs Three INEC offices attacked
15	23 May 2021	Enugu	South-East region in Igboeze South LGA, Unknown gunmen/hoodlums attacked
16	23 May 2021	Anambra	South-East region in Anambra State headquarters Unknown gunmen attacked
17	23 May 2021	Imo	South-East region in Ahiazu Mbaise LGA, Unknown gunmen attacked
18	9 Mar. 2021	Imo	A police station and several vehicles were burnt down in Isinweke Police Station, Ihitte/Uboma LGA.
19	18 Mar. 2021	Anambra	A police patrol team at Okacha Junction in Neni, Anaocha LGA, a police officer was killed whilst two others sustained gunshot injuries.
20	30 Mar. 2021	Akwa-Ibom	Killing of the Commander of the state Police Command's Quick Intervention Unit, CSP Ben Ajide and two other officers. A police patrol team at Ikot Akpan community, Essien Udim LGA,
21	5 Apr. 2021	Imo	Police Command and Nigerian Correctional Services Imo State Police Command headquarters, Owerri was razed; almost all the vehicles parked at the command headquarters were burnt. 1,844 inmates of the Nigerian Correctional Services were also freed.
22	19 Apr. 2021	Abia	In Uzuakoli Police Station, Bende LGA the police station was burnt down
23	21 Apr. 2021	Enugu	Adani Police Station, Uzo-Uwani LGA Two police operatives were shot dead whilst the police station was set ablaze.
24	24 Apr. 2021	Rivers	Four checkpoints from Elele to Omagwa in Ikwerre LGA, eight operatives were killed: three military personnel, three customs officials and two policemen. Guns and two operational vehicles were also carted away.
25	27 Apr. 2021	Akwa Ibom	A checkpoint at Urua Inyang, Ika LGA, Hoodlums killed two police officers, carted away rifles and burnt down a police van.
26	27 Apr. 2021	Imo	Naval checkpoint near Enamel Ware Junction, Onitsha-Owerri highway. One naval personnel was killed whilst two others were injured.



27	28 Apr. 2021	Abia	Nkporo Police Station, Ohafia LGA. The police station, motorcycles and cars were set ablaze whilst some suspects in detention were released.
28	1 May 2021	Akwa Ibom	Ibiaku Ntok Okpo Divisional Police Office, Ikono LGA. Two police officers were killed, whilst facilities, vehicles and other valuables at the station were destroyed.
29	1 May 2021	Ebonyi	A police officer was killed whilst another got injured. Abaomege Police Station, Onicha LGA,
30	6 May 2021	Ebonyi	A police officer was killed, office of the DPO and admin building were razed down. Obiozara Police Station, Ohaozara LGA,
31	7 May 2021	Rivers	At least seven police officers were killed at the checkpoint, two more officers were killed at Rumuji Police Station, a patrol car was set ablaze and five assault rifles were stolen. A checkpoint at Choba Bridge, Port Harcourt; Rumuji Police Station, Emohua LGA; Elimgbu Police Station, Igwuruta Road, Port Harcourt,
32	8 May 2021	Akwa Ibom	Odoro Ikpe Police Station, Ini LGA, five police officers and the wife of a serving police officer were killed. Some police vehicles were also set ablaze.
33	12 May 2021	Abia	Criminal suspects were freed, two vehicles and three motorcycles were burnt. Bende Divisional Police Station, Bende LGA,
34	17 May 2021	Abia	The police station was set ablaze whilst two policemen were killed. Apumiri Ubakala Divisional Police Station, Umuahia South LGA,
35	25 May 2021	Enugu	Iwollo Police Division, Ezeagu LGA. Four police officers were killed whilst the police station was set ablaze.
36	6 Jun. 2021	Delta	Ashaka Police Station, Ndokwa East LGA. The police station and a patrol vehicle were set ablaze.
37	26 Feb. 2021	Imo	Aboh Mbaise Divisional Police Station. A police station was razed down.
38	5/4/2021	Imo	Ehime Mbanjo Police Station was burnt by hoodlums. They also freed some of their members in the police custody. They sang Biafra songs of victory. They also carted away some ammunitions
39	12/5/2021	Abia	Burning down of Bende Divisional Police Station. The gunmen were over 100.
40	29/5/2021	Imo	Burning of a magistrate court and Police Station.
41	11/10/2021	Enugu	The Police Divisional Headquarters Umulokpa in Uzouwani L.G.A was attacked by unknown gunmen.
42	11/1/2022	Imo	Passengers in a commercial bus heading to Lagos from Uyo, were kidnapped when gunmen intercepted the bus in Isiala Mbanjo, Imo State.
43	10/2/2022	Enugu	Gunmen attacked a police check point in Enugu and killed eight policemen.
44	12/2/2022	Enugu	Four police men on stop and search were shot dead by gun men. The incident happened in Obiagu community, Amaechi Ekeotu-Agbani Town Road leaving the road deserted
45	23/2/2022	Enugu	Five persons were killed on this day when gunmen suspected to be IPOB militia attacked two polling units in Enugu communities during Local Government elections.
46	15/3/2022	Imo	Two prison warders were killed and several others wounded, vehicles burnt by gunmen in Okigwe town in Imo State.
47	18/3/2022	Imo	Gun Men Attacked The Umuguma Police Station In Owerri West L.G.A.
48	27/3/2022	Imo	Gun men attacked the Ofoko Divisional Police Headquarters situated in the Obowo Local Government Area of Imo State.
49	30/3/2022	Anambra	Several security operatives were killed and several buildings set ablaze when a gang of armed IPOB men attacked the headquarters of Nnewi South Local Government Area at Ukpok, Anambra State
50	1/4/2022	Ebonyi	Police officers reported an attack by gunmen in the Ikwo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The gunmen attacked the policemen who were attached to a construction company working in the area.
51	2/4/2022	Imo	Gun men stormed the Orsu Local Government Area headquarters and bombed it with an Improvised Explosive Devices (IED).
52	7/4/2022	Abia	Soldiers on patrol in Aba in the morning came under attack by unknown gunmen who set ablaze a military tank after an early morning raid.
53	10/4/2022	Imo	Gun men burnt the residence of the commissioner for Justice and Attorney General of Imo State - Cypril Akaolisa.
54	12/4/2022	Anambra	Gun men invaded the Atani Police Station in the Ogaru Local Government Area of Anambra State. Four police men, a female police officer reportedly lost their lives in the shootout.



55	19/4/2022	Anambra	Gunmen attacked the zonal Police Headquarters, zone 13, Ikpo in Dunukofia Local Government Area of Anambra State. A building in the compound was set ablaze while vehicles on the premises were also burnt.
56	29-30/4/2022	Anambra	Gun men killed six persons including a soldier in the Anaocha and Nnewi South Local Government Areas of Anambra State.
57	30/4/2022	Imo	Gun men shot dead and beheaded a couple who were operatives of the Nigerian Army. A.M Linus, a sergeant first class in the Army and his lance corporal wife were on their way to Imo State when the incident happened
58	3/5/2022	Imo	There was uproar in Oguta Local Government Area of Imo State as gunmen killed a Police Officer. The gunmen also chopped off the private part of the victim identified as Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Ukam Efut.
59	8/5/2022	Anambra	Gun men set ablaze a truck loaded with cows along Uga-Ezinifite Road in the Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State.
60	16/5/2022	Anambra	At Eke-Oko, an identified middle aged man wearing a police vest with the inscription "Say No To Crime" and riding on a motorcycle was shot dead by unknown gunmen
61	17/5/2022	Ebonyi	The chairman Ikwo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State Elder Steve Orogwu escaped death as unknown gunmen invaded his country home killing three of his brothers.
62	22/5/2022	Anambra	Militants alleged to be members of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) killed a woman, her four children and six others all of them of Northern extraction in Anambra State.
63	29/5/2022	Imo	The Izombe Police Station in Oguta L.G.A of Imo State was burnt down by hoodlums.
64	31/5/2022	Anambra	Gunmen killed four naval men and three policemen in different locations in Anambra State.
65	20/6/2022	Imo	There was pandemonium at Izombe Market in Oguta Local Government Area of Imo State on Monday as gunmen believed to be enforcing sit-at-home protest detonated a bomb in the densely populated market, forcing both traders and buyers to scamper for safety.
66	25/6/2022	Enugu	There was tension in Enugu as gunmen invaded a drinking joint at Akwuke, Enugu South Local Government Area of the State.
67	29/6/2022	Enugu	Masked gunmen attacked a police checkpoint in Enugu killing two officers on the spot. The incident happened at Garki MTD area in Enugu south local Government Area of the State capital.
68	13/7/2022	Enugu	Gunmen attacked officials of the independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Igboeze North Local Government Area of Enugu State.
69	26/7/2022	Abia	Six mobile policemen attached to the 28 PMF Umuahia and counter terrorists Unit, base 4 Aba were attacked.
70	1/8/2022	Imo	Gunmen killed seven security guards in Umuafom, Orogwe, a community in Owerri West Local Government Area of Imo State.
71	5/8/2022	Imo	Hours after killing four police officers in Imo State, gunmen invaded Izombe community in Oguta Local Government Area of the state shooting sporadically and destroying properties.
72	13/8/2022	Abia	A police officer was abducted when gunmen invaded Mbala Divisional police headquarters in Isuochi Community Umunneochi Local Government Area of Abia State.
73	15/8/2022	Imo	Gunmen shot dead a commercial motorcyclist at Ogbaku market on Owerri Onitsha Road in Owerri Imo State.
74	18/8/2022	Abia	Two gunmen and a soldier attached to the 14 Brigade Ohafia, Abia State were killed in a gun duel in Ohafia.
75	21/8/2022	Anambra	A major of the Nigerian Army Churchil Orji was shot dead in Anambra State.
76	7/9/2022	Enugu	An attack by unknown gunmen left at least six policemen dead in chime Avenue, New Haven, Enugu North Local Government Area of the State.
77	11/9/2022	Anambra	Three escorts in the convoy of senator Ifeanyi Ubah representing Anambra South senatorial zone were feared dead when he was attacked at Enugwu Ukwu in Njikoka Local Government Area of the state.
78	17/7/23	Imo	The traditional ruler of Nguru community in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State Eze James Nnamdi was shot dead by hoodlums suspected to be sit-at-home enforcers.