



LIWURAM
JOURNAL OF THE HUMANITIES
Vol. 26, No. 1, 2026



UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI
FACULTY OF ARTS

Sponsored By



TETFund/DESS/UNI/MAIDUGURI/ARJ/2024–2025/VOL.1

Copyright © 2026- Faculty of Arts, University of Maiduguri

Liwuram: Journal of the Humanities (ISSN: 0189-8388 (Print), 3121-7354 (Online)) is published by Faculty of Arts, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri, Borno State Nigeria.

All Rights Reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information or retrieval system, without the prior permission, in writing, from the publishers or the Editor-in Chief.

Editorial Board Members

Prof. Garba Ibrahim Department of History and Strategic Studies	Editor-in-Chief
Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Bedu Department of Languages and Linguistics	Deputy Editor-in-Chief
Dr. Garba Usman Department of English & Literary Studies	Copy Editor
Dr. Halima B. Shehu Department of History and Strategic Studies	Marketing Editor
Prof. Saleh Ahmad Abulfatahi Department of Arabic Studies	Member
Dr. Jacob Shimrumun Ioraa Department of Theatre Arts	Member
Dr. Dahiru Yahya Department of Arabic Studies	Member
Dr. Aliyu Salihu Department of Islamic Studies	Member

Editorial Advisers

Professor Yakubu Muktar, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri
Professor Aliyu Muhamma Bunza, Usmanu Danfodio University, Sokoto
Professor Oyiniyi Okunoye, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife
Professor Emeritus Jonathan Owens, University of Bayreuth, Germany
Professor Hafizu Miko Yakasai, Bayero University, Kano
Professor Idris Odumo Onche Amali, Federal University, Lafia
Professor Mohammed Inuwa Umar Buratai, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
Professor Roseline Oro Aziza, Delta State University, Abraka
Professor Sani Umar Musa, Usmanu Danfodio University, Sokoto
Professor Ibrahim Muhammad, Bayero University, Kano
Dean Faculty of Arts: Professor Abba Kura Shettima

Editorial Note (2026)

The presentation of this issue of *Liwuram* has been something of a protracted exercise. Unexpected challenges arose to delay us at almost every stage, including the critical issue of sustained funding. It took sometime before we settled back to our tested and trusted practice, and now we are back on course. As promised, this issue features some more improvements. There is now a companion online edition that can be accessed at <https://www.liwuramjournal.com.ng>. Furthermore, each paper is now downloadable with a coloured mast showing all the required details, in addition to the ability to download the whole issue. Another important reason for the delay is in our attempt to secure indexing with the appropriate agencies. It was only after a long struggle that we discovered that there was a long waiting period to enable them convince themselves of the applicants' genuineness. Given the way things are right now, we cannot blame them for implementing their safeguards. We have finally decided to go ahead with our production. We sincerely hope that, by the time of the release of the next issue, some positive progress will be reported.

This issue contains twenty-four (25) articles, contributed by 45 scholars from all over the Nigeria. There are five sections as usual, with Languages, Linguistics and Literature dominating with eleven (11) papers. Public Administration and History have two (2), Sharia and Jurisprudence have (3), Library and Information Technology have three (3) and Mass Communication and Sociology have three (6).

The Editorial Board has introduced additional safeguards regarding research quality and ethics. Starting from this issue, all papers have to undergo double blind assessments and also be subjected to Turnitin Similarity Checker to avoid plagiarism. Contributors are therefore advised to conduct their own plagiarism checks to avoid having their papers rejected. In addition, observations and suggestions from BOTH assessors will be provided to contributors to effect corrections. Failure to do so will lead to rejection. Because of the new threat of AI-generated fake citations, special attention is now given to cited works. Contributors are duly advised to be aware of and beware of this new trend. The University of Maiduguri is in the process of providing more effective guidelines for journals and other publications emanating from its faculties and departments in order to enhance quality and visibility. We shall be in full compliance.

We have encountered several issues with submissions via our email, and we shall announce additional ways of forwarding submissions in our next flyer. Happy reading!

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

1. **Adamu Sani Buba, PhD**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
2. **Ahmad Umar Sanda**, Federal University, Dutsinma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
3. **Ahmed Alhaji Aji**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
4. **Amos Bala**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
5. **Bello Ibrahim**, Al-Qalam University, Katsina. Nigeria.
6. **Dr. Abba Kale**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
7. **Dr. Abdullahi Abubakar Ahmad**, Federal Uni. of Agric & Entrepreneurship, Bama, Nigeria.
8. **Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Bedu**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
9. **Dr. Efe Francis Ejedafiru**, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria.
10. **Dr. Fatima Bukar Bababe**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
11. **Dr. Halima Lami Bello**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
12. **Dr. Hauwa Giwa-Ali**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
13. **Dr. Ibrahim Garba Gwammaja**, National Open University of Nigeria.
14. **Dr. Mohammed Bala Adamu**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
15. **Dr. Muhammed Alamin Deribe**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
16. **Dr. Musa Shuaibu Gadaka**, Yobe State University, Damaturu, Nigeria.
17. **Dr. Mustapha Ibrahim Garba**, Federal University, Dutse, Jigawa State, Nigeria.
18. **Dr. Saleh Jibir**, Yobe State University, Damaturu, Nigeria.
19. **Dr. Suleiman A Jaji**, Formerly of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.
20. **Dr. Usman Abubakar Mustapha**, North East Development Commission, Maiduguri, Nigeria.
21. **Dr. Yagana Goma**, Kashim Ibrahim University, Maiduguri, Nigeria.
22. **Emmanuel Oghneakpobor Emama**, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria.
23. **Fatima Musa**, Federal University, Dutsinma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
24. **Godwin Ototakovie**, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria.
25. **Hadiza Kamilu**, Federal University, Dutsinma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
26. **Hajara Garba Ibrahim**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
27. **Igbi Anthonia Takpobunor**, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria.
28. **Ismail Ilyasu Danladi**, Federal University, Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.
29. **Khadijat Rabi Babajo**, Federal University, Dutsinma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
30. **Mohammed Nur Shuwa**, Curator, Borno Emirate Palace Museum, Shehu`s Palace, Maiduguri.
31. **Muhammad Ahmed Ardo**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
32. **Muhammad Jidda**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
33. **Muhammad Lawan Galdi**, Federal University of Agric & Entrepreneurship, Bama, Nigeria.
34. **Musa Yusuf Ya`u**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
35. **Mustapha Lawal Bagiwa**, Federal University, Dutsinma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
36. **Prof. Esoswo Francisca Ogbomo**, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria.
37. **Professor Abba Isa Tijani**, Former Director-General., National Commission for Museums and Monuments.
38. **Professor Garba Ibrahim**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
39. **Professor Nasir Ahmad Sokoto**, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Nigeria.
40. **Professor Yahuza Abdullah Muhammad**, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
41. **Sa`adu Inusa**, Yobe State University, Damaturu, Nigeria.
42. **Safiya Shettima** University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.
43. **Suleiman Aliyu**, Federal University, Dutsinma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
44. **Usman Ibrahim**, Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Katsina State, Nigeria.
45. **Fred Emi Brisibe**, University of Africa, Toru-Orua, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Badges-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	i
Copyright	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ii
Editorial Board	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iii
Editors' Note	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iv
List of Contributors	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	v
Table of Contents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	vii

SECTION ONE: LANGUAGE, LINGUSTICS & LITERATURE

Dr. Hauwa Giwa-Ali: An Analysis of Political Pronouns and Lexical Items in Late President Muhammadu Buhari's Farewell Speech-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Emmanuel Oghneakpobor Emama & Igbi Anthonia Takpobunor: A Pragmatic Analysis of Hedging in Omoko's <i>Battles of Pleasure</i> -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Ibrahim Garba Gwammaja PhD: A Morphosyntactic Study of Forms and Functions of Hausa Grade 5 Verbal Expressions --	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Dr. Saleh Jibir, Dr. Mustapha Ibrahim Garba & Sa'adu Inusa: Notes on Morphophonology of Pabər/Bura Reduplicated Pluractional Verbs and their Forms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Khadijat Rabi Babajo, Mustapha Lawal Bagiwa & Suleiman Aliyu: Social Media Interaction and the Construction of Pragmatic Meaning in Digital Space: Evidence from Nigerian Online Contexts-----	-	-	-	--	-	--	-	--	-	--	-41
---	---	---	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	-----

Musa Yusuf Ya'u, Amos Bala & Ahmad Umar Sanda: Festin des élites face à la misère populaire: une lecture postcoloniale de <i>De la chaire au trône</i> d'Amadou Koné-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-45
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Musa Yusuf Ya'u, Fatima Musa & Hadiza Kamilu: La déscolarisation des filles comme violence structurelle dans le Roman Francophone Africain: une étude des textes choisis-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-52
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

ناصر أحمد صكتو: جماليات التلاحم الإيماني في البيان النبوي: دراسة تحليلية لحديث "مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم -	60	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
---	----	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

محمد جده : صور الكارثة الطبيعية في مرآة الشعر العربي البرنوي: قصيدة أبابا ثاني " فيضان ميدغري" أنموذجاً	-70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
--	-----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

يهودا عبد الله محمد : التعليم المهني وأثره في تنمية مهارات التوظيف لدى طلبة جامعة ميدغري النيجيرية أحمد الحاج أجي و محمد أحمد ارطو: الإعراب في اللغة العربية: دراسة وصفية تحليلية في الوظيفة الدلالية	82	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
--	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

SECTION TWO: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION & HISTORY

Professor Garba Ibrahim: Trajectory of Local Government Reforms in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges -	-	-	-	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	101
---	---	---	---	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Professor Abba Isa Tijani & Mohammed Nur Shuwa: The Shehu of Borno: Preserving Peace, Culture, and Heritage -	-	-	-	-	--	-	-	--	-	-	112
--	---	---	---	---	----	---	---	----	---	---	-----

SECTION THREE: ISLAMIC SHARIA AND JURIPRUDENCE

Dr. Abdullahi Abubakar Ahmad & Muhammad Lawan Galdi: The Growth and Progress of Islamic Law of Inheritance: A Critical & Historical Study - - - - - 118

Dr. Usman Abubakar Mustapha, Dr. Muhammed Alamin Deribe & Safiya Shettima³: The Relevancy and Admissibility of Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* Crimes in Islamic Law - - - - - 133

Dr. Musa Shuaibu Gadaka¹, & Ismail Ilyasu Danladi أحكام الطلاق وأحواله في الشريعة الإسلامية - - - - - 150

SECTION FOUR: LIBRARY & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Godwin Ototakovie, Dr. Efe Francis Ejedafiru & Prof. Esoswo Francisca Ogbomo: Perception of Librarians towards Knowledge Sharing in University Libraries in Delta State, Nigeria 160

Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Bedu: Digital Technology Documentation and Preservation of Undeveloped Languages in the North-eastern, Nigeria - - - - - 167

Dr. Suleiman A Jaji: Technology, Realism and Creativity in Contemporary African Literature - - - - - 179

SECTION FIVE: MASS COMMUNICATION & SOCIOLOGY

Hajara Garba Ibrahim: Government Media Regulation and Public Trust in Nigerian News Media: A Communication Policy Analysis - - - - - 187

Bello Ibrahim & Usman Ibrahim: Discursive Strategies in “*Good Morning Katsina Programme*” on 92.1 Vision FM Radio- - - - - -192

Dr. Fatima Bukar Bababe, Dr Halima Lami Bello & Dr. Mohammed Bala Adamu: An Assessment of the Effects of Flood in Maiduguri and its Environs on Commercial Activities - - - - - 210

Dr. Abba Kale & Dr. Yagana Goma: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) against Women and Girls in Borno State, Nigeria- - - - - 219

Fred Emi Brisibe: A Classification and Analysis of Props in Tungbo *Ama-Arú* (War Canoe) Performances - - - - - -232

Adamu Sani Buba, PhD: The Influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on Nigeria's Economic Development is Imperialism - - - - - -240

SECTION ONE:
LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS AND LITERATURE



An Analysis of Political Pronouns and Lexical Items in Late President Muhammadu Buhari's Farewell Speech

Dr. Hauwa Giwa-Ali ¹

¹*Department of English and Literary Studies,
University of Maiduguri,
P.M.B. 1069 Maiduguri,
Borno State
Nigeria.*

ABSTRACT

This study is an analysis of political pronouns and lexical item in late President Muhammadu Buhari's (2023) farewell speech to interrogate the complexity of duplicated personality who first as Soldier and now turned politician from the perspective of Van Dijk's (2006) socio-cognitive theory. The data are generated via online download to identify the personal pronouns used by the politician to convinced audience and which the analysis is presented through a statistical table. Rhetorical lexical items are identified and subjected to semantic interpretation based on the context. The findings show that late President Buhari used political pronouns to achieve rhetorical effect. He also used rhetorical lexical items which were not complex to solve.

Keywords

Political discourse, rhetorical and persuasive strategies, rhetorical lexical and ideology

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

Introduction

Political discourse analysis (PDA) is based on power, power abuse or domination through political discourse. Fairclough (1995) and Van Dijk (2006) agree that political discourse analysis (PDA) is above the discursive level as it involves social and political inequality. Every successful politician has to learn how to use persuasive language and rhetoric in order to cajole and win the votes of the citizenry. Late President Muhammadu Buhari was handicapped in the art of oratory because he rose to the position of General in the Nigerian army in 1961. He served as a military head of state from 1983 – 1985. However, in 2003 he entered politics and attempted the Presidential election but failed. This is not suppressing because he had imbibed too much of soldier life to change to politics this is what made his political life interesting for study because he finally succeeded in 2015 he was elected president after twelve (12) years. He was re-elected again in the 2019 – 2023 after eight (8) years. It is not surprising that his farewell speech was full of political pronouns and rhetorical choices to communicate his message.

Objectives of the Study

Identifying the political pronouns and rhetorical lexical items;
Showing their semantic implication;
Drawing a table for qualitative analysis of political pronouns with discussions; and
Explaining instances of rhetoric.

Review of Related Studies

Scholars have researched into theory of ideology and persuasion but their perspective and choice of text differ from this research.

Ehirechi, (2014) critically analysed the ideological uses of models by Nigerian politicians in electioneering campaign. He expunged data from the political manifesto of Barrister Rotimi Akeredolu of the Action Congress of Nigeria.

Dr. Olusegun Mimiko of Labour Party (2012); he used critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the yardstick of analysis. His findings show the modal verbs 'will' and 'have' have the highest frequency of usage conclusively showing the party manifesto full of promises and pledges. The modals 'can', 'I', 'must' were used to indicate obligations, promises and soliciting for support and manipulation.

Rashidi and Rasti, (2012) researched into the textual modes used by the west to impose its own values and ideologies in its media representations with strong sanctions against Iran. Data was obtained from your news report and the stories taken from the foremost us online paper.

Critical discourse Analysis can be traced down history lane to the Frankfurt school before the Second World War II Agger (1992) and Rasmussen, (1996) however the application of CDA came up from the United Kingdom and Australia towards the end of 1970. CDA has also been liaised with other critical philosophical developments in the field of social sciences (socio-Linguistics). Psychology sociology hence its definition from different perspectives; thus, Ibarz and Iniguez (1997), Singh (1996), Thomas (1993) and Fairclough (2001) see CDA as a form of critical social science thereby highlighting the problems envisaged by people in their daily social life and how to overcome such problems. CDA also looks at how social power abuse using dominance inequality enacted, reproduced and resisted in the context of socio-political discourse. As an interdisciplinary analytical viewpoint that analyzes authority, dominance and social inequality. While discourse analysis can be applied to all types of research, CDA focuses on social problems primarily the role of discourse in the creation and recreation of power abuse or domination (Van Dijk, 2001). CDA attempts to create a relationship between language and power. Wodak (2021) says CDA is mainly concerned analyzing with transparent and non-transparent structural relationship of dominance, discrimination, power and control as it is inherent in the language. As for CDA Wodak (2001) claims that critical here means an in-depth study/examination thus dogging up the complexities, educationist dogmatism and dichotomies being self reflexist Fairclough and Wodak (1997) enlist eight categories or principles of CDA as:

- i. Social problems.
- ii. Power relations are discursive.
- iii. Discourse constitutes society and culture.
- iv. Discourse does ideological work.
- v. Discourse is historical.
- vi. The link between text and society is mediated.
- vii. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory.
- viii. Discourse is a form of social action.

CDA is generally used in analyzing texts of politicians in order to reveal their political agenda Cameron, (2001).

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA)

Van Dijk (2006) maintains the focus of PDA is on the analysis of political discourse particularly with the reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination through political discourse.

Persuasion in Language use

Persuasion is an important device that helps politicians to achieve their goals, it helps to convince people faster than any other devices (Ferrari, 2012). Lakoff (1972) defines persuasion as the moves by a particular group of people/party to change the behaviors, feelings intentions or view point of another group/party. Pishghadam and Rasouli (2011) maintains that persuasion is a direct speech act performed by a speaker with the intention of making listener to perform an action thereby reshaping/changing the listeners feeling, behaviors based on his/her ideology. Gass (2018) maintains

that politicians used persuasion to influence their audience and gain their full support. Persuasion and rhetoric can be used interchangeably as was the practices in ancient Greece with philosophers like Plato, Aristotle etc.

Rhetoric: Partington (2010) claims rhetoric in the art of persuasive discourse. Fairclough (2012) on the other hand states that persuasive language is written to cajole/persuade the audience to buy a product with the belief that it is the best. Van Dijk (1997) states that rhetoric is the art or study of persuasive public discourse which employs such Linguistics features as intensifiers, adjectives, lexical items as well as non-linguistic features like metaphor, personification, repetition to make discourse more expressive, persuasive develop an attractive.

Principle of Persuasion:

Cialdini (2001) postulates six principles

- i. **Reciprocation Principle:** This is based on the law of karma which traditionally is believed that whatever one does to others would be revisited on him thus politicians make big promises in return for the people vote.
- ii. **Principle of Scarcity:** Here the politicians create the impression that he is scarce to come by (that is his likes are not many around). Therefore, he is a messiah.
- iii. **The Principle of authority:** The ranking of the person in the society is what matters here; thus, out of respect for a party leader his words are taken for real and he wins the people votes.
- iv. **The principle of Consistency:** Consistency here refer to what is most liked/prioritized or desired by the people; thus, a constant repetition of such promises creates a sense of commitment.
- v. **The principle of Consensus:** This principle is based on majority carry the vote Cialdini (2001) states that consensus is a principle of human behavior whereby people tend to determine what is correct and what is not by examining the action of others i.e. they assume that an action is correct. If another person agrees with it or when they are told that many other persons are doing it. Persuaders in political discourse tend to use this principle to project their candidates as consensus candidates who have gained national acceptance.
- vi. **The principle of liking:** Here the politicians gain peoples votes based on their affection for him because they feel he likes them too i.e he identifies with them.

Rhetorical/Persuasive Strategies

Many linguistic devices are used in discourse to persuade or convince 'the audience' these items are referred to as rhetorical persuasive strategies. (Obeng, 1997; Van Dijk, 2011; Thomas et al 2004) have suggested the following persuasive strategies.

- i. **Creativity:** this helps in structuring a political discourse towards a show of truthfulness.
- ii. **Indirectness:** Van Dijk, (2011) claims this is similar to politeness whereby politicians spread negative ideas about their opponents through invendos metaphors, circumlocution etc.
- iii. **Intertextuality:** Genette, (1983) says it is the presence of a text in another text. Fairclough (1992) claims that all texts are intertextual as every text is a constituent of another. Intertextuality is used by politicians to strengthen their speech and reinforce religious, sociocultural and historical context. Kitawa and Ozerova, (2019); Obeng, (1997) claims that intertextuality increases the credibility of a text and attracts the attention of the audience to believe in the speaker's words.

Choice of lexis: the use of certain words highlights the seriousness of the speaker in concerning people (Aman, 2005). Denham and Roy, (2005) claim the choice of vocabulary provides valuable insight into those words which surround or support a concept.

References: personal pronouns play an important role in sending persuasive message by political leader. Thomas et al (2004) says the first person pronoun 'I' is used in emphasizing concept and in declaring some kind of responsibility 'we' a third person pronoun is used to show togetherness, inclusiveness or exclusiveness is exemplified through the use of 'our', 'we', 'us' inclusive while the pronoun 'they', 'their' them' is exclusive. Other rhetorical devices are metaphor which is a strong persuasive device representing abstract objects as concrete entities. Personification is when non-

human entities are represented as human. Evidence concretizes the speakers claims or statement. Rhetorical questions state the obvious thus they do not need an answer. Analogy creates comparison.

Ideology in politics: from the perspective of CDA Datondji and Amousu, (2019) define ideology as a mental representation of the world with implication in power relation such as those of domination and suppression ideologies are abstract mental system that Dorham (2007) sees ideology as a political term an enlist it different conception thus:

- i. A political believe system
- ii. An action-oriented set of political ideas
- iii. The ideas of the ruling class.
- iv. The world view of a particular social class or social group.
- v. Political ideas that embodied or articulate class or social interest.
- vi. Ideas that propagate false consciousness among the exploited or oppressed.
- vii. Ideas that situate the individuals within a social context and generate a sense of collective belonging.
- viii. An official sanction set of ideas used to legitimize a political system or regime.
- ix. Embracing political doctrine that claim a monopoly of truth.

Theoretical Framework

Various theoretical Frameworks have been propounded for the analysis of CDA but the one theory chosen for analysis in this research is Van Djijs Socio-cognitive Approach (2006).

Van Djijs Socio-cognitive theory has two levels of discourse analysis, macro and micro. Macro level refers to power dominance and inequality between social groups while micro is determined by language use, discourse, verbal interaction and communication. Van djik states that ideological Discourse is generally organized by a general strategy of positive self-presentation (boasting) and negatives other presentation (derogation). In fact, Van Djik claims that CDA should not limit itself to a study of the relationship between discourse and social structure but language use as discourse always presupposes the intervening mental models, goals and general social representations (knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms, values) of language users. Therefore, the study of discourse circulates between society/culture/situation, cognition, Discourse language. Van Djijs socio-cognitive approach tends to make clear ideological dimension of 'us' versus 'them' and demonstrate the discursive structures and strategies used in exercising the dominant power. Unlike other theories Van Djik maintains that discourse structures and social structures can only be related through the mental representation of language users as individuals and as social members. Ideologies are the product of social institution these group specific ideologies in turn shape the discourse or texts produced by members of such group; the discourse produced by such group members are then used to maintain social interaction.

Additionally, the socio-cognitive approach aims to address problems of power abuse, domination and resistance as found in discourse branching into three categories: cognitive, social and discourse components. While the cognitive includes memory, mental (personal cognition of the setting, participants, their identities, roles and relationships action and events) and social cognition (socially shared knowledge, ideologies and opinions), the social components deals with intergroup and intergroup relationships.

Van Djik, (2007) proposes the following in analyzing ideologies:

- i. Emphasize positive-things about us;
- ii. Emphasize negative things about them;
- iii. De-emphasize negative things about us;
- iv. De-emphasize positive things about them;

Other ways of emphasizing or de-emphasizing positive and negative descriptions are headlining foregrounding, Topicalization, active structures, examples and illustrations, contrast paragraph order, metaphors, hyperboles, irony and some other rhetorical devices can be used to emphasize positive

things about ‘us’ and negative things about ‘them’. De-emphasize negative things about us and negative things about them can be done with passive structures, small letter, euphemism, implicit information, back grounding, hedging, vagueness modality disclaimers, synonym, paraphrasing and low-level description in Van Dijk, (2015).

- i. polarization: this concerns representation of the agents i.e the positive representation of the in-group and negative depiction of our group.
- ii. The pronouns “we (us, our) and they (them), there are regarded as political pronouns. They are used to represent the actors and their enemies.
- iii. Emphasis of positive self-description and negative other descriptions.
- iv. Activities; what the ‘in-group’ does and must do are represented
- v. Norms and values; what is good or bad depending on the ideologies of the group is depicted as the justification of what is right might not be generally right in the larger society
- vi. Interest; it refers to the discourse representation of the groups struggle or interest. While analyzing the linguistic items used as persuasive/rhetorical strategies such as creativity, modality, inter textuality, coherence indirectness, reference among others will be used. Even though these strategies have been explained in the literature review. The ideological implications behind the use of such strategies by the politicians will be revealed.

Methodology

Late President Muhammadu Buhari's farewell address was downloaded from the internet.

- i. political pronouns and rhetorical lexical items were expunged as data.
- ii. a qualitative table was drawn for the political pronouns with discussions. Rhetorical lexical items were subjected to semantic interpretation.
- iii. findings were made with conclusion.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table of qualitative analysis of political pronouns, S/N represents sentence number

Paragraph Number	Political Pronouns	Frequency of occurrence	Percentage
2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 15, 16, 17, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 34, 35, 35, 36, 36, 37, 37, 38	I	23	28.0
2, 11, 11, 12, 12, 13, 15, 15, 20, 27, 29, 35	You/Your	12	14.6
3, 4, 5, 5, 9, 9, 18, 21, 24, 25, 26, 31, 36	We	13	15.9
2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 10, 10, 12, 16, 17, 17, 19, 20, 21, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 28, 32	Our	24	29.3
1, 2, 11, 15, 24, 26, 27, 33, 34, 35	My	10	12.2
Total		82	100%

Discussion

The political pronouns used in Late President Buhari's farewell address. ‘I’ is a first person or personal pronoun used by the speaker for emphasis

e.g. ... I address you today ...

... I salute the doggedness ...

... I call on all us ...

Therefore ‘I’ is used emphatically to indicate domination; it occurred twenty three (23) times with a percentage of 28.0%. ‘You’ is a second person pronoun while ‘Your’ shows the possessive aspect.

I congratulate you on the realisation of your dream ...

You have indeed worked for this day and God has crowned your efforts.

‘You’ in the two citations above does not refer to Nigerian but to Bola Ahmed Tinubu who had waited for ten (10) years for the realisation of dream ‘Your’ is possessive because it refers to the realised dream of becoming a President, ‘You’ and ‘Your’ occurred twelve (12) times with 14.6 percent. ‘We’ is a third person pronoun but it is speaker inclusive.

... We must as a nation improve and sustain gains, we make ...

... We increased the ability ...

... We completed age-long projects and processes ...

‘We’ is positively inclusive as the president doesn’t claim all the achievements alone but as a feat achieved by him and the citizenry ‘Our’ is a possessive pronoun speaker inclusive

... To ensure that our democracy remains resilient and our elected representatives ...

... The deftness of our response

... Our administration also provided an enabling environment ...

So ‘our’ exhibits positive possessiveness thus ‘... our democracy ...’, ‘... our response ...’ and ‘... our administration ...’ all indicate collective action whose benefits and appreciation is not just for the President but for the generality of the people. ‘Our’ occurred twenty four (24) times with 29.3 percent.

‘My’ is a first person possessive pronouns it has the lowest frequency occurring only ten (10) times with 12.2%.

... To my brother, friend and fellow ...

... My fellow countrymen ...

... members of the national Assembly deserve my appreciation ...

‘My’ above shows a personal relationship between the speaker and President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, First person pronoun ‘I’ which has 28.0 percent. It is important note that ‘our’ has the quality of being speaker inclusive (that is a modest way of operating closeness to the audience). The first-person pronoun on the other hand refers to the speaker directly. The third person pronoun ‘we’ follows closely with 15.9 percent. Hence the speaker uses it to create a sense of inclusiveness/belonging in the achievements made by the Buhari administration. The second person ‘you’ and the possessive ‘your’ has 14.6 percent. The speaker possessive pronoun ‘my’ is used the least used with a frequency of ten (10) and 12.2 percent.

Graphological Analysis

The paragraphs were deliberately numbered thus showing the different ideas discussed in each paragraph. While maintaining intertextuality as all the speech is about the achievements of Buhari’s government during his eight year tenure. His address mode showed a sense of Cordiality:

My fellow Nigerian brother sisters and friends of Nigeria.

Fellow Nigerians, on the strength of your overwhelming support..

Capitalization appeared in the middle of sentences to create importance and emphasis on particular words such as: ‘God’, ‘Nigerian’, ‘Nigeria’, ‘Presidential Election’, ‘Republic’, ‘presidential Candidates’, ‘God-Father’, ‘Efficient’, ‘Productive’, ‘Incorruptible and Citizen-Oriented (EPIC)’, ‘Nigeria Re-Birth’ thus these key words throw high on the important aspect of the farewell speech even though the paragraphs were numbered the grammatical rules of opening sentences were not observed as most sentences opened with conjunctions and prepositions thus stylishly introducing intertextuality as each paragraph is a continuation of the ideas previously earmarked thus giving free-flow.

Rhetorical Lexical Items

Democratically elected...

Well-endowed

Peaceful transition

Entrenched
Redress
Doggedness + resilience
Strength of individual
- dream -
Burning passion
Crowned
Overwhelming support
Political God-Father
Well-resourced
Global economic downturns
Temporary pain
Brigandage and carnage
Unlawful captivity
Patriotism
Progressively
Credible
Revamping economy
Mark and celebrate
Promise
Well resource candidates
Strategies
Despite
Banditry
Terrorist
Arm robbery
Nigeria Re-Birth

I address you today in my last assignment as a democratically elected president.

----- democratically elected? Are two lexical items which indicate that he was voted into office as president of our well-endowed Nation because Nigeria is bless with natural resources such as crude oil, food stuff etc.

Hence endowed means gifted by God, hence with a deep sense of gratitude to God, a great deal of application to the Nigerian people and a modest sense of fulfilment. The lexical item gratitude and appreciation of synonyms which shows his recognition of how the high regard Nigerians have for him.

‘Mark’ and ‘celebrate’ thus marking and celebrating the end of one government and beginning of a new government peacefully without any problem. The politics in Nigeria is becoming firmly set rooted, firmly established entrenched as people have a better understanding **‘redress’** where people are allowed to complain and make a case in court if they feel they have been wrongly perceived

Doggedness and resilience; the outgoing president Muhammad Buhari saluted the president aspirants for their unwavering committed and ability to withstand losing at the polls despite all else.

Overwhelming support; unanimous support without tribalism.

Promise; to do the correct things that would make impact on the lives of Nigerians and expectation to get voted into office.

Progressively; moving away from the path of correctness. Progressively here is the diversion the country from the lane/ path of correctness.

Credible; here refers to authenticity of that results of the votes casted because the elections were fair and transparent and rigging had almost been wiped away.

Political God-Father: the new trend highlights poor people winning election through vote and not through Godfathering, king maker or an exchange of money for votes.

Well resource candidates: rich contestants.

Strategies: indicate measures put in place to ensure the economy remained afloat during global world economic crisis.

Revamping economy: Updating/ modernizing the economy which resulted in temporary pain suffering but it yielded positive results to the advantage of citizens.

Banditry, Terrorist, arm robbery and other criminal all acts of robbery by violence, lawlessness, organized crime all became reduced.

Brothers keeper: having a sense of responsibility being answerable for the wellbeing of not just your family but humanity.

Despite: he craving to get rid of corruption in Nigeria

Nigeria Re-birth: is a figurative phrase because it refers to the reawakening to a new beginning where the Nigerian citizens will thrive in peace after undergoing reforms that in at producing an efficient, productive, incorruptible and citizen- oriented federal civil service.

Findings

The deliberate choice of the pronouns 'I', 'You', 'Your', 'we', 'our' and 'my' aligns with the ideology of polarization which fits the macro level of analysis propounded by Van Dijk (2006) which is ideological discourse generally organized by a strategy of positive self-presentation (achievements) while presenting the other party negatively. The socio-cognitive approach clarifies the ideology of 'us' versus 'them'. The ideology of 'Political God-Fatherism' and well 'resourced person' exhibits the theory of power dominance and inequality within social groups. Even political brigandage, carnage and unlawful captivity are used to present the ugly activities of the political period mildly.

Conclusion

Late President Muhammadu Buhari had problem aligning his straight personality as a soldier to the personality of full-fledged politician which is full of diplomatic and persuasive, mostly unreliable.

We are already seeing the outcome of this process as it provided an even playing field where persons without any political God-Father or access to money defeated other well-resources candidates.

Thus while believing he won the election without any God-Father, he failed to realise that it wasn't his popularity that voted him into office, he never got to do the correct things as he had wished because the political God-Fathers and well-resourced persons who got him in made the administration unaccountable, unlawful with an increase of insecurity; thus he said:

I had grown tired of watching the country progressively moving away from the path of correctness.

He had completely lost control and left the government in the hands of hooligans and thugs. 'Fellow Nigerians' you know how dear the desire in my heart is to rid the country of corrupt practices that had consistently diminished our efforts to be a great country. Buhari failed to realise that ruling a people at gun-point is having the people obey the last command, while ruling as a democratically elected government means the three arms representing the people (house of assembly, representative and senate) have a say in fact even the president has to present bills for their approval.

REFERENCES

- Agger, B. (1992). *The Discourse of Domination: From the Frankfurt School to postmodernism*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Ahmed, F. (2017). Knowledge Sharing in a Non-native Language Context: Challenges and strategies. *Journal of Information Science*, 44(2), 248–264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016555151683607>

- Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching Languages to Young Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cialdini, R. B. (2001). *Influence: Science and Practice* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Clayman, S. E., & Heritage, J. (2002). *The News Interview: Journalists and public figures on the air*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Darweesh, A. D., & Muzhir, H. D. (2016). Representation of the Syrian Crisis in the American Political Speeches: A critical discourse analysis. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 3(1).
- Derakhshani, M., Nayif Qaiwer, S., Kazemian, B., & Mohammadian, S. (2021). Critical Discourse Analysis and Rhetorical Tropes in Donald Trump's First Speech to the UN. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 11(10), 1224–1236.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical Discourse Analysis. In T. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction* (Vol. 2, pp. 258–284). London: Sage.
- Kazemian, B., & Hashemi, S. (2014). Critical Discourse Analysis of Barack Obama's 2012 Speeches: Views from Systemic Functional Linguistics and Rhetoric. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(6), 1178–1187. <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.4.6.1178-1187>
- Kitaeva, E., & Ozerova, O. (2019). Intertextuality in Political Discourse. In O. Cakirtas (Ed.), *Language, Power, and ideology in political writing: Emerging research and opportunities* (pp. 143–170). IGI Global.
- Lakoff, R. (1972). Language in Context. *Language*, 48(4), 907–927. <https://doi.org/10.2307/411994>
- Obeng, S. G. (1993). The Pragmatics of Pronominal Usage. Paper presented at the Linguistics Association of Ghana Meeting, Accra, Ghana.
- Partington, A. (2010). *Persuasion in Politics: A text*. London: LED Edinzioni Universitarie.
- Partington, A. (2018). Corpora and Discourse: A Most Congenial Relationship. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 9(3), 401–419.
- Pishghadam, R., & Rasouli, P. (2011). A Cross-Linguistic Study of Persuasive Strategies Used in Persian and English language. *Research Journal of International Studies*, 22, 7–17.
- Rashidi, N., & Rasti, A. (2012). Doing (in)justice to Iran's Nuke Activities: A Critical Discourse Analysis of News Reports of Four Western Quality Newspapers. *Australian Journal of Maritime and Freshwater Research*, 34(5), 805–811.
- Thomas, L., Wareing, S., Singh, I., Stilwell Peccei, J., Thornborrow, J., & Jones, J. (2004). *Language, Society and Power* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 4(2), 249–283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926593004002006>
- Van Dijk, T. (1993). *Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis* Sage publications.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1995). *Discourse as Social Interaction*. Sage.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2009). Discourse, Power, and Access. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed., pp. 85–106). London: Sage.



A Pragmatic Analysis of Hedging in Omoko's *Battles of Pleasure*

Emmanuel Oghneakpobor Emama¹ & Igbi Anthonia Takpobunor²

^{1,2}Department of English and Literary Studies,
Delta State University, Abraka,
Delta State
Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the pragmatic analysis of hedges in *Peter Omoko's Battles of Pleasure*. The study explores how hedge expressions function in dramatic discourse and how characters employ them to achieve communicative goals within interpersonal interactions. Although previous studies on Omoko's works have largely centred on thematic and literary concerns, little or no attention has been paid to the pragmatic strategies of hedges. This study, therefore, fills this gap by examining the forms and functions of hedges in the play. The study is anchored on Leech's Politeness Principles as its theoretical framework, which provides a basis for understanding how hedges contribute to politeness strategies, face management, and the maintenance of social harmony among characters. The study's data are drawn from selected dialogues in the play, and the analysis adopts Prince et al.'s (1982) classification of hedges. This classification categorises hedges into adaptors, rounders, plausibility shields, and attribution shields, thereby offering a systematic framework for identifying and analysing hedging devices in the text. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the study analyses instances of hedging to determine their pragmatic functions in relation to politeness, mitigation, uncertainty, and Power relations. The findings reveal that hedges serve as essential pragmatic tools in the play, enabling characters to soften assertions, express tentativeness, negotiate interpersonal relationships, and strategically manage conflict. The study concludes that hedging significantly enhances the play's communicative dynamics and contributes to a deeper understanding of pragmatic strategies in Nigerian dramatic discourse.

Keywords

hedging, pragmatics, interpersonal discourse, politeness strategies

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Conversation is not just an exchange of grammatical meaning. An interplay of influences: shared social rules, context, principles of conversational cooperation, and politeness conventions, is critical to sustaining meaningful conversation. Hedging is one of the most common pragmatic principles for projecting conversational politeness, as it blunts directness by vitiating the force of the speaker's assertion. Lakoff (1972:2) defines hedging as "words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy". Fuzzy in his definition implies words that can make a statement less clear or absolute. This indicates that hedging enables a speaker's expression to be less absolute and open to modification. Apart from its role in blunting directness, hedging also encases the pragmatics of ambivalence. In this vein, Hyland's (1998:1) definition of hedging encompasses the pragmatics of "lack of commitment to the truth of the proposition or a desire not to express that commitment categorically". Similarly, Crompton (1997) sees hedging as a linguistic strategy allowing the author to avoid committing to the (absolute) truth of a proposition (or statement or claim). This implies that hedging is a conversational strategy employed by speakers to reduce the risk of committing oneself. Hedging maintains and regulates the relationship between communicants and plays an important role in harmonising communication, which aligns with Tchizmarova's (2005) definition of hedges. Tchizmarova (2005) defines hedging as a strategy that mitigates the harshness or hostility of the force of one's actions, softens the force of utterances and makes them more acceptable to the hearer.

Meanwhile, Weinreich (1966) states that hedged words are described by Coates (2004, P. 88) as "Linguistic forms that express the speaker's certainty or uncertainty about the proposition under discussion, such as 'I think, I am sure, you know, sort of and perhaps'". Hedging allows us to disagree without criticising others' perspectives. This implies that during a dialogue, one does not totally or directly tell the other person or interlocutor that he/she is wrong; rather, he/she uses hedges such as "I am not entirely sure you are right". Thus, hedging is employed to disagree with a proposition without soiling the conversation or downplaying the person's opinion. In the same vein, hedging is used to prevent communication issues or even breakdown. This study, therefore, investigates the pragmatics of hedges in Peter Omoko's *Battles of Pleasure*. The specific goal of the study is to identify the hedging devices employed by the characters in Peter Omoko's *Battles of Pleasure*.

Literature Review

The categorisation of hedges is generally underpinned by the peculiarities of the words or phrases that introduce them and the underlying pragmatic import. Prince et al. (1982) classify hedges into two types: approximators and shields. Shields are further divided into adaptors, rounders, plausibility, and attributive shields. Adaptors are used when the speaker adapts an existing Word to a new situation to show that the actual situation is not identical to, but is close to, the prototypical situation. Such adaptors tend to be comparative. Adaptors can also be used to lessen the impact of a statement that is criticising the hearer. Examples are 'His feet were sort of blue' Her face is pale'. Examples of an adaptor are signalled phrases like 'sort of, some, little bit, kind of, like, and others. Rounders are used when the speaker does not want or need to give exact information. Rounders represent a class of hedges that modify the propositional content presented in figures, statistics, and measurements. Examples include: 'She is about 6. Ft tall' and 'They are roughly 15 in number'. Plausibility shields indicate the speaker's uncertainty and doubt about the proposition's content. Plausibility shields make a speaker disclaim responsibility for the general truth of the information conveyed. Examples are 'I guess you are right' and 'I think his feet are blue'. Finally, Attribution shields are used when the speaker wants to attribute the belief expressed in the proposition to someone else. Here, the speaker shifts responsibility to a third party. Examples include 'according to her estimate, the heart rate was back in two minutes' (Salager-Meyer, 1995).

Interest in the linguistics of hedging is longstanding and has attracted considerable scholarly attention from diverse disciplines and across a variety of discourse genres. With a Focus on the 'epistemic modality' in scientific texts in the context of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and the Electronic Scholastic Test (EST), Hyland (1994) avers that the use of modals and certain subsets of lexical resources in specialised fields of English-mediated pedagogy pose hedge-based communicative challenges. Similar studies have been done in the fields of medicine (Salvager-Meyer, 1994) and business (Clemen, 1996). Those studies essentially focus on issues ranging from intelligibility challenges. Ato significant points in his study, which was the distinction he made between writers' hedging on the one hand and attribution to a higher authority on the other. One striking feature of the preceding studies is that the pragmatics of hedging does not drive them, but rather the challenges of intelligibility that hedging poses in specialised academic texts.

Studies on the interplay between hedges and politeness in interpersonal discourse are dominant. This is unsurprising, arising from the overarching roles that hedges play within the matrix of daily human interactions. Thus, a plethora of studies have examined the phenomenon within the framework of politeness principles and how they function to sustain politeness (Jingwei, 2013; Wang, 2016; Gayane, 2019). In the legal context, the communicative role of hedges as tools to elicit sympathy, express politeness, avoid responsibility, and mitigate the severity of legal pronouncements was the focus of Fitri et al. (2019) and Yan (2023). Hedging has also attracted research in cross-cultural context (Reza, 2007; Samaiea et al., 2014), in Newspaper discourse (Anisa, 2018), in the rhetoric of academic discourse (Marta, 2017; Gribanova & Gaidukova, 2019)) . Generally, less research attention has been given to the pragmatics of hedging in dramatic text. In the literary context, prose genre seem to enjoy greater investigative priority. For example, Ra'ouf (2025) examined Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, *Man and Superman*, and *Pygmalion* to determine the frequency of lexical

and syntactic hedges in the texts and asserts that the most dominant hedge device is the modal auxiliary. He avers that the modal-underpinned hedge devices are pragmatic strategies of avoidance, concealment, de-personalisation, persuasion, and politeness. Hasan (2023:1) reflects the related investigative concerns in selected European dramatic text and observes that context is key in determining the pragmatic force in approximator, modal, and epistemic verb-underpinned hedges. Studies have also been done on *Pride and Prejudice* (Lu & Gao, 2019), William Gibson's *The Miracle worker* (Fauziyah, 2007).

In the Nigerian context, numerous multidisciplinary studies on hedging have been conducted from the perspective of political discourse (Emmanuel, 2026), In media discourse (Nneka, 2021), in newspaper editorials (Omo & Idegbekwe, 2017), in academic text (Mele & Maina, 2022), and in gender studies (Dozzie et al, 2020). in the literary context however, little investigative attention has been given to the pragmatics of hedging. A few notable studies on the subject matter include Nwoko's (2016) study on Gimba's *witness to Tears*. There is therefore a significant gap in the literature of pragmatics of hedging in literary text in the Nigerian context. The study on Omoko's use of hedging in dramatic dialogue is particularly relevant.

Theoretical Framework: Politeness Principles

Politeness principles were developed by Geoffrey Leech (1983). Politeness for Leech was all about strategic conflict avoidance and showing respect for others. Leech defines politeness as a set of behaviors between participants that show feelings of comity. Put simply, this model, unlike Brown and Levinson's model of politeness, shows regard for others rather than the self. Everyone has a desire, a self-image, a way they wish to be seen; hence, to see them in that Light, one needs to be careful while engaging in a conversation with them.

Politeness principles are guidelines that shape communication to maintain social harmony, respect and cooperation; thus, this study adopts Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle as its theoretical framework for analysing hedging in Peter Omoko's *Battles of Pleasure*. Leech extends Grice's Cooperative Principle by arguing that effective communication is not just about truth and clarity but also about maintaining social harmony. He therefore identifies six maxims—Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, and Sympathy—which regulate polite interaction. Hedges are examined here as pragmatic strategies through which these maxims are realised in discourse. The Tact Maxim encourages minimising costs to others and maximising their benefits, often achieved through hedges that make directives or requests less face-threatening. The Generosity Maxim emphasises self-denial and benefit to others, explaining why speakers hedge when offering help or commitments. The Approbation Maxim requires minimising dispraise and maximising praise of others; hedges such as "sort of" or "I think" allow speakers to avoid sounding too blunt in judgments.

The Modesty Maxim stresses self-downgrading, often expressed in hedges like "maybe I am not sure, but..." that reduce self-assertiveness. Similarly, the Agreement Maxim promotes harmony by minimising disagreement and maximising concord; hedging is instrumental here, as phrases like "perhaps you are right" or "to some extent" help reduce open conflict. Lastly, the Sympathy Maxim urges minimising antipathy and maximising sympathy, and hedges soften unpleasant news or criticism to show concern for others' feelings. In *Battles of Pleasure*, the characters engage in conflicts of interest, power struggles, and persuasive interactions, making hedging a crucial pragmatic tool. Through Leech's framework, hedging can be interpreted as a politeness strategy that manages face wants, mitigates confrontation, and sustains social equilibrium within the play. Thus, this study employs Leech's Politeness Principle as its theoretical lens to explain how hedging functions beyond linguistic structure—serving as a pragmatic device that reflects politeness, Power negotiation, and relational management in Omoko's dramatic discourse.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design. It involves identifying and interpreting the hedging devices Peter Omoko uses in *Battles of Pleasure*. Thus, the extract from the text will form the data for the study. The analysis focused on the two categories of hedges put forward by Prince et al. (1982): Approximators and Shields. Hedging words across four text categories were identified and interpreted according to the messages they conveyed. The analysis focuses on the various hedging categories, such as adaptors, rounders, plausibility shields, and attribution shields, which are generally grouped into approximators and shields.

Adaptors

Adaptors are used when the speaker adapts an existing Word to a new situation to show that the actual situation is not identical to, but is close to, the original. Adaptors are used to lessen the impact of a statement that is criticising the hearer. Consider the following excerpts from the texts.

Excerpt 1

OLOBA: ...Saniyo, hope you are not sick? Your eyes are red **like** the buluku of the Odede of ade cult. (p. 13)

The setting of this excerpt is a conference, which happens to be the Igede song-and-dance group's meeting place. The people present are: Saniyo, Odjiko, Oloba, and Amudu. The goal of this excerpt is to identify what was wrong with Saniyo, who was moody, because he was the subject of ridicule during the just-concluded performance by the Ubigen group.

The hedged Word in the excerpt is "like", which is an adverb. The speaker Oloba uses it to soften his claim through comparison, making it sound less confrontational or more tentative. Oloba used the hedged Word "like" to avoid making a harsh, face-threatening statement that would disrespect Saniyo's feelings.

Excerpt 2

OLOBA: Do not tell me you are still reminiscing about the event at the last performance. You are sad **as if** the heavens have refused us a favour. But you cannot remain like this all day (p. 13)

The setting is still at the conference hall of the Igede song and dance group. The goal of the excerpt is to pacify Saniyo, so he will not remember the shame and humiliation inflicted on him by the Ubigen group.

The hedged Word or phrase in the excerpt is "as if," which is an adverb. Oloba minimises the cost of a potentially face-threatening act by avoiding making a direct claim about the cause of Saniyo's sadness.

Rounders

Rounders are used when the speaker does not want to give exact information. Rounders represent a class of hedges which modify the propositional content presented in figures, statistics, time and measurement. Below are a few excerpts to explain rounders' hedges in the text.

Excerpt 1

OLOLO: That is also what the elders are saying. We all pray it turns out so. Remember, they all predicted the same thing last year. At the end, what did we see? The blame was apportioned to the dry season, which came rather too late. Hunger almost drove **some** families out of the trade. It was only the brave like us who ventured deep into the forest and found shallow streams that sustained us for the period, with huge amounts of debt piling up in anticipation of the next fishing season. (p.23)

The excerpt describes a scene where the Igede song and dance group welcomes their new composer, Ololo, while also reflecting on the harvest from the previous year.

The Word "some" functions as a rounder hedge because it deliberately introduces vagueness or imprecision. Instead of providing an exact quantity or detail, the Ololo softens his statement by giving an approximate or indefinite reference. This strategic vagueness aligns with Leech's Politeness Principle, particularly the Maxim of Tact and the Maxim of Agreement. By avoiding exactness, the speaker minimises the risk of sounding too blunt, authoritative, or confrontational. Thus, "some" operates as a politeness strategy that reduces potential imposition and promotes conversational harmony.

Excerpt 2

AMUDU: I was told that most of our brothers who were fishing in Ayakoromo sold part of their fishing gear just to meet up for the next fishing season. (p. 23)

In this excerpt, Amudu, Ololo, and Saniyo are engaged in a conversation that highlights the impact of the previous year's poor harvest. The discussion reveals that scarcity forced some fishermen to sell part of their fishing equipment to survive and prepare for the upcoming season.

In Amudu's remark, the use of the Word "most" functions as a rounder hedge because it conveys a broad generalisation without giving exact numbers. By stating "most of our brothers," he implies that a significant number of them sold part of their fishing equipment, but he avoids committing to precise details. This lack of specificity makes the statement sound convincing while still allowing for exceptions, since "most" does not necessarily mean "all." As a rounder hedge, it tones down the claim, making it less rigid and more flexible. In line with Leech's politeness principle, the choice of "most" enables Amudu to discuss a serious matter without exaggeration or strict accuracy, thereby reducing the risk of sounding harsh or overly critical.

Excerpt 3

ODJIKO: This is how we have planned it. A few moments before our performance, we shall select some youths who will rush into the dance ring and stand in the centre of the stage. (P.41)

This scene focuses on Ololo, Odjiko, and Amudu as they map out their performance in Light of the information, they have received about Logbo's weakness.

In Odjiko's statement, the expressions "few moments" and "some youths" serve as rounder hedges, deliberately introducing vagueness and avoiding exactness. By saying "a few moments before our performance", Odjiko does not commit to a specific time, thereby keeping the plan flexible and less imposing on others. Similarly, "some youths" avoids the rigidity of stating an exact number, which softens the directive tone of the utterance. These choices reflect Leech's politeness principle, particularly the maxim of tact, which emphasises minimising imposition and allowing room for interpretation. Thus, the use of rounder hedges here helps Odjiko maintain cooperation, reduce face-threatening acts, and make his statement more acceptable to his audience.

Excerpt 4

ODJIKO: That is not going to be a problem since we have a lot of them around. (p. 41)

This scene focuses on Ololo, Odjiko, and Amudu as they map out their performance in Light of the information, they have received about Logbo's weakness.

In Odjiko's statement, the phrase "a lot" functions as a rounder hedge because it expresses quantity in an imprecise and non-committal way. Instead of providing an exact number of available people, Odjiko uses a vague quantifier that suggests abundance without specifying a number. This vagueness serves two purposes: first, it downplays the need for accuracy, and second, it reassures others without binding him to a definite figure. In line with Leech's politeness principle, particularly the maxim of tact, the hedge minimises the risk of contradiction or dispute that might arise if a precise number were given. By using "a lot", Odjiko creates a cooperative and face-saving expression that reassures his team members while keeping his claim flexible.

Excerpt 5

SANIYO: Hmm... **Some** of the statements in the song are not too direct. (P.48)

In this scene, the Igede song-and-dance group is making final preparations for the performance. The participants present are Ololo, the Curator, Saniyo, and Moshue.

In Saniyo's remark, the use of the Word 'some' acts as a rounder hedge because it creates vagueness and avoids full commitment. Rather than stating 'all the statements' or identifying particular lines in the song, he employs the indefinite quantifier 'some,' which leaves the reference open-ended. This choice makes his comment less direct and more polite, allowing for greater interpretive flexibility.

According to Leech's politeness principle, particularly the tact maxim, this hedge softens the force of criticism, thereby reducing potential conflict and safeguarding the hearer's face. In this way, 'some' as a rounder hedge enables Saniyo to raise concern without appearing too harsh or imposing.

Shields

Plausibility hedges indicate uncertainty. It expresses a speaker's doubt concerning the content. Plausibility shields make a speaker's statement less categorical and are intended to help the speaker disclaim responsibility for the general truth of the information conveyed. The following excerpts are some of the hedges in the text.

Excerpt 1

ODJIKO: It **could** just be a mere coincidence ... you have been ... I mean, you are just a mere victim of a masked character. **I still do not think** someone from this village told them anything. (p. 14)

The scene is set in the conference hall of the Igede Song and Dance Group. It centers on Odjiko reassuring Saniyo, urging him not to be overly disturbed by the ridicule he received from the Ubigen group, while emphasising that no member of their community had revealed the information to the rival team. In Odjiko's speech, the expressions "could" and "I still do not think" function as plausibility hedges that reduce the force of his claims. This type of hedging reflects Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle, especially the tact maxim, which emphasises minimising cost or imposition on the hearer. By saying "it could just be a mere coincidence," Odjiko presents the matter as a possibility rather than a definite fact, which helps to soften his stance and avoid sounding confrontational. Similarly, the phrase "I still do not think someone from this village told them anything" is presented as a personal viewpoint rather than an outright denial, thereby safeguarding Saniyo's positive face and easing any feelings of blame. In this way, Odjiko's choice of words is both polite and calculated, as it reassures Saniyo by downplaying the idea of betrayal within the community and framing the ridicule as something that can be explained without internal fault.

Excerpt 2

LOGBO: They **seem** helpless ... helpless like me. They took our blood, urine, pressure, this and that and went to their coven. We were asked to go and return the following day. When I got there the following morning, the big bald doctor walked up to me. "Are you Logbo?" Yes. I am, I replied. Hello, then invited me to his office. Do you know what he did? He looked at me and said, "Mr. Logbo. **I think** the problem is with you. The results from the test show that your wife is perfectly okay" ... (p. 36)

The setting of this scene is Ekakoto's residence, who is a member of the Ubigen troupe. The discussion focuses on the information Logbo received during his consultation with the gynecologist. Participants in the dialogue include Ekakoto, Logbo, Mukoro, and Ololo. In the conversation, the expressions "seem" and "I think" function as plausibility hedges, reducing the speaker's certainty and presenting the statement as a personal perception rather than an absolute fact. The Word "seem" conveys that what is being said is only an appearance or impression, not a definite reality, thereby allowing space for alternative interpretations. Similarly, "I think" frames the claim as the speaker's opinion rather than an objective truth, softening the force of the assertion. Both hedges serve to

protect the speaker's face by avoiding over-commitment, which aligns with Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle, particularly the maxim of tact, since they minimise the risk of imposing a rigid or confrontational stance on the hearer.

Excerpt 3

MUKORO: **I am afraid; I think** you should ask Hwofadon at this time who the birth father of her children is. Our people have a saying: only a woman knows the real Father of her children. (p.37)

Set in Ekakoto's house where the discussion revolves around Logbo's failure to get his second wife, Sati, pregnant, despite already having five children with his first wife, Hwofadon. Mukoro remarked that rather than assuming he is truly the father of Hwofadon's children, Logbo should seek clarification. The phrases "I am afraid" and "I think" function as plausibility hedges because they lower the speaker's level of certainty. From a pragmatic perspective, "I am afraid" operates as a politeness marker that prepares the listener for an unfavorable message. It softens the effect of potentially face-threatening content and corresponds with Leech's tact maxim, which emphasises reducing imposition. Likewise, "I think" presents the statement as the speaker's opinion rather than an undeniable fact, thereby weakening its force and leaving room for the listener's interpretation. This connects to the modesty maxim, since the speaker avoids claiming complete authority over the truth. Together, these hedges help to regulate social interaction by easing the delivery of the message, promoting harmony, and showing respect to the hearer.

Excerpt 4

EKAKOTO: I am not pleased with the line that says... **I suggest** dropping the entire line.

CURATOR: You have a point there, Ekakoto. If those lines are dropped, will they affect our message in the song?

MOSHUE: ... **I do not think** so. But we shall look into it. (p. 54)

The excerpt takes place during the Ubigen group's final rehearsal, where they were refining their song. Ekakoto noticed an issue in one of the lines and proposed that certain lines be removed. The expressions "I suggest" and "I do not think so" function as plausibility hedges, softening the force of the speakers' contributions and avoiding making their statements sound overly absolute. When Ekakoto says "I suggest," he frames his opinion as a recommendation rather than a command, leaving others the option to accept, reject, or modify it. This hedging aligns with politeness strategies, since it minimises imposition and respects the group's collaborative decision-making. Similarly, Moshue's "I do not think so" reduces the certainty of his response by presenting it as a personal belief rather than a definite fact. This phrasing also leaves space for alternative viewpoints, signaling openness to further discussion. Both hedges thus promote cooperation and reduce the potential for conflict within the group.

Excerpt 5

OLOBA: **I think** we should all be careful. The designs of a man's heart are different from those of the face. Or is it not the teeth that one uses in laughing that he also uses in biting?

The scene takes place in the Igede group's conference hall, where the members gather to console Saniyo, whom the Ubigen group had mocked during the previous performance. At the same time, Oloba urges caution, believing that the Ubigen group may have secretly placed spies within the Igede community.

The phrase "I think" functions as a plausibility hedge because it softens the degree of certainty in the speaker's statement. Instead of asserting the claim as an absolute fact, the speaker presents it as a personal view, which sounds less forceful. From the perspective of Leech's Politeness Principle, this reflects the tact maxim, since it minimises the imposition on the hearer by allowing space for disagreement or alternative opinions. At the same time, it also aligns with the modesty maxim, as the

speaker avoids presenting themselves as the sole authority on the matter. In essence, "I think" reduces the risk of face-threat, showing respect for the hearer's perspective while keeping the statement open-ended.

Excerpt 6

SANIYO: Please permit me to observe this. I hope all of us here are honourable enough to keep whatever we plan here today until the songs are finally commissioned for singing. Because you know, the walls have ears too (p. 25 & 26)

In the excerpt, the scene is set at an Igede group meeting, where members are planning to create a stronger song for the upcoming festival. Because of suspicions that spies might be among them, Saniyo felt compelled to ask for reassurance that everyone could be trusted to keep their plans confidential.

'I hope' functions as a plausibility hedge because it frames his concern as a hopeful expectation rather than a direct accusation or demand. Pragmatically, this reduces the force of his utterance: instead of bluntly saying "All of us must be honourable enough to keep the plan secret," he softens it by presenting it as something he wishes or expects.

Through this hedging, Saniyo avoids sounding confrontational or distrustful toward the group. In terms of Leech's Politeness Principle, it reflects the tact maxim by minimising imposition, and also the approbation maxim since it assumes goodwill and integrity among the members. By phrasing his concern as "I hope," he protects the hearers' positive face (their desire to be respected and valued) while still drawing attention to the need for secrecy.

Therefore, "I hope" here is a politeness device that mitigates potential conflict, expresses expectation less forcefully, and strengthens group solidarity.

Attribution Shields

Attribution hedges are used when the speaker wants to attribute the belief expressed in the proposition to someone else. Here, the speaker shifts responsibility to a third party. The following excerpts are some of the incidents in the text.

Excerpt 1

OLOBA: I think he is still there. It was only last week that I saw Titi, the second wife of his younger brother, Takpan Okwagbe. She confirmed that her husband, Takpan and his brother, Ololo, are still in Odimodi. According to her, she only came to sell some goods to increase her food stock. (p. 17)

The scene takes place at the Igede meeting ground, where Oloba and the others are deliberating on how to bring Ololo into their team. In the discussion, Oloba shares with the group the information he received from Titi, Ololo's younger brother's wife, about where her brother-in-law is

In the excerpt where Oloba tells the others about Ololo's whereabouts, he frames the report with an attribution like: "According to Titi, Ololo's younger brother's wife..." Here, the word "according" functions as an attribution hedge, as Oloba deliberately shifts ownership of the information to Titi rather than presenting it as his own certain knowledge. By doing this, he reduces his personal responsibility for the claim's accuracy and allows the group to evaluate the reliability of Titi's account. Pragmatically, this hedging strategy helps Oloba maintain credibility in the meeting. If the information turns out to be wrong, he cannot be directly blamed, since he has already indicated that the source is external. It also softens the force of his contribution, avoiding the impression that he is imposing his version of events on the group. In this way, "according" functions both as a hedge of attribution and as a politeness device that supports cooperative group dynamics

Excerpt 2

OLOLO: Fine, Logbo, Logbo, what do you think of him? Is there no skeleton in his cupboard?

ODJIKO: **I was told**...em ...things have not been well with him recently.

OLOLO: **I was told** that we were told that it is an ill report. We need facts.

This excerpt takes place during a conversation among Ololo, Amudu, Saniyo, and Odjiko as they deliberate on what to mock Logbo with.

The phrase "was told" functions as an attribution hedge, since Odjiko frames his remark as something he heard from others rather than as firsthand knowledge. By doing so, he shifts responsibility for the accuracy of the claim away from himself and weakens the firmness of his statement. In pragmatic terms, this hedge reduces certainty and introduces doubt, suggesting that the information is second-hand and might not be fully reliable.

Excerpt 3

AMUDU: Hmm...I know little of him. **I once heard** he has a problem with his wife. I think we should investigate it and direct a song at him. (p. 26).

This scene unfolds as Ololo, Amudu, Saniyo, and Odjiko discuss how to uncover something that could be used to ridicule Logbo. During the talk, Amudu shares with the group a piece of information he had heard previously about Logbo and his wife.

In this exchange, the expression "I once heard" serves as an attribution hedge, framing the remark as something he learned from others rather than as his own certain knowledge. By linking the claim to hearsay, he shifts responsibility for its accuracy away from himself and suggests that the information may not be fully reliable. From a pragmatic perspective, this hedge reduces certainty and introduces doubt, making the statement tentative. In line with Leech's Politeness Principle, Amudu's wording reflects the tact maxim, since he avoids asserting his view too forcefully on the group. It also illustrates the modesty maxim, as he downplays his authority and allows space for others to accept, reject, or question the claim. Thus, the use of the hedge supports group cooperation, lessens possible face-threatening effects, and demonstrates politeness while still engaging in the discussion.

Excerpt 4

AMUDU: **I was told** most of our brothers fishing in Ayakoromo sold out part of their fishing gear just to meet up for the next season (P.23)

The excerpt above is on a discussion among Amudu, Ololo, and Saniyo about the impact of the previous year's harvest, which compelled some people from Ayakoromo to sell portions of their fishing equipment.

In the conversation, Amudu's use of the phrase "I was told" serves as an attribution hedge, shifting responsibility for the information away from himself and onto an unnamed external source. Rather than presenting the claim as his own certain knowledge, Amudu frames it as second-hand, which reduces his personal accountability if the information turns out to be inaccurate. This strategy reflects Leech's Politeness Principles, particularly the Modesty Maxim and the Tact Maxim. By not asserting the claim directly, Amudu avoids appearing overly authoritative and instead shows humility, which aligns with the Modesty Maxim. At the same time, by leaving room for doubt, he minimises the imposition on his listeners, allowing them the freedom to accept or reject the claim without directly challenging him, in line with the Tact Maxim. In this way, the hedge "I was told" helps Amudu maintain politeness, protect his face, and sustain cooperative interaction within the group.

Excerpt 5

EKAKOTO: **I was told** that Saniyo has refused to participate in any of Igede's community activities since the contest. He accused all his friends of being betrayers. (P. 35)

The excerpt takes place at Ekakoto's house, the meeting point of the Ubigen group. Their discussion centered on strategies to defeat the Igede dance group once more. During the meeting, Ekakoto

mentioned that he had heard Saniyo was unwilling to take part in any of the Igede community's activities.

The phrase "I was told" functions as an attribution hedge, allowing the speaker to distance themselves from full responsibility for the information conveyed. Instead of presenting the claim as their own certain knowledge, the Ekakoto attributes it to an unnamed source. This strategy softens the force of the statement and makes it less face-threatening. In terms of Leech's politeness principles, they reflect the tact and modesty maxims. By not asserting the information directly, the speaker avoids imposing strongly on the hearer and reduces the risk of confrontation if the claim turns out to be false. At the same time, it shows modesty by not projecting authority or certainty over the information. In this way, "I was told" serves as a polite hedge that maintains social harmony while still conveying potentially sensitive or uncertain information.

Excerpt 6

MUKORO: I have heard of the man, too. He is a specialist on sterility, I was told... Especially in women.

LOGBO: Hmm... So I was also told. However, after examining both of us, he confirmed that Sati was fertile and pronounced the same for me... That I am no longer a man. (P. 36)

The excerpt centers on Logbo's struggle with his second wife's inability to conceive. He explains to the group that he found it difficult to disclose to his wife the gynecologist's report, which indicated that he was the one with the fertility issue. As a result, he chose to consult an Ijo Masseur to verify whether he was truly the cause of the problem. Both Logbo and Mukoro, meanwhile, acknowledged that they were familiar with the masseur.

In the conversation, the phrases "I was told," "I have heard," and "I was also told" function as attribution hedges, indicating that the speakers present their information as second-hand rather than as direct knowledge. By doing this, they shift responsibility for the claim's accuracy to unnamed sources rather than asserting it with certainty. This reduces their personal commitment to the truth of the statement and softens the force of what they are saying. In line with Leech's Politeness Principle, such hedging minimises the risk of face-threatening acts. The use of these attribution hedges, therefore, allows Mukoro and Logbo to share information cautiously while maintaining politeness and social harmony.

Conclusion

Hedges can make communication polite and flexible, effectively helping maintain and adjust the relationship between interlocutors. From the discussion so far, it can be deduced that hedges are one conversational strategy that helps keep communication between interlocutors smooth. Thus, this study examines the pragmatic analysis of hedges in Peter Omoko's *Battles of Pleasure*, revealing their relevance to effective communication and the character's strict adherence to the politeness principle. A good number of hedges were used throughout the text in order to achieve politeness, which is the sole aim of hedging. By employing various hedging devices, the author achieves smooth, friendly communication among the characters; this also shows mutual respect, as they are all careful with their words.

References

- Anisa, Z (2018). Pragmatic study on hedging as a politeness strategy in online newspapers.
Brown, P., and Levinson, S.C. (1978). Universals in Language Usage. The politeness Phenomena.
Cabanes, P. (2007). A Contrastive analysis of hedging in English and Spanish: Architecture project Description. RESLA, 20, pp 139-158.
Clemen, G. (1997). The Concept of Hedging, Origins, Approaches, and Definitions.
Crompton, B. (2010). Hedging in Academic Writing: Some Theoretical Problems. for Specific Purposes, 16(14),271-287.

- Dozzie et al. (2020). Gender and Politeness/Hedging Strategies in English among Igbo Native Speakers in Nigeria: A Difference in Conversational Styles. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 3 (1), 62-71 <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiall.v.11n.3p.61>.
- Emmanuel, C.B. (2026). *A Strategic Analysis of Nigeria's Hedging Strategy in the Context of U.S.-China Rivalry* *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 14(2), 884-900.
- Gayane, R.V. (2019). Linguistic Hedging in Interpersonal Communication. *Future Academy*.
- Gribanova, T.I. & Gaidukova, T.M. (2019). Hedging in Different types of discourse. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*. Vol. 13.
- Hyland, K. (1994). Hedging in Academic Writing and EAP Textbooks: English for Specific Purposes 13(3), pp. 239–256.
- Jingwei, T. (2013).. Pragmatic function of hedges and politeness principles—*International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*.
- Lakoff, G. (1973). Hedges: A study in meaning criteria and Logic of fuzzy concepts. *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 2(4) 458-508.
- Leech, G.N. (2014). *The Pragmatics of Politeness*. Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lewin, B.A. (2005). Hedging: an exploratory study of authors and readers' identification of toning down in scientific texts. *English for Academic Purposes*. 163–178.
- Lu, Y & Gao, W. (2019). A Study of Hedges in *Pride and Prejudice*. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 16 (8) 336-341 doi:10.17265/1539-8072/2019.08.003.
- Omoko, P. (2009). *Battles of Pleasure*. Kraftgriots Books Limited.
- Nneka, P. (2021).A Pragmatic Analysis of Hedging Devices in President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's Media Chats. 2021, *Ife Journal of Languages and Literatures (IJLL)*, 7: (1), 236-251.
- Omo, I. C., & Idegbekwe, D. (2020). Pragmatic Hedges in Editorials: A Focus on Vanguard, Guardian and Sun Newspaper Editorials in 2017. *Journal of Translation and Language Studies*, 1(1), 26–36. <https://doi.org/10.48185/jtls.v1i1.11>
- Prince, E.F. Frader, J, & Bosk, C. (1982). On hedging in physician-physician discourse. *Linguistics and the profession*. 8(1) 83-97.
- Salager – Meyer, F. (1995). I think you should perhaps conduct a study of hedges in written scientific texts. *The journal of TESOL France*, 2(2) 127-143
- Wang, S. (2016). Corpus Research on hedges in applied linguistics and an EFL journal paper. *International Journal of Education*, 9(1), 44-51.
- [://author.com](http://author.com)- Hedges in Linguistics.
- (2023). Pragmatic analysis of hedges used in defendant's argument in civil courts: e study of Lao Rongzhi. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and Translation*



A Morphosyntactic Study of Forms and Functions of Hausa Grade 5 Verbal Expressions

Ibrahim Garba Gwammaja PhD¹

¹Department of Linguistics, Foreign and Nigerian Languages,
National Open University of Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study presents a descriptive morphosyntactic analysis of Grade 5 verbal expressions in Hausa, with a focus on their form and function. The specific objectives of the study are to describe the syllable and morphological structure of Grade 5 verbs, including processes of clipping and borrowing and also to examine how these forms are deployed in command and statement constructions. A qualitative descriptive approach was adopted. Data were sourced from native-speaker elicitation and published Hausa texts. The data were coded and analyzed using content analysis with attention to morphological form, syllable structure, and syntactic function. Findings show that Grade 5 verbs exhibit three, four, and five syllable structures. Both Arabic and English loans are integrated into the Grade 5 template. Functionally, Grade 5 verbs are productive in direct, indirect, and negative commands, as well as in assertive, descriptive, and informative statements. Lexical, structural, and pragmatic ambiguities occur and are resolved by context.

Keywords

Hausa verb grade, morpho-syntax, causative-reflexive, clipping, borrowing

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Hausa is a major Chadic language of the Afro-Asiatic family, spoken as a first language by over 50 million people and as a second language by many more across West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, Niger, and neighbouring countries. As a language of wide communication, education, and media, Hausa has attracted considerable linguistic attention. One of the most distinctive features of Hausa grammar is its system of verb grades. This system is an inflectional class system in which verb roots undergo specific morphological, tonal, and syntactic changes to encode grammatical categories such as aspect, mood, voice, and argument structure. The grade system is therefore central to both the description and the teaching of Hausa verbs. Within this system, Grade 5 has been traditionally described as the causative-reflexive grade. Morphologically, Grade 5 is characterized by the attachment of the suffix *-ar da* to verb bases. This process is not always uniform. It frequently co-occurs with tonal alternation, vowel lengthening, and syllabic restructuring of the base. As Newman (2000) and earlier scholars such as Parsons (1960) and Newman (1973) have noted, the formation of Grade 5 verbs often results in forms that differ in syllable structure from their base forms. These alternations suggest that Grade 5 is not merely an additive process but involves deeper morpho-phonological adjustments. Semantically and syntactically, Grade 5 verbs are associated with causative and related functions. They typically increase the valency of the verb by introducing a causer argument, and they are used to express direct or indirect causation, enablement, and sometimes reflexive or reciprocal notions. Because of this, Grade 5 forms play an important role in both everyday communication and in more formal registers such as instruction, commands, and narrative discourse. In command and statement sentences, for example, Grade 5 verbs are frequently used to direct action, assign responsibility, and describe caused events.

Specifically, the study addresses two main questions. First, what are the syllabic and morphological patterns of Grade 5 forms in Hausa? This includes an investigation of *disyllabic*, trisyllable, tetra-syllable, and *penta-syllabic* bases and how each interacts with the -ar da suffix. Second, what are the syntactic functions of Grade 5 expressions in command and statement sentences? Despite the functional importance of Grade 5, most existing studies on Hausa verb grades have treated the system as a whole rather than isolating individual grades for detailed analysis.

Literature Review

Scholarship on the Hausa verbal system provides the foundation for this study, but a gap remains in integrated morphosyntactic accounts of Grade 5 alone. There are volumes of scholars works in relation to this aspect but to mention few; Newman (2000) classifies Grade 5 as the -ar da extension and assigns it a causative-reflexive function. The phonological processes associated with this grade are described by Parsons (1971, 1972), who outlines the tonal and segmental alternations that differentiate verb grades. Building on this, Munkaila (2005) and Bagari (1987) demonstrate that Grade 5 functions to increase verbal valency. Wolff (1993) further situates Hausa verb morphology within a broader morphosyntactic framework. Furniss (1983; 1993) focuses on disyllabic verb bases and the way extensions such as Grade 5 attach to them. He argues that the vowel length and tone of the base determine the resulting form. Specifically, CVCV bases take -ar da with a tonal shift, while CVV bases may undergo truncation. This analysis accounts for three (3), four (4), and five (5) syllable surface patterns. Furniss also distinguishes between material that belongs to the base and material that belongs to the grade, which supports treating -ar and da as separate morphemes. However, his study is limited to full, unclipped forms and does not include a syntactic analysis. In addition, borrowing is not addressed, likely because English and Arabic loans were less common in the corpora available in 1981. Amfani (2007) contends that Grade selection in Hausa is governed by both the semantic and phonological properties of the verb base rather than by arbitrary rules. He proposes that each base has an *operating grade* range it can enter. He further shows that some bases resist Grade 5 -ar da because their semantics block causativization; for example, stative bases do not readily accept causative meaning. Amfani's work, however, does not examine clipped forms, nor does it consider borrowing or the relationship between form and syntactic function such as command versus statement. The present study extends Amfani by providing evidence of clipped Grade 5 forms in actual usage. Bedu re-analyses Hausa verb syntax within Chafe's framework, which links meaning, argument structure, and surface form. He argues that verb grades are best explained by how speakers package events, not solely by morphological rules. According to Bedu (2024), Grade 5 is used to encode a *caused change of state* with an *affected object*, a function that aligns with command and statement constructions. From a semantic perspective, Chafe's model also explains the productivity of Grade 5 with loanwords, because the semantic template is open, forms such as charge → cazar da are readily integrated. Bedu does not, however, discuss clipping, borrowing, or ambiguity in Grade 5, and his data are largely restricted to full forms obtained through elicitation.

However, Abraham's work on the Hausa verb system describes the complexity of verb grades and their meanings. He discusses Grade 5 verbs in relation to other grades. Wolff's analysis of Hausa morphology includes discussion of verb grades and their syntactic implications. His work informs the morphosyntactic analysis of Grade 5 verbs. Schadeberg (2003) discusses on Chadic languages, including Hausa, he discusses verb extensions and their role in conveying grammatical meaning. His analysis informs the understanding of Grade 5 verb forms. Gautier (1986) studies on Hausa verb morphology provides insights into the structure of Grade 5 verbs and their relationship with other verb forms. The existing literature, including works by Newman, Parsons, and others, lays groundwork for understanding Hausa Grade 5 verbs. However, there's a gap between these studies and the current research, primarily in terms of focus and scope. No study has linked Grade 5 syllable structure, clipping, borrowing, and syntactic function in one framework. This paper fills that gap.

3. Methodology of Data collection

This study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach to investigate Grade 5 verbal expressions in Hausa. The methodology involved gathering the data involves both primary and secondary sources to ensure depth. Primary sources include the native speaker's intuition of the researcher and selected native Hausa speakers for validation. Under the primary sources, this research population offered valuable data on the grammaticality, meaning, and contextual use of Grade 5 verbal expressions. Elicitation sessions were arranged for the native speakers to authentic all examples of the grade 5 verbal expressions that the researcher generated using his intuition. During these sessions, attention was given to how the expressions function across different communicative contexts. From the elicited data, the researcher identified and extracted Grade 5 verbal expressions suitable for analysis. The extraction focused on items that clearly illustrate syllable structure, morphology, and pragmatic functions. Secondary sources involved consulting existing literature on Hausa linguistics. Data analysis was done through content analysis, with focus on form, meaning, and pragmatic use. Overall, the methodology provided a systematic and credible basis for describing Grade 5 verbal expressions.

4. Data Analysis

This study used content analysis to examine Grade 5 expressions. The analysis focused on form, meaning, and function in different contexts. It explored syllable structures, clipping, borrowing, and semantic/pragmatic functions. Grade 5 expressions form commands and statements using causative-reflexive verbs. Let us look at the syllable structure of verbal grade 5. The expressions have distinct characteristics.

4.1 Syllables Structure of Verbal Grade 5

Hausa is a West Chadic language of West Africa characterized by a comparatively simple syllable structure. Hausa syllables are basically CV, CVC, CVV. When the Grade 5 suffix -ar da attaches, the total syllable count of the verb increases. From our data, Grade 5 forms in Hausa range from monosyllabic bases to five-syllable outputs (Newman, 2000). The data reveal that Grade 5 verbs manifest in syllable patterns extending from disyllabic to five-syllable forms. Specifically, the corpus contains Grade 5 derivations based on disyllabic, and trisyllable stems, in addition to four- and five-syllable bases. In all cases, the suffixes element -ar and the particle da are required to realize the full Grade 5 form as it shows in the below:

i. The data identify a robust class of Grade 5 verbs characterized by a three-syllable structure. This trisyllable template functions as a salient and productive form in Hausa. Such forms are lexically common and serve to encode specific event types, particularly causative and applicative meanings. The existence of this pattern increases the formal variability of Grade 5 morphology in Hausa.

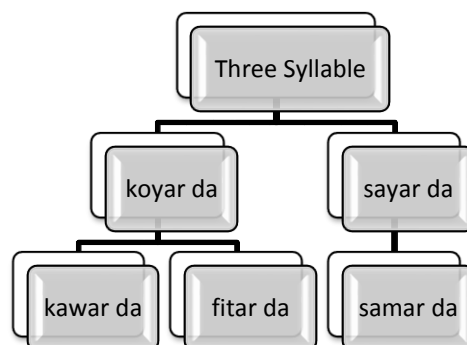


Table 1

ii. A four-syllable template is identified as a distinct realization of Grade 5 in Hausa. This pattern is morphologically systematic and semantically specialized, serving to convey particular causative and applicative meanings. Within the broader verbal grade system, four-syllable Grade 5 forms are

attested in diverse discourse contexts. The existence of this structure further expands the formal and functional inventory of Hausa Grade 5 verbs.

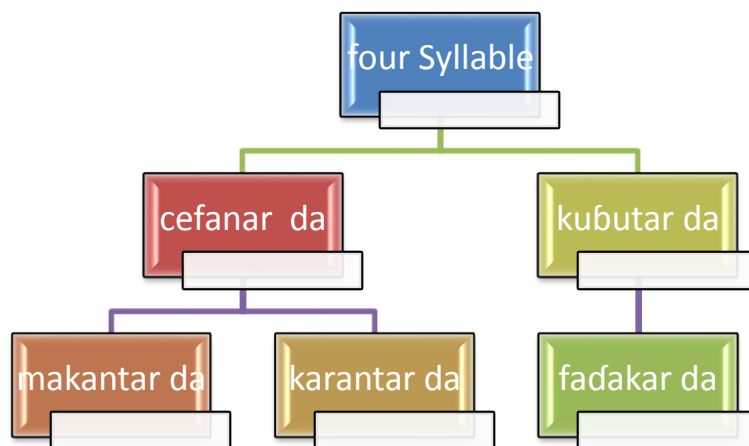


Table 2

iii. Verbal grade 5 expressions with five syllables involve borrowing words from Arabic. These words are incorporated into Hausa with a specific structure. The five-syllable pattern is a distinct feature of these expressions. Borrowed words are adapted to fit this syllable structure. This form of verbal grade 5 is commonly used in Hausa. The Arabic origin words are modified for Hausa usage. This borrowing enriches the Hausa language vocabulary. The five-syllable structure is a notable characteristic.



Table 3

4.2 Clipping in Hausa Grade 5 Expression

Clipping shortens words while keeping their original meaning. There are three types: initial, middle, and final clipping. Initial clipping removes the start of a word. Middle clipping removes the middle part. Final clipping, or back-clipping, removes the end part. This study focuses on middle clipping in Hausa grade 5 verbal expressions. Middle clipping is applied in some grade 5 expressions. The table below shows examples of this clipping type. Clipping is a common word formation process. Grade 5 is productive across all base sizes. Clipping then reduces four to five syllable forms in fast speech. This shows Hausa prefers economy but keeps the -da marker for grammatical clarity. This supports Furniss (1981) on base-shape effects and Amfani (2007) on operating grades". It helps create new words or shorten existing ones. Hausa language uses clipping in verbal expressions. Grade 5 expressions are specifically affected. The clipping pattern is notable in these expressions. The study highlights this pattern in Hausa. Examples are provided in the table.

S/N	Base	Causative form	Clipping form
1	Sàyaa ‘buy’	Saayar dà ‘sell out’	Sai dà ‘sell out’
2	Fitaà ‘go out’	fiitar dà ‘take out’	Fid dà ‘take out’
3	Tsayàa ‘stand’	Tsaayar dà ‘stop something’	Tsai dà ‘stop something’
4	Wàhalàa ‘suffer’	Wahalar dà ‘cause suffer for’	Wahal dà ‘cause suffer for’
5	Gaisàa ‘greet’	Gaisar/gayar dà ‘greet Someone’ (CNHN, 2006)	Gai dà ‘‘greet someone’
6	Tashii ‘wake up’	Tayar dà ‘get (someone) up’	Ta dà ‘get (someone) up’

Table 4

Table 4 illustrates the base, the full causative Grade 5 form, and the clipped output for each item. A uniform clipping site is observed in examples 1-6, where reduction occurs in the second syllable. In contrast, example 5 exhibits clipping in the third syllable, thereby constituting an exception to the dominant pattern. This variation underscores the non-uniformity of Grade 5 morphophonology. The tabular format effectively organizes the data and enables direct comparison, thereby supporting the analysis of Grade 5 formation. The clipping operation is identified as a critical component of this process, and the attested exception warrants further analysis to determine its conditioning factors.

/4.3 Transformation of borrowed word into Hausa Grade 5 Expression

Borrowing involves adopting words from one language into another. There are three types of borrowing: direct adoption, translation of components, and borrowing meaning. This study focuses on words borrowed from Arabic and adopted into Hausa. These words are directly adapted and used in verbal grade 5 in Hausa. The borrowed words are described in the table below. The process of borrowing enriches the Hausa language. Arabic words have been incorporated into Hausa vocabulary. The adoption is a result of linguistic and cultural exchange. Hausa language has borrowed words from various languages. The borrowed words are used in everyday communication. The table highlights the borrowed words and their usage. Direct adoption is a common method of borrowing. The words are adapted to fit Hausa language structure. The borrowing process is a natural linguistic phenomenon. The study examines the borrowed words in verbal grade 5.

S/N	Base	Causative form
7	Musuluncii ‘islam’	Musuluntar da ‘cause some to embrace Islam’
8	Amincii ‘honest’	Amintar da ‘cause someone freedom’
9	Ilimii ‘knowledge’	Ilimantar dà ‘educated someone’
10	Tarbiyyaa ‘attitude’	Tarbiyantar dà ‘teach Someone good attitude’
11	Wa’azii ‘preach’	Wa’azantar dà ‘preach someone’
12	Kafurcii ‘unbeliever’	Kafurtar dà ‘cause someone nonbeliever’
13	Amfanii ‘useful’	Amfanar dà ‘make something useful’
14	Charge ‘charge a phone/ battery’	Cazar dà ‘cause charge something’
15	Change ‘modification’	Canzar da ‘cause change something’

Table 5.

Examples 7 to 13 are words borrowed from Arabic, while examples 14 to 15 are borrowed from English. Both sets of loanwords are integrated into Hausa using the language's Grade 5 verbal structure. The borrowed items do not remain foreign but are adapted to fit Hausa's morphological patterns. This adaptation shows that Grade 5 rules govern not only native stems but also borrowed ones. Arabic loans often reflect religious, educational, and administrative domains that entered Hausa early. English loans tend to reflect modern technology, governance, and schooling introduced later. Despite different source languages, both groups follow the same Grade 5 structural requirements. For example, borrowed stems receive the characteristic Grade 5 final vowel and tonal pattern. The process confirms that Hausa's verbal system is productive and open to new lexical items. It also demonstrates the language's capacity to maintain grammatical consistency while expanding its lexicon. Thus, the treatment of Arabic and English loans under Grade 5 rules illustrates Hausa's flexibility and systematic borrowing.

5. Ambiguity in Hausa Grade 5 Expression

Ambiguity has two main types: syntactic and lexical, but this paper focuses on lexical ambiguity. Partridge (1993:15) defines ambiguity as a word or sentence with multiple meanings. There are three types: lexical, sentence, and pragmatic ambiguity.

- i. Lexical ambiguity, or semantic ambiguity, occurs in verbal grade 5. Examples include
 - *kwantar dà* (lay someone down or lay something down)
 - *Ciyar dà* (feed someone or feed something).
- ii. Syntactic ambiguity, or structural ambiguity, causes multiple interpretations, e.g.,
 - *Ali ya kooyar dà daràsii* (Ali teaches a lesson (Hausa) or Ali teaches a lesson (lissafi)).
 - *Musa ya taayar dà muu* (Musa wakes us up or Musa corrects us)
- iii. Pragmatic ambiguity deals with context meaning, e.g.,
 - *Musa ya kwaantar dà shii* (Musa lay's someone down or Musa cheat's someone).
 - *Ali ya zuubar dà gàrinsa* (Ali lost his chance or Ali lost his money).

The above examples show three types of ambiguity in Hausa Grade 5 verbal expressions. Lexical ambiguity occurs when one verb form has two possible meanings due to the root itself. *Kwantar dà* can mean 'lay someone down' as in putting a child to sleep. It can also mean 'lay something down' as in placing an object on a surface. *Ciyar dà* shows the same pattern with the meanings 'feed someone' and 'feed something'. The verb stem stays constant while the object's immanency changes the interpretation. Structural ambiguity arises when the grammatical structure allows more than one parse. *Ali ya kooyar dà daràsii* may mean 'Ali teaches a lesson' with *daràsin* Hausa as the object. It can also mean 'Ali teaches a lesson on *lissáfii*' if *daràsii* is taken as a complement and *lissáfii* is elliptic or implied. *Musa ya taayar dà muu* is structurally ambiguous between causative and corrective readings. One parse is 'Musa wakes us up' where *taayar dà* functions as 'cause to rise'. The other parse is 'Musa corrects us' where *taayar dà* means 'put right' or 'amend'. Pragmatic ambiguity depends on context rather than word meaning or structure. *Musa yaa kwantar dà shii* literally means 'Musa laid him down'. In some contexts, it is extended pragmatically to mean 'Musa cheated him' or 'Musa deceived him'. *Ali ya zuubar dà gàrinsa* literally means 'Ali poured away his flour'. Pragmatically, it is used for 'Ali lost his chance' or 'Ali lost his money', depending on discourse. These ambiguities show that Grade 5 verbs rely on context, tense, aspect and mood (TAM) markers, and object type for disambiguation. Lexical ambiguity involves word meaning. Syntactic ambiguity involves sentence structure. Pragmatic ambiguity involves context interpretation. Verbal grade 5 expressions can be ambiguous. The meaning depends on context and interpretation. Ambiguity can lead to multiple understandings. The types of ambiguity are interconnected. Understanding ambiguity is crucial in communication. The examples illustrate lexical ambiguity in Hausa. Ambiguity is a key concept in linguistics.

6. Command Sentence with Hausa Grade 5 Expression

Grade 5 verbs are central to imperative constructions. Direct command sentence as in *Fiitar dà mootar* ‘Take out the car’. Indirect or Polite command sentence as in *Don Allah kà shiigar dà mootar* ‘Please put the car inside’. Negative command sentence as in *Kar kà ciiyar dà Saani* ‘Do not feed Sani’.

A command sentence expresses an order or request. It can be direct, indirect, or negative. Hausa uses verbal grade 5 expressions in command sentences. Let us look at how these commands are constructed. There are different types of command sentences in Hausa. Verbal grade 5 is used to form these commands. Examples of commands with verbal grade 5 follow. Commands can be direct, like *yi wannàn* ‘do this’. They can also be indirect which included *kà iyaa yin wannàn* ‘can you do this’ and negative command comprises *kar kà yi* ‘don’t do it. Hausa command sentences have specific structures. Verbal grade 5 adds meaning to these commands.

a- Direct command: Is form categorically in Hausa by the use of verbal grade 5.

- *fiitar dà mootàr*, ‘take away the car’
- *shiigar dà yaaròò* ‘take the child in’
- *kwantar dà jàriirii* ‘lay’s the baby down’

b- Indirect command: This is having to do with polite or implied e.g.

- *Don Allah kà shiigar dà mootàr* ‘please put the car inside’
- *Zaa ki iyaa saamar dà kudii* ‘could find some money’
- *Kun kaawar dà kaayan* ‘ you can take away the goods’

c. Negative command: This form of command has do do with negative or prohibition e.g.,

- *kar dà ka shiigar da mootar* ‘don’t put the car inside’
- *kar dà ya baayar dà kudii* ‘he should not give the money’
- *kar kà ciiyar dà Saani* ‘you should not feed Sani’

In addition, the Grade 5 verbs in Hausa play a central role in expressing commands, and they appear in three main forms. Direct commands use the bare Grade 5 verb stem with no subject or TAM marker attached. Examples like *fiitar dà mootar* ‘take away the car’ (bare stem + da + object) show the verb *fiitar* followed by the particle *da* and the object. Similarly, *shiigar dà yaaròò* ‘take the child in’ and *kwantar da jariri* ‘lay the baby down’ follow the same pattern. The absence of a subject pronoun marks the utterance as an imperative directed at the listener. This structure is categorical in Hausa because Grade 5 stems are regularly used for simple commands. The verb retains its Grade 5 final vowel and tonal shape, which signals the grade identity. Indirect commands soften the force of the directive and often add politeness markers or modal verbs. *Don Allah ka shiigar dà mootar* ‘please put the car inside’(subject + modal) uses *Don Allah* ‘for God’s sake’ plus subject *ka*. The inclusion of *ka* changes the form from a bare stem to a second person subjunctive construction. *Zaa ki iyaa saamar dà kudii* ‘you could find some money’ uses the future modal *zaa* plus *iyaaa* ‘be able’.

The core pragmatic assumption of Grade 5 verbs is cause someone/something to undergo a change of state or location.

When used in commands, the speaker assumes the hearer has the capacity to cause that change, and the verb’s -ar da morphology directly encodes that causative intent. We see this assumption play out in 3 locutionary forces:

1. Direct Command (Direct Causation Locutionary force)

Speaker directly orders the hearer to cause a change.

Pragmatic assumption: You have control and must cause something to happen now. Examples, - *fiitar dà mootàr* - ‘take away the car’ → Cause the car to go out

- *shiigar dà yaaròò* - ‘take the child in’ → Cause the child to go in

- *kwantar dà jàriirii* - ‘lay the baby down’ → Cause the baby to lie down

The action is immediate, non-negotiable, and the Grade 5 form marks the speaker as having authority to demand a caused change.

2. Indirect Command (Polite/Implied Causation Locutionary force).

Speaker requests rather than orders. Politeness markers soften the command but the causative meaning remains.

Pragmatic assumption: You are able to cause something, and I am appealing to you to do it.

Examples:

- Don Allah kà shiigar dà mootàr - 'please put the car inside' → I appeal to you to cause the car to go in
- Zaa ki iyaa saamar dà kudfi - 'could you find some money' → I assume you are capable of causing money to be available.
- Kun kaawar dà kaayan - 'you can take away the goods' → I acknowledge your ability to cause the goods to be removed.

The Grade 5 causative meaning is preserved, but social factors like Don Allah and modal Zaa ki iyaa reduce directness. The speaker still assumes the hearer can effect the change.

3. Negative Command (Prohibition of Causation Locutionary force)

Speaker prohibits the hearer from causing a change.

Pragmatic assumption: Do NOT cause something to happen. Prevent the change of state. Examples:

- kar dà ka shiigar da mootar - 'don't put the car inside' → Do not cause the car to go in.
- kar dà ya baayar dà kudfi - 'he should not give the money' → Do not cause the money to be given
- kar kà ciiyar dà Saani - 'you should not feed Sani' → Do not cause Sani to eat

The speaker assumes the hearer could cause the action, and is actively blocking that causative potential. The kar + Grade 5 structure maintains the causative semantics while negating it.

7. Statement Sentence with Hausa Grade 5 Expression

A statement sentence conveys information or expresses an opinion. In Hausa, Grade 5 expressions are used to form statements. These expressions often indicate a completed action or a state. Grade 5 verbs typically involve a change of state or causation. They can express actions like *causing something to happen*. Hausa Grade 5 expressions have specific structures. The structure often involves a verb with a specific suffix. These expressions can indicate reflexive or causative actions. For example, *ya saukar dà kuudfi* (he brought down the money). Grade 5 expressions add nuance to statements. They can change the verb's meaning significantly. Statements with Grade 5 expressions are common in Hausa. They convey specific actions or states. The expressions follow Hausa's grammatical rules. Grade 5 verbs are an important part of Hausa grammar. These expressions help convey complex meanings in Hausa.

a. Assertive construction e.g.,

- Sàabùulu yaa fiitar dà dàtti 'the soap washes out the dirty'
- Filin yaa saamar dà 'yan bàl 'the field provide footballers'
- Leemar ta saamar dà inuwàa 'the umbrella provide shadow'

b. Descriptive which has to do with description e.g.,

- Yaa fiitar dà mootar a hankàlii 'he removes the car gentle'
- Taa shiigar dà kaayan cikin gidaa 'she put the goods inside the house'

c. Informative construction which provides new info e.g.,

- Doogàrai sun saayar dà mootar sarkii 'the palace guard sold the emir' car'
- Sanyii yaa daskàrar da àbinci 'the cold has frozen the food'
- Soojoojii sun kifàr da gwamnati. The military over through the government'
- Gwamnati taa tsaayar dà àiki 'the government stops the work'

However, Grade 5 verbs in Hausa are not limited to commands but also occur in declarative constructions. Assertive constructions use Grade 5 verbs to state facts or general truths about the world.

- Sàabùulu yaa fiitar dà dàtti ‘the soap washes out the dirt’ presents a generic, habitual action of soap.

The subject *sàabùulu yaa fiitar dà dàtti sabulu* plus Grade 5 *fiitar da* asserts a characteristic function rather than a specific event.

- Filin yaa saamar dà ’yan bâl ‘the field provides footballers’ makes a general claim about the field’s role.
- Leemar ta saamar dà inuwàa ‘the umbrella provides shade’ likewise states a typical function of an umbrella.

These sentences rely on third person subject markers *ya* and *ta* with the Grade 5 stem. Then, the descriptive constructions add adverbials or locatives to show how or where the action occurs as we can see below:

- Yaa fiitar dà mootar a hankàlii ‘he removed the car gently’ describes the manner of removal.
- Taa shiigar dà kaayan cikin gidaa ‘she put the goods inside the house’ specifies the location of the action.

The Grade 5 verb remains the core, while a *hankali* and *cikin gida* supply descriptive detail.

Informative constructions introduce new or reportable information, often about completed events, like:

- Doogàrai sun saayar dà mootar sarkii ‘the palace guards sold the emir’s car’ conveys a specific incident.
- Sanyii yaa daskàrar dà àbinci ‘the cold has frozen the food’ reports a result caused by weather.
- Soojoojii sun kifàr dà gwamnati ‘the military overthrew the government’ provides political news.
- Gwamnati taa tsaayar dà àiki ‘the government stopped the work’ informs about an official action.

Across all three types, Grade 5 verbs combine with subject and TAM morphemes to fit the discourse function. The data show how Grade 5 verbs undergo clipping in everyday Hausa, revealing the interface of morphology and syntax. Full forms like *saayar dà* ‘sell out’, *fiitar dà* ‘take away’, *gaisar dà* ‘greet’, and *tsaayar dà* ‘stop’ contain the particle *da*.

In rapid or informal speech, speakers shorten these to *sai dà*, *fid dà*, *gai dà*, and *tsai dà* while keeping the meaning. *Saayar dà àbinci* ‘sell the food’ becomes *sai dà àbinci* with the medial syllable *-yar* deleted. *Fiitar dà mootaa* ‘remove the car’ is reduced to *fid dà mootaa* by dropping the vowel and *r* sequence. *Gaayar dà maataa* ‘greet women’ appears as *gai dà maataa* through loss of the *-yar* syllable. *Tsaayar dà tàfiyar* ‘stop the travelling’ is clipped to *tsai dà tàfiya* with similar reduction. Morphologically, the clipped form deletes an internal CV syllable but preserves the Grade 5 stem and the particle *da*.

The core lexical morpheme and the grammatical morpheme *da* remain, so the valency and meaning are not lost. Syntactically, the shortened verb still governs a direct object, showing that argument structure is unaffected. This indicates that the phonological reduction operates at the morpheme level without altering syntactic roles. The process illustrates how morphology supplies the units and syntax determines their arrangement in the sentence. Clipping is motivated by ease of articulation and frequency, common features of Grade 5 verbs in use. It also creates potential ambiguity because *sai* alone can mean ‘until’ in other contexts. Listeners rely on the retained *da* plus the object noun to recover the verbal reading. Thus, the clipped variants confirm that Grade 5 forms are both morphologically analyzable and syntactically stable. The phenomenon shows Hausa’s balance

between phonological economy and grammatical explicitness. Overall, the interface demonstrates that Grade 5 verbs are flexible in form yet consistent in function.

8. Conclusion

The findings show that Grade 5 is a productive and central category in Hausa verbal morphology. Morphologically, Grade 5 is marked by the -ar da extension, which co-occurs with subject, TAM, and the particle da. Phonologically, Grade 5 forms range from three to five syllables. Five-syllable forms often result from Arabic loans adapted to Hausa phonotactics. Middle clipping is also common, where internal syllables such as -yar are deleted while the core stem and da are retained. This process maintains valency while reflecting economy of expression. In addition, the data show that Hausa readily integrates Arabic and English borrowings into Grade 5, and such loans behave like native stems. Functionally, Grade 5 primarily encodes causation, change of state, and increased transitivity. In discourse, Grade 5 verbs operate across three main sentences. They are used in direct, indirect, and negative as well as occur in assertive, descriptive, and informative statements. Negative forms are systematically derived and retain the causative meaning of Grade 5. Ambiguity can arise at lexical, structural, and pragmatic levels. However, interpretation is resolved through object animacy, contextual cues, and surrounding morphemes. Overall, the evidence confirms that Grade 5 in Hausa operates within a morpheme-based system in which form and function are consistently mapped, and in which the grade is fully integrated into command, statement, and negation structures.

References

- Abraham, R.C. (1959). *The Language of the Hausa People*. University of London Press.
- Bagari, D.M. (1987). Aspects of Hausa Syntax and Semantics. *Hausa Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1-20.
- Bedu, A. M. (2024). Revisiting the Syntactic Analysis of Hausa Verbs from Wallace Chafe's Semantic- Structure-Form Perspective. *Journal of Linguistics, Language in Education*. Vol. 18, No. 2 pp83-96.
- CNHL (2006). *Kamusun Hausa*. Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University press.
- Furniss, G. (1981). Hausa disyllabic verbs: comments on base forms and extensions. *Studies in African Linguistics* 12 (2): 97–129.
- Furniss, G. (1983).** "The 4th grade of the verb in Hausa" in E. Wolff and H. Meyer-Bahlburg (eds.), *Studies in Chadic and Afroasiatic Linguistics*, Hamburg: Helmut Buske, pp. 287-300.
- Gautier, M. (1986). Hausa Verb Morphology. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London.
- Munkaila, M. (2005). *Aspects of Hausa Syntax*. Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.
- Newman, P. (2000). *The Hausa Language*. USA: Yale University Press.
- Newman, P. (1973). Grades, Vowel-Tone Classes and Extensions in the Hausa verbal System, *Studies in African Linguistics* 4:297-346.
- Parsons, F. W. (1960). The verbal system in Hausa, *Afrika und Übersee*, 44:1-36.
- Parsons, F. W. (1972). Suppletion and neutralization in the verbal system of Hausa. *Afrika und Übersee* 55:49-97, 188-208.
- Parsons, F.W. (1971). Hausa Verb Structure. *African Language Studies*, Vol. 12, pp. 1-20.
- Partridge, E. (1993) *Slang Today and Yesterday*. London: Macmillan.
- Schadeberg, T. C. (2003). Chadic Verb Extensions. In M. Lionel Bender et al. (Eds.), *Chadic Language Studies* (pp. 71-84). Hamburg: University of Hamburg.
- Wolff, H. E. (1993). Hausa Morphology. In J. Jacobs et al. (Eds.), *Syntax: An International Handbook of Contemporary Research* (pp. 123-138). Berlin: de Gruyter.



Notes on Morphophonology of Pabər/Bura Reduplicated Pluractional Verbs and their Forms

Dr. Saleh Jibir¹, Dr. Mustapha Ibrahim Garba² & Sa'adu Inusa³

^{1&3}Department of Languages and Linguistics,
Yobe State University, Damaturu.

²Department of English and Linguistics,
Federal University, Dutse, Jigawa State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the interface between morphology and phonology of the Reduplicated pluractional verb forms in Pabər/Bura language within the framework of Generative Phonological (GP) Theory. The study examined the various changes that occurred within Pabər/Bura verbs and explained what motivates these changes, rules were formulated for every alternation discussed. The analysis of our data which proved reduplication processes evident in Pabər/Bura verbs, reveals two types of reduplication, the partial e.g. /nggitù/ became [ngg^hitngg^hità], /mbùtā/ became [mbùmbùtārì] and complete reduplication e.g. /pshà/ became [pšìpšì], and /mbwòtā/ became [mb^wòmb^wòšì] after suffixation of /-a/ and /-si/ morphemes respectively to derive other verb classes. This research involves fieldwork where multiple of data were collection through interview and observation. The data was collected from forty-eight (48) informants, eight (8) from each Local Government Areas of Biu Emirate these Local Government Areas include Bayo Biu, Hawul, and Kwaya-kusar in Borno State, and Gujba and Gulani in Yobe State. One of the areas that this study suggest further research is to have a research on diachronic analysis of Pabər/Bura verbs, where the findings of this analysis may be very helpful to one attempting a diachronic study of Pabər/Bura analysis.

Keywords

reduplication, complete, partial, derivation, pluractional, verbs

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Morphologically, verb is most productive open class of word in a natural language with only more derivatives than any other class of words, it is the element or nucleus of a sentence construction in a language. Baba (1993). Although Pabər/Bura has for several decades enjoyed good number of linguistics studies from different scholars but they are mostly focusses more on the areas of grammar, loanwords, syntax, morphology, comparative analysis and sociolinguistics, as can be seen in the works of Davies (1956), Badejo and Bura Orthography Committee (1987), Mohammed and Badejo (2000), Mohammed, et al (2002) Mohammed, et al (2007), Blench (2009), Mua'azu and Balami (2010), Mu'azu (2012) and Mu'azu (2014) among other. The present study act differently by attempting to address the morphophonological aspect of the Pabər/Bura verbs. So as to establish their forms in the language. In view of the above therefore, the focus of this research is to examine the morphophonological issues of reduplication processes in deriving pluractional verbs in Pabər/Bura and establishing their distinctive forms in the language.

The Pabər-Bura people live on the Biu Plateau which in present geo-political setting known as Biu Emirate in Southern part of Borno State Nigeria. Biu Emirate was formerly known as Biu Division until 1976 when a local government system and emirate council were introduced by the Federal Government of Nigeria (Haruna 1998).

The Bura-Pabir language is classified under the **Biu-Mandara** subgroup of the **Central Chadic** branch within the **Afro-Asiatic** (formerly Hamito-Semitic) language family (Newman, 1977). The

language is primarily spoken in Biu Local Government and surrounding Local Government Areas of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Reduplication is referred as the systematic recurrence of units with a word for semantic or grammatical purpose (Ewekuoson et al 2013). Similarly, Morphophonology involves a process in which morphological operations triggers a phonological alternation or modifications when morphemes are combined. Akinlabi (1996) asserts that in all word formation processes, sound segments and features may morphophonologically be affected like when the tone could also perform some sort of morpheme functions due to operations. As for Akhmanova (1971:69) “morphophonology is concerned with the ways in which morphological processes influence the phonological pattern to suit natural language rules within morpheme boundaries”.

In related contributions, Aliero (2015) examine the aspect of morphophonology of C’lela nouns. In his analysis Aliero discovered that addition of inflectional affixes to certain noun stems in C’lela, sometime motivate certain phonological processes. The scholar also established that, C’lela language has distinctive morphological properties similar to other languages across West Africa. The major morphological processes of C’lela includes: compounding, derivation, affixation and reduplication. Aliero further stressed that, C’lela uses prefixe and suffixes on nominal and verbal categories to provide information about number and tense.

Jika, (2017) analyses the morphophonology of Kiswahili and Hausa borrowed nouns from Arabic. Where he comes up with morphophonological issues in the loanword adaptation of the two languages. The main phonological processes used in nativazation of loanwords in Kiswahili and Hausa identified were analysed using Optimality theory. The finding shows that; insertion is the most productive strategy used in loanwords nativazation in the two languages. Therefore, vowel insertion (epenthesis) is the most mutual repair strategy used in Arabic loanword adaptation. For example: Arabic borrowed words of the consonant vowel, double consonant in Hausa and Kiswahili.

(1) Input: /asl/ Output: [a.si.li] „origin,

(2) Input: /dars/ Output: [da.ra.sii] „a lesson”

Other phonological processes that had been identified is deletion where the output [law.maa], [luqu.ma] admits the deletion of last consonant purposely to meet the restriction of final consonant. Consequently, the output is considered or fixed as a desirable participant, where the output [luqmah] conserves the last consonant of the prosodic word yet it neglects to avoid transgression of the terminal consonant”s restriction.

Other changes noted by Jika got to do with the phonemes. There are some phonemes that are found in Arabic but are not in Hausa and Kiswahili phonemic inventory. If a loanword has such phoneme, then it has to be changed to the nearest equivalent in the both recipient languages. Below are examples where Arabic /q/and /kh/ are realized as /k/ and /h/ respectively in Hausa and Kiswahili languages.

(1) Input /qabar/

Output [kabari] „a grave”

(2) Input /qabar/

Output [kaburi] „a grave”

Therefore, the two works differ in term of the theoretical framework adopted, class of word and language worked on. The works is relevant to this study based on the morphological processes involved despite the differences.

Another relevant work is that of Abdulmajid (2000) observes the consonantal and vowel morphophonemics in Luwanga dialect of Luhya tribe spoken in Western Kenya using Natural Generative Grammar Theory. The major phonological and morphological processes observed in the dialect includes: homorganic nasal assimilation, palatization, liquid strengthening, vowel coalescence, glide formation and vowel deletion. These processes according to Abdulmajid occur synchronically in the language in contexts or environments governed and motivated by various factors.

This work is also relevant to this study based on the morphological processes involved, despite the differences. Abdulmajid focuses attention on Luwanga dialect using Natural Generative Grammar Theory. While this study uses Generative Phonological Theory as a framework on Pabər/Bura verbs.

Similarly, in his contribution on the claim put forward by early writers on Arabic loanword in Hausa Klingenberg (1928); Greenberg (1947) and Hiskett (1965) as in Yelwa (1992). Yelwa (1992) based his opinions on the history of Hausa words based on phonological and morphological point of view. At the phonological level Yelwa (Ibid) point out area such as (1) the alternation of Arabic /F/ with /b/ in Hausa, (2) Nasal assimilation (3) Neutralization (4) palatalization of alveolar consonants, while on the morphological aspect Yelwa considered prefixes, suffixes and loan shift as part of the evidences.

However, on the phonological processes Yelwa (ibid) discuss the issues of Arabic /f/ sound when borrowed with Hausa is realized as /b/ sound intervocalically, word finally or after a semi-vowel followed by a vowel as exemplified below

3. Arabic: al-kitaab – Hausa: littaaɗii (book)

4. Arabic: al zayb – Hausa: laifii/aibu (fault).

Yelwa further formulates rule to represents these changes.

Dr. b > Has: f/[v-v], [v-#]; [G-V] or {G-C}.

Similarly, Yelwa (1993:108) discusses nasal assimilation as, “where by a nasal consonant has the same place of articulation as that of any following consonant” where he presents the environments where such a process occurs, as in the following example

5. a). $n > \check{n}$ /..... #
 b). $n > m$ /..... C
 [+labial]
 c). $n > \check{n}$ /..... C
 [+ velar]
 d). $n > n$ /..... # C
 [-vela]
 [-labial]
 e). $n > n^y$ /.....C
 f). $m > \check{n}$ /.....\$ C
 [+ velar]

On the other hand, there are few attempts on the Pabər/Bura morphology in the recent time by some scholars. Mu'azu and Balami (2010), in their descriptive analysis of Bura verbs classified Bura verbs into three distinct classes morphologically, as verb class (1) (VC1), verb class (2) (VC2) and verb class (3) (VC3). Mu'azu and Balami based their classification on vowel ending and tonal patterns. Verb class (1) (VC1) ends in suffix (-a /-aa) with low (L). Low-low (LL), high-high (HH), high-low (HL), low-high (LH) tone patterns. Verb class (2) (VC2) comprises verbs that end in the suffix (-i, -u and -e) with low (L), low-low (LL), low-low-low (LLL) and high-high-high (HHH) tone patterns. Verbs in class (3) (VC3) ends with consonants with high (H), low (L), high-low (HL), low-high (LH) high-high (HH), low-low (LL), high-high-low (HHL) and low-low-high (LLH) tone patterns. Such classification needs to be re-organized using morphophonological processes.

Bukar and Jibir (2016), investigates the morphological behaviours of the Hausa loanwords adaptation in Babur-Bura. The morphological behaviours of the Hausa loanwords adaptation arrived at in the

study includes: (1) prefixation of *-mda* (person) and *-mji* (people) to the Hausa loanwords in deriving noun of agents and suffixation of plural marker *-ayeri* to derive plural form of the Hausa loanwords, *-kur* suffix to derive adjective from noun and (2) suffixation of possessive pronouns to indicate possessiveness. (3) Complete reduplication process was observed in the case of adverbs. The base is completely repeated as in *aru-aru* (long, long ago, many, many years ago); *dalla-dalla*, (clearly, in an orderly manner); *maza-maza*, (quickly); etc.

In a related development, Bukar and Jibir (2018), also examine the phonological behavior and adaptation of Hausa loanwords in Babur-Bura. A phonological analysis of the data collected enabled them to arrive at the following findings: (a) glottalization (/b/ > /b̥/), (b) deglottalization (/k̥/ > /k/), (c) sound substitution (/ɸ/ > /p/, /h/ > /ɸ/, /n/ > /r/, /r/ > /l/), (d) palatalization (/k/ or /kj/ > /tʃ/), (e) voicing (/k/ > /g/, /t/ > /d/), (f) vowel substitution (/i/ > /ə/, /u/ > /ə/), (g) insertion of (/a/, /h/, /m/ and /ŋ/ at the initial position, (/i/, /o/, /j/ at the medial position and (/m/, /ŋ/ /r/ and /u/) segments at the final position, the deletion of article (/al-/ at the initial position, (/i/ and /u/) vowels at the medial and final positions.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research, is synchronic in nature which involves fieldwork. Therefore, multiple methods of data collection were employed which includes, interview and speaker's intuition. The data was collected from forty-eight (48) informants, eight (8) from each Local Government Areas. These Local Government Areas are Bayo, Biu, Hawul and Kwaya-Kusar (of Borno state), Gujba and Gulani (of Yobe state).

The research informants were selected by means of simple random sampling. This means that all the members of the target population for the research were accessible, and each member had an equal chance of being selected. Therefore, this sampling technique was employed in such a way that limited number of people could be used as informants that could be extended to the larger population. The main aim of using simple random sampling techniques in the selection of the research subjects was to get native speakers capable of supplying the information needed for the research.

The data was collected from forty-eight (48) informants, eight (8) from each Local Government Areas. These Local Government Areas are Bayo, Biu, Hawul and Kwaya-Kusar (of Borno state), Gujba and Gulani (of Yobe state).

3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is on reduplication study of Pabər/Bura verbs which adopts Generative Phonological (GP) Theory. Generative phonology "is a particular theory of phonology developed in 1960s, in which highly abstract underlying representations are acted upon by a (possibly long) sequence of phonological rules to produce surface form (pronunciations)" Millar (2007:94). Similarly, Generative Phonology is a "subfield of the general theory of linguistics known as Generative Grammar. It assigns the correct phonetic representations to the utterances in such a way as to reflect a native speaker's internalized grammar which has two crucial components. (i) Levels of phonological representation and (ii) phonological rules" (Baba, 1998:88; Agbede 2015:153). According to Agbede (2015), GP posits two levels of phonological representation, an underlying representation is the most basic form of a word before any phonological rules applied to it. Underlying representation on the other hand is what a native speaker produces phonologically about the abstract underlying phonology of the language without the application of any phonological rule. A phonetic representation is the surface form of the utterance that is spoken and heard by the listeners of the uttered word. Phonological rules captured the transformational process of the underlying representation of the phonological representations. These include deletion, insertion, or change segments, or changes that occurred on phonetic segments features phonemically. Therefore, to Baba (1998:98) and Agbede, (2015:153) Generative Phonological Framework "is generally seen to be capable of describing many aspects of human language, particularly morphophonological issues". Using both morphological processes and phonological rules.

This approach came to prominence with the Chomsky and Halle's (1956), sound pattern of English which amplified the relevance of Generative Phonology in handling morphophonological issues using distinctive features for the purpose of formulating phonological rules for every phonological issue in natural language. In this perspective, one of the main aims is to factor out many more redundancy from the words phonological representations and to fill in these redundancies by rule. These highly abstract representations are presumed to form part of the speaker's knowledge of the language, that is, they might be how the words are encoded in the mental lexicon (Agbedo, 2015:154).

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analyzed focuses mainly on reduplication and the derivation of pluractional verb classes in Pabər/Bura. These verbs have been classified into four classes based on their respective vowel endings, i.e verb class (i) ends in /a/, /a:/, eg. /mása/ (buy), /psimtaa/ (to drop), class (ii) ends in /i/, /i:/ eg. /zùzùrì/ (to bow). /bùtsí/ (clap), class (iii) ends in /u/, /u:/ eg. /càntù/ (to show), /kùrakú/ (to shout) and verb class (iv) ends in consonants respectively, eg. /filinkir/ (to fall on something), /dlár/ (to help).

The Pabər/Bura verbal reduplication in the derivation of pluractional verbs exhibits two type of processes that are obtainable in natural languages. The available data shows partial and complete reduplication processes in the language.

4.1 Complete Reduplication in the Derivation of Verb Pluractional verbal

Form through Suffixation

Complete reduplication is when the entire morpheme is repeated without any overt change. "The morphological category which generally undergoes this process are verbs, the derivatives of which are traditionally referred to as pluractional" Aronoff & Fudeman (2005:77). This process is very common in Pabər/Bura language as presented in the tables below.

**TABLE 1: Complete Reduplication in the Derivation of Verb Class (i)
From Verb Class (iv) Plural form**

UR Monosyllabic Verb class (iv)	Complete Reduplication of verb class (i)	Suffixation of /- sì/Morpheme to derive verb class (ii)	SR Verb class (ii)	Gloss
/mbwà/ (tie)	/mbwàmbwà/	/mbwàmbw-sì/	[mb ^w àmb ^w àsí]	Pluractional 6erb
/zòrà/ (repeating)	/zòrtzòrà/	/zòrtzòrt-sì/	[z ^w òrtz ^w òrtási]	Pluractional verb
/nkèbà/ (press)	/nkèbnkèbà/	/nkèbnkèb-sì/	[ŋk ^y èb ŋk ^y èbsì]	Pluractional 6erb
/gìrtà/ (brush)	/gìrtgìrtà/	/gìrtgìrt-sì/	[g ^y ìrtg ^y ìrtási]	Pluractional verb
/kòbtà/ (squeeze)	/kòbtkòbtà/	/kòbtkòbt-sì/	[k ^w òbtk ^w òbtaší]	Pluractional verb
/nggìtà/ (endure)	/nggìtnggìtà/	/nggìtnggìt-sì/	[ŋggìtŋggìtìsì]	Pluractional verb

The data in table (1) above illustrates how derivational morpheme /-sì/ is suffixed to the complete reduplicated verb class (i) in the derivation of verb class (ii) plural form. The final tone of verb class (i) is maintained.

The morphophonological interaction evident here is as a result of change in the reduplicated verbs structure from /mbwò/ to [mb^wòmb^wòsí] and /zòrà/ to [z^wòrz^wòrsì] etc. which show the evidence of palatalization and labialization is what triggers the phonological changes. While, The change in the verb classes from class (i) to class (ii) is the morphological change in the verbs.

Thus, the phonological rule governing the plural formation for the complete reduplicated verb class (iv) could be formulated as follows:

Rule 17: CVCV + CVCV $\longrightarrow$ CVC + CVC + V # $\longrightarrow$ CVC+CV+CV#

The rule states that, close syllable becomes open in a complete reduplicated form in the derivation of plural verb class (i) word finally.

4.2 Partial Reduplication in the Derivation of Verb Pluractional verbal Form

Through Suffixation

A partial reduplication is when there is only “partial” repetition of a part of a word or base, as can be seen in following tables below:

Table 2: Partial Reduplication in the Derivation of Verb class (i) from Verb class (iii) plural form.

UR Verb class (iii)	Partial Reduplication of verb class (iii)	Suffixation of vowel /-à / after vowel /u/ deletion to derive verb class (i)	SR Verb class (I)	Gloss
/nggùrù/ (to drive)	/nggùrnggùrù/	/nggùrnggùr-à/	[ngg ^w ùrngg ^w ùrà]	Pluractional form
/nggìtù/ (to endure)	/nggìtnggìtù/	/nggìtnggìt-à/	[nggìtnggìtà]	Pluractional form
/nggwàrù/ (to stir)	/nggwàrnggwàrù/	/nggwàrnggwàr-à/	[nggwàrnggwàrà]	Pluractional form
/nggùlùmù/ (to chew)	/nggùlùmnggùlùmù/	/nggùlùmnggùlùm-à/	[ngg ^w ùlùmngg ^w ùlùmà]	Pluractional form

The data in table (2) above shows how derivational suffix morpheme /-a / is suffixed to the partial reduplicated form of verb class (iii) after ending vowel /u/ deletion from the basic verb. The final tone of verb class (iii) is maintained in the derivation of verb class (i) pluractional form. However, the deletion of /-u/ vowel becomes necessary so as to avoid /-u/+/a/ # > - /ua/ sequence which is unaccepted in the derivation of verb class (i).

The morphophonological interface evident here is as a result of change in the partial reduplicated verb structures from /nggùrù/ to [ngg^wùrngg^wùrà] and /nggìtù/ to [nggìtnggìtà] etc which show the evidence of palatalization and labialization also. Similarly, the vowel /-a/ is suffixed to the verb after deletion of the vowel /-u/ are what triggers the phonological changes in the verbs. The changes in the verb class from class (iii) to class (i) are the morphological changes in the verbs through derivational process.

Table 3: Partial Reduplication in the Derivation of Verb class (ii) from Verb Class (i) plural form

UR Verb class (i)	Partial Reduplication	Suffixation of /-rì / after the deletion of /a/ vowel Morpheme	SR Verb class (ii)	Gloss
/nàmà/	/nàmànàmà/	/nàmànàm-kir/	[nàmànàmàk ^y ir]	Pluractional form of make
/mbwà/	/mbwàmbwà/	/mbwàmbw-kir/	[mbwàmbwk ^y ir]	Pluractional form of tie up/arrest
/nkèḍà/	/nkèḍnkèḍà/	/nkèḍnkèḍ-kir/	[nk ^y èḍḍnk ^y èḍk ^y ir]	Pluractional form of to press

/tìrà/	/tìràtìrà/	/tìràtìr-kìr/	[tìràtìrk ^y ìr]	Pluractional form of to push
/mbùlà/	/mbùlmbùlà/	/mbùlmbùl-kìr/	[mbùlmbùlk ^y ìr]	Pluractional form of seize

The data in table (3) above clearly show the derivation of class (v) verb from class (i) verb through suffixation of a morpheme */-kìr/* to reduplicated form of verb class (i). It is also observed that after final vowel */a/* of the reduplicated form is deleted, is what make the reduplication to become partial in the derivation of the plural form of verb class (ii).

Similarly, the morphophonological interaction observed here is as a result of change in the structure of the verb, where verbs */nàmà/*, */mbwà/* becomes [nàmnàmàk^yìr] and [mbwàmbwk^yìr] after the suffixation of */-kìr/* morpheme. That is what triggers the phonological change as a result of automatic palatalization that occur as a result of */-k^yìr/* suffixation. The morphological change is due to the change in the verb class from class (1) to class (11) through derivation.

Table 4: Partial Reduplication in Derivation of Verb class (ii) from Verb

Class (i) plural form

UR Verb Class (i)	Partial Reduplication	Suffixation of <i>/-rì/</i> / Morpheme after vowel <i>/a/</i> deletion	SR Verb class (ii)	Gloss
/ntàkwà/	/ntàntàkwà/	/ntàntakwà-rì/	[ntàntakwàrì]	Pluractional form of to peck
/ntàtsà/	/ntàntàtsà/	/ntàntàtsà-rì/	[ntàntàtsàrì]	Pluractional form of to cut off part of it
/ntìhà/	/ntìntìhà/	/ntìntìhà-rì/	[ntìntìhàrì]	Pluractional form of to make mark/draw
/ntsàrà/	/ntsàntsàrà/	/ntsàntsàrà-rì/	[ntsàntsàràrì]	Pluractional form of to press
/ntsàrà/	/ntsàntsàrà/	/ntsàntsàrà-rì/	[ntsàntsàràrì]	Pluractional form of to step on something
/ntsìvà/	/ntsìntsìvà/	/ntsìntsìvà-rì/	[ntsìntsìvàrì]	Pluractional form of to inject

The examples in table (4) above show how derivational morpheme */-rì/* is suffixed to the partial reduplicated form in the derivation of verb class (ii) plural form. Similarly, there is also a case of final vowel deletion in the partial reduplicated part of the derived verb.

The morphophonological interface evident in the above table is as a result of change in verb structure as a result of reduplication. This is what triggers the phonological change in the verbs. Similarly, the change in verb classes from class (i) to class (ii) is what brings about the morphological change.

Table 5: Partial Reduplication in the Derivation of Verb class (ii) from

Verb class (i) Plural form.

UR Verb Class (i)		Suffixation of <i>/-rì/</i> / morpheme after vowel <i>/a/</i> deletion	SR Verb class (ii)	Gloss
/ndàsà/	/ndàndàsà/	/ndàndàsà-rì/	[ndàndàsàrì]	Pluractional form of to swallow
/ndàtà/	/ndàndàtà/	/ndàndàtà-rì/	[ndàndàtàrì]	Pluractional form of amazed/confused

/ndàbìlà/	/ndàndàbìlà/	/ndàndàbìlà-rì/	[ndàndàbìlàrì]	Pluractional form of to differentiate
/ndìgà/	/ndìndìgà/	/ndìndìgà-rì/	[ndìndìgàrì]	Pluractional form of to separate
/ndìgtà/	/ndìndìgtà/	/ndìndìgtà-rì/	[ndìndìgtàrì]	Pluractional form of to assign
/ndilà/	/ndìndilà/	/ndìndilà-rì/	[ndìndilàrì]	Pluractional form of to tie a knot
/ndòlà/	/ndòndòlà/	/ndòndòlà-rì/	[ndòndòlàrì]	Pluractional form of to twist

The data above clearly show how derivational morpheme /-rì/ is suffixed to the partially reduplicated form in the derivation of verb class (ii) plural form. The data reveals a case of final vowel /a/ deletion which makes it a partial reduplication in the derived verb.

Similarly, the morphophonological interaction observed in the data above is as a result of change in the structure of the verb which is due to this reduplication. That is what triggers the phonological change. While the morphological change is the change in the verb class from class (i) to class (ii) through derivation.

Table 6: Partial Reduplication in Derivation of Verb Class (ii) from Verb class (i) plural form.

UR Verb Class (i)	Partial reduplicatio	Suffixation of /-ì / morpheme after vowel /a/ deletion	SR Verb class (ii)	Gloss
/ncàbà/	/ncàbncàbà/	/ncàbncàbà-ì/	[ntʃàbntʃàbì]	Pluractional form of the verb press
/ncìbà/	/ncìbncìbà/	/ncìbncìbà-ì/	[ntʃìbntʃìbì]	Pluractional form of the verb fencing
/ncàkwà/	/ncàkwncàkwà/	/ncàkwncàkwà-ì/	[ntʃàkwntʃàkʷì]	Pluractional form of the verb implant
/ncàntà/	/ncàntncàntà/	/ncàntncàntà-ì/	[ntʃàntntʃàntì]	Pluractional form of the verb show
/ncàngtà/	/càngncàngtà/	/ncàngncàngtà-ì/	[ntʃàngntʃàngtì]	Pluractional form of the verb guide
/ncìwà/	/ncìwncìwà/	/ncìwncìwà-ì/	[ntʃìwntʃìwì]	Pluractional form of the verb transplant

The data in table (6) above indicate vowel /i/ suffixation to the partial reduplicated form in the derivation of verb class (ii) plural form. There is also a case of vowel /a/ deletion which makes the reduplication to be partial and also to give way for derivation of the verb class (ii) which ends in /i/ vowel.

The morphophonological interaction observed in the examples above is as a result of partial reduplication of the verbs which brings about change in their structures which triggers the phonological change through suffixation of /i/ vowel at the end of the words, while, the morphological change is the derivation of the verb from class (i) to class (ii) respectively.

Thus, the phonological rule governing the plural formation for the partial and complete reduplicated forms in the derivation of another verb for the data in tables (1 to 7) could be formulated as follows:

Rule 2: $C^1V^1 + C^1V^1 \longrightarrow C^1V^1 + C^1V^1 + C^2V^1 + C^1V^1 + C^1V^1 \#$

OR

$CV+CV \longrightarrow CV+CVC+CV+CV+CV$

The rule states that first syllable with one segment becomes two segments in the partially reduplicated verb form in plural formation.

5. CONCLUSION

In this research we have attempted to make an explicit analysis of the Pabər/Bura verbs. Generative Phonological Theory was adopted because it assigns the correct phonetic representations to the utterances in such a way to reflect a native speaker's internalized grammar. This analysis demonstrates that these processes occur as synchronic processes which are as a result of phonological and morphological alternation that occur in the environment of verbs derivation. In addition to discussing them and giving examples, the analysis attempts to formulate rules for the processes discussed.

The morphological alternations which occur across morpheme boundary includes, reduplication in the derivation of verb plural forms through suffixation. Reduplication can be partial or complete, a partial reduplication is when there is only "partial" repetition of a part of a word or base. While the complete is when the entire morpheme is repeated without any overt change. The study has shown that these alternations occur as synchronic processes in Pabər/Bura language which are as a result of phonological and morphological alternations which occur in an environment due to the appearance of vowels or morphemes.

Regarding how possible is it for the morphophonological operations and rules of Pabər/Bura verb class to be formulated? There are rules formulated for the alternations discussed, where the rules in the distinctive feature theory were used in formalizing the processes.

In the same vein, every morphophonological processes investigated the research has established all the interface found between phonology and morphology.

Finally, we cannot claim to have explore all the verbs of Pabər/Bura language. Therefore, we hope to shed some light on the morphophonological aspect of Pabər/Bura verbs. We have not touched other lexical items such verbal nouns, borrowed nouns and other monosyllabic verbs. Therefore, if research could be extended to such items it would contribute to a better understanding of Pabər/Bura language.

REFERENCES:

- Abdulmajid, A. M. (2000). *Luwanga Morphophonemics: A Natural Generative Phonology*. Unpublished M. A. Dissertation, University of Nairobi.
- Agbedo, C. U. (2015) *General Linguistics: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. Nsukka: Kumcee-Ntaeshe Press Inc.
- Akhmanova, O. (1971). *Phonology, Morphology, Morphology*. The Hague and Paris: Moutn. Online at: <https://www.Researchgate/publication/432603365>
- Akinlabi, A. (1996) Featural Affixation. *Journal of Linguistics* 32:234-289 Retrieved, 12th Dec. 2019, from www.jurtec.net/akinlabi96
- Aliero, M. A. (2015). *Aspect of the Morphology of C'lela*. Unpublished PhD. Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon.
- Baba, A. T. (1993). *The Morphophonological Alternations in the Hausa Verbal Forms*. Unpublished PhD. Thesis, Bayero University Kano.
- Baba, A. T. (1998). *The Morphophonological Alternations in the Hausa Verbal Forms*. *Berichte des Sonderforschungsbereichs* 268, 1.(12) Frankfurt.
- Badejo, B. R. & Bura Orthography Committee (1987). "Bura Language Orthography" *Orthographies of Nigerian Languages, Manual v*, Lagos National Language Centre.

- Bukar, M. and Jibir, S. (2016). Morphological Behaviour and Adaptation of Hausa Loanword in Babur-Bura. *Yobe Journal of Language, Literature and Culture*. 1:57-64. Yobe State University, Damaturu.
- Bukar, M. and Jibir, S. (2018). Phonological Behaviour and Adaptation of Hausa Loanword in Babur-Bura *Language, Communication and Society*. Festschrift in Honour of Professor B. R. Badejo. 1.280-220. LINCOM GmbH Muenchen Germany.
- Blench, R. (2009). *Bura Phonology and Some Suggestions Concerning the Orthography* [Draft Circulated for Comment]. Retrieved, 30th Nov, 2011, from www.rogerblench.info/RBOP.htm.
- Chomsky, N. and Halle, M. (1968). *The Sound Pattern of English*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Crystal, D. (2008). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. London: Blackwell Publishers.
- Davis, J. G. (1956). *Biu book*. Zaria: Norla Press.
- Ewekuosam E. Charle O. M. and Agyekum K. (2013). The Morphophonology of the Akan Reduplicated Verb-Form *Journal of Language and Linguistics Studies* 9(2). 45-56.
- Mohammed, S. and Badejo, B. R. (2000). An Ethnolinguistic Perspective of Bura System of Naming. *Mojolls Vol (II)* Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Maiduguri pp. 61-70.
- Mohammed, S. Shettima, A. K. and Mua'zu, M. A. (2002). Assimilation Processes in Bura. *Mojolls 1V (1)* Department of Languages and Linguistics, University of Maiduguri pp. 61-70.
- Mohammed, S. Dikwa, K. A. and Babikkoi, A. M. (2007). Consonant Variation in Bura Dialects. *Journal of Language, Culture and Communication (JLCC)* vol. 1(4). pp: 16-22.
- Mu'azu, M. A. (2012). A Descriptive Analysis of Bura Verbal Inflectional Suffixes. *Language Literature and Culture*. A Festschrift in Honour of Professor Abdulhamid Abubakar. PP: 38-45.
- Mu'azu, M. A. (2014). An AutoSegmental Analysis of Bura Verbs Tonal System. *Harshe Journal of African Languages*. Department of African Languages and Culture. Zaria: A. B. U. Pp.187-209.
- Mu'azu, M. A. & Balami, F. (2010). *A Descriptive Analysis of Bura Verb and Vocabulary*. Lincon Studies in African Linguistics Muenchen: Lincom GmbH.
- Haruna, Z. K. (1998). Bura folksongs: An Analysis of their types, Occasions, Themes, Techniques and Functions. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis Memorial University of Newfoundland.
- Yalwa, L. D. (1992). Arabic Loanwords in Hausa Ufahamu: *Journal of African Studies* Online at: DOI: 10.5070/f7203016759. Pp 101-131.



Social Media Interaction and the Construction of Pragmatic Meaning in Digital Space: Evidence from Nigerian Online Contexts

Khadijat Rabi'u Babajo¹, Mustapha Lawal Bagiwa² & Suleiman Aliyu³

^{1,2,3}Department of English,
Federal University, Dutsinma,
Katsina State
Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

The growth/spread of social media platforms has significantly transformed patterns of human interaction and the processes through which pragmatic meaning is constructed, particularly within African and Nigerian digital spaces. This paper investigates how pragmatic meaning is interactionally negotiated on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter (X), Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, with a specific focus on Nigerian online discourse. Drawing on pragmatic theory, politeness theory, face theory, and recent developments in digital pragmatics, the study examines how users employ linguistic, paralinguistic, and semiotic resources including emojis, code-switching, memes, hashtags, and indirectness to perform social actions and manage interpersonal relationships in digital space. Using naturally occurring social media data, the study demonstrates that pragmatic meaning in Nigerian digital interaction is culturally embedded, context dependent, and co-constructed through shared knowledge, sociocultural norms, and platform affordances. The paper argues for the necessity of African centred approaches to social media pragmatics in order to move beyond Western centric models of digital communication. The research adopts a qualitative, discourse analytic approach.

Keywords

social media interaction, pragmatic meaning, digital space, Nigerian discourse, emojis, code-switching

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

Introduction

Social media interaction has become one of the most dominant forms of communication in the twenty first century, reshaping how individuals construct meaning, negotiate relationships, and participate in social life. In Africa, and particularly in Nigeria, social media platforms have assumed functions far beyond casual communication, serving as spaces for political mobilisation, religious engagement, economic transactions, education, and everyday social interaction. Unlike face to face communication, interaction in digital space is characterised by the absence of physical or presence, reduced nonverbal cues, asynchronous participation, and an often-indeterminate audience. These features place a greater burden on pragmatic inference, requiring users to rely on contextual cues, shared cultural knowledge, and semiotic resources to interpret meaning. Consequently, pragmatic meaning on social media is not merely encoded in linguistic forms but is dynamically constructed through interaction.

Nigeria presents a particularly rich context for the study of social media pragmatics due to its multilingual environment, strong communal values, deep religious consciousness, and complex socio-political realities. Nigerian social media users frequently combine English with Nigerian

Pidgin, Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Arabic expressions, and indigenous idioms, creating layered meanings that are intelligible primarily through shared sociocultural competence.

This paper examines how social media interaction contributes to the construction of pragmatic meaning in digital space, using Nigerian online discourse as a case study. It argues that pragmatic meaning in African digital contexts is interactional, culturally grounded, and shaped by local communicative norms.

DIGITAL SPACE AS AN INTERACTIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN AFRICA

Digital space is not a neutral or culturally homogeneous environment. Rather, it is shaped by local social practices, values, and communicative traditions. In African contexts, digital interaction often reflects communal orientations to communication, respect for hierarchy, indirectness, and collective identity.

In Nigeria, platforms such as WhatsApp function as extensions of family compounds, religious gatherings, and community meetings. WhatsApp family groups, for example, replicate traditional interactional norms where elders are accorded respect, disagreement is often indirect, and humour is used to manage face threatening situations.

Twitter (popularly called Nigerian Twitter) functions as a public sphere where citizens engage in political commentary, social criticism, humour, and collective lamentation. Meaning in this space is frequently constructed through shared national experiences, sarcasm, memes, and hashtags that presuppose insider knowledge. Thus, digital space in Nigeria operates as an interactional environment where pragmatic meaning emerges through participation in culturally recognisable communicative practices.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Pragmatics and Meaning in Context

Pragmatics, as defined by Levinson (1983), is concerned with how meaning is inferred in relation to context. In digital communication, where contextual information is often fragmented, pragmatic interpretation becomes central to meaning construction.

Politeness and Face in Digital Interaction

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Goffman's concept of face are particularly relevant to Nigerian digital discourse. Nigerian users often employ indirectness, humour, emojis, and religious expressions to maintain face and avoid open confrontation, reflecting African politeness norms that prioritise harmony and respect.

Digital and Social Media Pragmatics

Social media pragmatics focuses on how meaning is constructed through interaction on digital platforms, taking into account platform affordances, multimodality, and user generated content. Meaning is co constructed not only between users but also through engagement with platform features such as likes, shares, emojis, and hashtags.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, discourse analytic approach. Data were drawn from WhatsApp group chats (family and community groups), Public Nigerian Twitter posts, Facebook comments on Nigerian news pages, Instagram captions and comment threads.

The data were analysed pragmatically, focusing on speech acts, implicature, politeness strategies, emoji use, code-switching, and contextual inference. Ethical considerations were observed by anonymising data and focusing on publicly available content.

CODE-SWITCHING AND PRAGMATIC MEANING IN NIGERIAN DIGITAL INTERACTION WITH EXAMPLES.

Code-switching is a salient feature of Nigerian social media discourse and functions as a powerful pragmatic resource.

Example 1 (WhatsApp):

“Please try and come early o, wallahi this thing is serious 🙏”

Here, English performs informational function, whereas Hausa (*wallahi*) signals sincerity, and the emoji reinforces urgency and appeal. The pragmatic meaning goes beyond literal instruction to convey seriousness, emotional involvement, and interpersonal concern.

EMOJIS AS PRAGMATIC RESOURCES IN NIGERIAN DIGITAL SPACE

Emojis play a central role in Nigerian digital interaction, often functioning as substitutes for gesture, tone, and facial expression.

Nigerian Pragmatic Uses of Emojis:

- 😂😂😂 → ridicule, mockery, shared humour
- 😭😭 → exaggerated frustration or laughter
- 🙏 → prayer, appeal, gratitude, resignation
- 💀 → shock, disbelief, dark humour

Example 2 (Twitter):

“Government said fuel price will reduce 😂😂😂”

In Nigerian Twitter discourse, the emoji 😂 does not always indicate humour; pragmatically, it may signal sarcasm, dismissal, or indirect insult.

Thus, emojis in Nigerian digital space are interactional markers, not universal emotional signs.

RELIGION AND PRAGMATIC MEANING ONLINE

Religious expressions are deeply embedded in Nigerian digital interaction with expressions such as;

“By God’s grace”

“Allah ya kiyaye”

“God forbid”

Are frequently used pragmatically, and they function as withdrawal from conflict, moral positioning, indirect accusation. Soften refusal Express hope etc. Such expressions allow users to perform face saving acts while conveying strong evaluative meanings.

Example 3 (Facebook):

“May God judge between us 🙏”

“We will see tomorrow, by God’s grace 🙏”

Pragmatically, this may imply uncertainty, surrender or polite avoidance rather than firm commitment.

POLITICAL DISCOURSE AND COLLECTIVE PRAGMATIC MEANING

African communicative culture values respect, hierarchy, and face-saving. These values extend into digital interaction.

Hashtags such as #EndSARS, #FuelSubsidy, #NigeriaDecides function as collective speech acts, constructing shared pragmatic meaning and political identity across large audiences. Individual posts gain meaning through participation in collective interaction rather than isolated interpretation.

Nigerian users often avoid direct criticism by using humour, employing emojis, switching to indigenous languages, or framing statements as jokes. This aligns with Brown and Levinson’s

politeness theory but also reflects African face systems, where communal harmony often outweighs individual assertiveness.

FINDINGS AND RECOMENDATION

The findings of this research reveal that pragmatic meaning in Nigerian digital space is interactionally constructed, while relying on shared sociocultural knowledge, and is shaped by multilingualism. Social media users employ emojis as pragmatic cues, by reflecting on African norms of politeness and communalism. Western models of digital pragmatics alone are insufficient to capture these dynamics.

The research also recommends that continuation of using social media interaction in Nigerian will contributes to applied linguistics by expanding pragmatic theory to African digital contexts, media studies by highlighting culturally situated meaning making, and digital communication studies by emphasising interaction over textual determinism.

CONCLUSION

This paper has demonstrated that social media interaction in Nigerian and African contexts is a complex, culturally embedded process through which pragmatic meaning is collaboratively constructed. Digital space is not merely a technological environment but a sociocultural arena shaped by local norms, values, and communicative traditions. Understanding pragmatic meaning in such contexts requires culturally grounded analytical frameworks that recognise the interactional nature of digital discourse.

REFERENCES

- Barbulet, G. (2013). "Social Media- A Pragmatic Approach: Contexts & Implicatures". *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*.
- Chung, S. and Liu, H. (2023). "The pragmatics of social media: Introduction". *International Review of Pragmatics*.
- Gallager, R. (2007) "Principles of Digital Communication". (NP)
- Khan, S., Geng, H., Larsari, V., and Sain, Z. (2023). "The Evolving Role of Social Media in Modern Marketing Communications: Navigating Challenges and Opportunities". September 2023. *International Journal of Marketing and Digital Creative*
- KhosraviNik, M. (2020) "Digital meaning making across content and practice in social media critical discourse studies" *Critical Discourse Studies: Routledge Studies*.
- Kowalczyk, J. (2020). "The Pragmatic and Stylistic Aspects of Communication between State Authorities and the Citizen within e Administration in Poland". *Int J Semiot Law*.
- Lee, J. (2019) "Digital communication, social media, and Englishes" (NP)
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pohl, Henning, Christian Domin, and Michael Rohs. 2017. "Beyond Just Text: Semantic Emoji Similarity Modeling to Support Expressive Communication." *ACM, Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction* 24 (1): article 6. doi>10.1145/3039685.
- Sun, Y., Wang, G. and Feng, H. (2021). "Linguistic Studies on Social Media: A Bibliometric Analysis".



Festin des Élites face à la Misère Populaire : Une Lecture Postcoloniale de *De la Chaire au Trône* d'Amadou Koné

Musa Yusuf Ya'u¹, Amos Bala² & Ahmad Umar Sanda³

^{1&2}Department of Languages and Linguistics

University of Maiduguri,

³Department of French,

Federal University, Dutsinma,

Katsina State

Nigeria.

Résumé

Cette étude analyse, à partir d'une approche postcoloniale, la représentation de l'avidité des élites et de la misère populaire dans *De la chaire au trône* d'Amadou Koné. Elle part du constat que les indépendances africaines, porteuses de promesses de justice sociale et de développement, ont rapidement laissé place à une profonde désillusion en raison des dérives des nouvelles élites dirigeantes. L'objectif est de montrer comment Koné met en scène l'échec du leadership postcolonial à travers le personnage du Prince, ancien professeur devenu dirigeant, qui renonce progressivement à ses idéaux pour se consacrer au luxe, au pouvoir et aux plaisirs personnels. L'analyse textuelle révèle que le palais symbolise la richesse, les privilèges et la jouissance des élites, tandis que les bidonvilles incarnent la pauvreté, l'exclusion et les inégalités subies par la majorité de la population. L'étude montre également que les nouvelles élites reproduisent les logiques de domination héritées du système colonial, perpétuant ainsi les injustices sociales. En proposant une lecture postcoloniale centrée sur les rapports entre pouvoir, richesse et marginalisation, cette recherche enrichit les études critiques consacrées au théâtre d'Amadou Koné et met en évidence le rôle de la littérature comme espace de dénonciation des dérives du pouvoir et de réflexion sur les enjeux de la gouvernance en Afrique postcoloniale.

Abstract

This study examines, through a postcolonial lens, the representation of elite greed and popular poverty in Amadou Koné's *De la chaire au trône*. It is grounded in the observation that African independence, which initially raised hopes for social justice and development, was soon followed by profound disillusionment as the excesses of the new ruling elites became apparent. The objective is to demonstrate how Koné portrays the failure of postcolonial leadership through the character of the Prince, a former university professor who gradually abandons his ideals in favour of power, luxury, and personal pleasure. Textual analysis reveals that the palace symbolises the wealth, privilege, and indulgence of the ruling class, whereas the slums represent the poverty, exclusion, and inequalities experienced by the majority of the population. The study further shows that the new African elites reproduce the structures of domination inherited from colonial rule, thereby perpetuating social injustice. By offering a postcolonial reading centred on the relationships between power, wealth, and marginalisation, this research enriches existing scholarship on Amadou Koné's drama and highlights the role of literature as a medium for exposing political abuses and fostering critical reflection on the challenges of governance in postcolonial Africa.

Keywords

littérature africaine, postcolonialisme, leadership, élites, pouvoir, inégalités sociales, Amadou Koné

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

Introduction

La décolonisation a suscité un immense espoir chez les peuples africains, qui y voyaient l'avènement d'une ère nouvelle, marquée par la fin des discriminations et des injustices sociales. Cependant, cet optimisme initial a rapidement laissé place à une profonde désillusion. Loin d'apporter l'apaisement attendu, les indépendances ont été suivies de nombreux troubles politiques. Les jeunes États africains peinent à instaurer une gouvernance stable et équitable, demeurant ainsi le théâtre de crises persistantes.

Au cœur de ces difficultés se trouve la question du leadership, l'un des problèmes majeurs des sociétés africaines postcoloniales. Cette problématique a d'ailleurs suscité l'intérêt de nombreux écrivains africains, lesquels interrogent de manière critique les motivations et les pratiques de la classe dirigeante. Parmi ces écrivains nous pouvons en citer quelques-uns : Ahmadou Kourouma dans *Les soleils des indépendances* (1968), Mongo Beti dans *Trop de soleil tue l'amour*, Sony Labou Tansi dans *La vie et demie*, Aminata Sow Fall dans *L'ex-père de la nation* (1987), Zegoua Gbessi Nokan dans *Les petites rivières* (1983), Sembène Ousmane dans *Le dernier de l'Empire* (1981), Alioum Fantoure dans *Le cercle des Tropiques*, Aimé Césaire dans *La Tragédie du Christophe et Une saison au Congo*, Bernard Dadié dans *Monsieur Thôgô-gnini*, Sylvain Bemba dans *L'Homme qui tua le crocodile*, Maxime N'Debeka dans *Le Président*, et Eugene Dervain dans *Les Termites* pour ne citer que quelques-uns. Ces écrivains s'engagent à éveiller la conscience de leurs compatriotes, contre les dérives des nouveaux maîtres de l'Afrique dont les régimes ont entraîné corruption, violence, népotisme, coups d'État et dictatures, etc. Jacques Chevrier parle d'une nouvelle littérature :

Les années soixante-dix donnent en effet naissance à une nouvelle littérature qui prend ses distances vis-à-vis des idées et des positions défendues par Léopold Senghor et ses amis (...) et dans laquelle les thèmes du conflit des cultures et de la quête de l'identité perdue cèdent peu à peu la place à la satire sociale et politique et à l'analyse des mutations d'un monde en crise. (8)

En effet, les leaders africains sont notoires pour leur abus de pouvoir de tous genres, notamment sous les dictatures mais aussi bien dans les démocraties. Les leaders noirs qui se trouvent au pouvoir n'ont rien ou peu fait pour améliorer les conditions de vie de leurs concitoyens. Les nouveaux dirigeants sont motivés par la conquête du matérialisme et de l'érotisme dans tous les sens du terme, en laissant la majorité du peuple dans des conditions déplorables et misérables. Ces leaders sont plus portés sur leur propre prospérité que sur le bien-être de la population. Une fois au pouvoir, ces dirigeants deviennent pires que les colonisateurs blancs. À travers des œuvres engagées, les écrivains mettent en lumière les contradictions des sociétés postcoloniales et interrogent la responsabilité des élites dirigeantes dans la perpétuation des injustices.

La présente étude examine l'avidité et la vie luxueuse des dirigeants africains. Notre attention se focalise sur le leadership du personnage principal le Prince. Attendu que leadership est à avoir avec l'influence d'un individu sur un groupe, le Prince aux mots d'Onyemelukwe « ne se contente pas de l'épanouissement au niveau de soi mais il veut influencer positivement la vie d'autrui, changer de manière significative le destin collectif » (12). Le Prince est un leader en contact avec la civilisation européenne, il cherche désespérément à améliorer la condition de vie de son peuple, à faire venir le progrès dans sa communauté arriérée. Dès lors, une question centrale se pose : comment expliquer que les dirigeants africains, porteurs d'ambitions d'espoirs au lendemain des indépendances, deviennent les acteurs d'un système marqué par l'avidité, le luxe et le mépris des populations ?

Pour répondre à cette problématique, il convient d'analyser, à partir de *De la chaire au trône* de Koné, la représentation d'un pouvoir dévoyé, caractérisé par la quête effrénée de richesses et de plaisirs, ainsi que ses conséquences sur les conditions de vie des populations.

Résumé de *De la chaire au trône*

De la chaire au trône est l'histoire d'un professeur d'université qui a signé un pacte avec sa tribu. Il a accepté de devenir Prince et de mourir à la fin de la douzième année de règne. Douze années écoulées, le Prince refuse de mourir. La nuit où il devra mourir, il s'entretient avec la jeune fille avec laquelle il a partagé sa vie durant les six dernières années du règne. Il s'inquiète pour elle : que deviendra-t-elle après sa mort ? Il lui confie les raisons qui l'ont poussé à accepter le pacte avec sa tribu. Il sera bientôt minuit, l'heure fatale. Tandis que le Prince se retire pour prendre un bain, trois vieillards entrent et remettent à la jeune fille l'aiguille mortelle avec laquelle elle doit le tuer. Le secret de la mort du Prince est lié à la dernière fille qui a vécu avec lui. C'est à elle de le faire passer dans l'au-delà. Le Prince resvient, s'assoit dans un fauteuil et s'endort. La jeune fille avance avec l'aiguille. La coutume doit s'accomplir. Mais elle ne peut finalement se résoudre à utiliser l'aiguille. Le Prince alors se lève, il ne dort pas. Il lui explique que son sommeil n'est qu'une feinte comme son refus de mourir. Il n'a pour but que de torturer une dernière fois les gardiens de la coutume, ceux qui l'ont empêché d'accomplir son projet et d'utiliser les richesses du royaume pour réduire l'écart entre les riches et les pauvres. Il lui avoue que ce bonheur qu'il n'a pu offrir à la masse, il la reconduit sur elle en la choisissant, en lui offrant le confort et le plaisir. Il a voulu la sauver, elle, faute de pouvoir sauver tous les hommes. Finalement la jeune fille emmène le Prince dans leur chambre et choisit de mourir à ses côtés.

Ahmadou Koné et son œuvre

Avant d'entamer notre analyse, nous jugeons nécessaire de faire un aperçu des critiques déjà effectuées sur le corpus de base afin de mieux situer la présente étude. Il est important de noter que les œuvres littéraires de Koné ont peu attiré l'attention du monde critique, malgré sa réputation internationale. Onyemelukwe constate que « l'effort d'Amadou Koné dans le cadre de l'engagement littéraire est fort louable, malgré le fait que ses œuvres – récits, nouvelles, romans et surtout pièces théâtrales, n'attirent pas encore l'attention de beaucoup de chercheurs et de critiques littéraires » (3).

Pour la critique Onyemelukwe, Koné dans *De la chaire au trône*, semble parodier la tendance dictatoriale chez les leaders africains de l'ère postindépendance. Le personnage principal, le Prince cherche à élonger son régime et se faire dictateur. (73). Elle soumet que *De la chaire au trône* est la critique des mœurs politiques en l'occurrence, la tendance à la dictature chez les leaders ivoiriens... (19). Quant à Fiangor, il est d'opinion que Koné aborde le thème de « la tradition et ses poids ». Il attribue l'échec du Prince à transformer la société à la nature en disant : « les pesanteurs traditionnelles persistent dans la société et empêchent les populations d'évoluer suivant des modèles émancipateurs » (72). Pour en finir, le critique Kwahulé observe que *De la chaire au trône* est une pièce centrée sur un trône vidé de ses pouvoirs, marquée par la jouissance, la fatalité de la mort et une fatalité de jouissance.

Du projet idéaliste au plaisir : analyse personnage princier

Koné met le lecteur en contact avec la réalité sociopolitique des dirigeants africains. Les leaders, qui avant d'accéder au pouvoir ont de bonnes intentions et de bonnes visions, des leaders porteurs d'espoirs de leurs peuples. Le Prince est leader qui a de bonnes intentions et des bonnes visions. Il cherche à amener le développement au niveau de sa communauté arriérée, qui résiste un changement positif. La question qu'on se pose c'est ; réussit-il dans sa tâche ?

Le Prince, dans *De la chaire au trône*, comme le titre le connote est un professeur de l'université qui laisse la chaire pour devenir un prince. Le Prince avant même de devenir un prince était préoccupé de la condition humaine. Il ne se contente pas de l'épanouissement au niveau de soi mais il veut influencer positivement la vie d'autrui. Voici son propos : « J'avais cessé de penser à moi tout seul. Je réfléchissais à la condition humaine... » (113). Le prince est un homme de bonnes intentions, qui veut influencer les circonstances, changer les hommes pour qu'ils puissent refaire le monde. Un homme ambitieux, qui cherche à réduire l'écart entre les riches et les pauvres. Le Prince : « Je suis rentré dans mon pays pour changer. Je t'ai dit, je faisais tout avec passion et je voulais que ça change brusquement, je le reconnais. Mais comment pouvais-je faire changer les choses, moi un simple

professeur, si non en parlant. Oui, j'ai parlé... Je m'y suis mis » (115). En tant que Professeur, il s'est engagé à défendre des gens en situation malheureux, en luttant contre l'injustice et les abus des patrons envers leurs ouvriers. Il est un homme au service des autres. Écoutons-le :

J'ai appelé les choses par leur nom. Dans les bureaux je criais après les commis...J'injuriais, quand j'en avais l'occasion, les patrons qui maltrahaient leurs ouvriers... j'ai continué à essayer de changer les choses et je faisais conférences sur conférences. Ah ! Que de nuits blanches passées pour préparer des hommes (115).

Le Prince, d'après ces paroles, semble refléter les leaders-protagonistes Ousmaniens (leaders syndicalistes), les leaders qui sont conscient de leur situation déplorable. D'après Onyemelukwe « they recognise the need to raise the awareness of masses whom they lead and fight relentlessly to liberate them from colonial domination and oppression » (17). La différence entre les héros Ousmaniens et le Prince, ici, est que les premiers luttent contre les méfaits de l'administration coloniale alors que le Prince lutte contre l'injustice et les abus sociales dans les pays africains nouvellement indépendants.

En empruntant le mot du premier garde, le Prince trop « ambitieux » (123), de retour à son pays s'est engagé d'y effectuer du changement, de faire un effort pour réduire l'écart entre « les favorisés et les déshérités » (114). Le prince constate qu'il est : « impuissant à changer quoi que ce soit » (116). Les bonnes intentions, les bons rêves et les illusions perdues, le prince ne vit que d'amertume. Ses premiers objectifs ont été ainsi trahis. Alors, il accepte le pacte de laisser la chaire pour le trône. Le critique Koffi Kwahulé qualifie ce héros konéen comme : « un héros régressif qui va de l'universel au particulier, de la ville à la campagne, du présent au passé, du modernisme au traditionalisme » (118).

De la chaire au trône, reflète la peinture par excellence de cette réalité sociopolitique de l'Afrique postcoloniale où les dirigeants africains se complaisent tôt dans le penchant de se servir à leur faim, tout en ignorant les conditions pitoyables de leurs compatriotes dont ils ont promis d'améliorer le sort. Le village décrit dans le récit représente symboliquement un État africain quelconque, dont la gestion est confiée à ses propres fils après l'indépendance. Dès le début de l'œuvre, l'auteur dresse un portrait évocateur de ce pays :

Un pays où la condition humaine est la même que partout ailleurs avec d'un côté joie débordante de vivre et l'autre côté tragique réalité...Un pays où la misère inonde l'abondance, la cupidité et l'égoïsme émoussent les derniers élans de la dignité humaine... un pays où les superbes villas font divorce avec les taudis des bidonvilles. Où souvent et toujours on rit ici et on pleure là (79).

Ce passage illustre avec force les contradictions qui caractérisent les sociétés africaines postcoloniales, marquées par un contraste saisissant entre richesse et misère. Les dirigeants y mènent une vie de luxe et de débauche, tandis que la majorité de la population vit dans des conditions dégradantes. Le personnage du Prince incarne parfaitement cette figure du leader africain. Avant son accession au pouvoir, il nourrit des ambitions nobles et exprime une volonté sincère d'améliorer le sort de son peuple. Il déclare :

En vérité, quand je venais, ce n'était pas pour jouir uniquement, je pensais pouvoir changer quelque chose...Je voulais faire de ma venue dans la tribu une espèce de résurrection, oui, je pensais qu'avec les richesses qu'on mettrait à ma disposition, je pourrais aider la tribu et en faire une sorte de petit paradis. (117)

Cependant, une fois installé au pouvoir, il abandonne rapidement ses idéaux. Comme de nombreux dirigeants africains, il se laisse séduire par les plaisirs liés à sa position. Le palais dans lequel il réside

devient alors le symbole d'un univers de jouissance, où abondent mets raffinés, boissons exquises et plaisirs charnels.

Koné peint les leaders et d'autres gens de l'autorité postcoloniale, incompetents, malhonnêtes, corrompus et égoïstes. Lui (Le Prince) qui croit pouvoir utiliser les richesses mise à sa disposition pour aider la tribu comme ces leaders africains. Il se laisse emporter par les plaisirs du palais. Ce palais du Prince symbolise une place de jouissance, où ces leaders sont entourés de tous les plaisirs de la vie, des menus délicieux, des boissons extraordinaires, des jouissances des femmes. Le témoignage du narrateur Voyageur met en évidence cette réalité : « ... si j'étais génie...je me servais de mes pouvoirs pour bâtir un palais comme celui-là. Et je vivrais dedans, respirant les plus doux parfums, dégustant les meilleurs plats et toujours dans les bras des plus belles filles de la terre » (91). Le propos du voyageur, reflète le portrait des dirigeants africains qui ont accédé au pouvoir pour des instincts personnels, les leaders excessivement enrichis sur les fonds publics. Ces leaders ne s'intéressent qu'aux richesses qu'ils accumulent et à la jouissance. Le milieu où ils résident est représenté, ici par le palais, qui est une place de plaisirs et jouissance. Selon le Voyageur porte-parole de Koné, « Heureux sont les mortels qui vivaient là (le palais) » (81).

La classe dirigeante africaine vit dans les jolis palais, ce que le Voyageur qualifie d'une « espèce de paradis, un domaine des dieux » (81). Le Prince vit dans un joli palais, où il a droit à tous les plaisirs de la terre : mets rares, boissons délicieuses, femmes de son choix. Chaque matin, on lui présente deux jeunes filles vierges parmi lesquelles il choisit une pour la journée et la nuit. Cette quête effrénée de plaisirs est également illustrée par la comparaison avec Jean-cœur-de-pierre dans *La vie et demie*, personnage emblématique de la démesure et de l'excès. Celui-ci est capable de féconder toutes les femmes du pays. La preuve en est qu'il réussit à satisfaire cinquante jeunes vierges recrutées dans tout le pays. La scène est télévisée et radiodiffusée pour montrer sa capacité sexuelle :

L'amusement et le plaisir étaient le propre même de l'être de Jean - cœur - de - pierre [...] Pour s'amuser Jean - cœur - de pierre instaura la nuit de l'opinion, celle 24 décembre où les tracts pouvaient se jeter à volonté [...]. A cette époque, Jean - cœur - de - pierre prétendit que son père lui était apparu et lui avait donné des instructions sur sa progéniture. On avait préparé cinquante lits dans l'une des trois milles chambres du palais de Miroirs [...] C'était dans la chambre rouge, la seule du palais des Miroirs qui ne fut pas bleue [...] On fit entrer cinquante vierges choisies parmi les plus belles du pays. Fraîchement baignées, massées, parfumées [...] On déshabilla les vierges, on les coucha sur le lit dont le numéro 1 correspondait à celui écrit sur le ventre juste au-dessus du nombril. Le guide portait numéro 1, les vierges étaient numérotées de 2 à 51. Jean-cœur-de- pierre [...] accomplit son premier tour de lit en trois heures vingt-six minutes et douze secondes (146-148).

Le Prince et Jean-cœur-de-pierre sont portés sur l'assouvissement de leurs penchants pour les plaisirs charnels, dont les festins et les pulsions libidinales. Le Prince comme les dirigeants africains sont aux mots de Kuju : « généralement motivés par les instincts narcissiques, oscillant souvent entre le ventre et le bas-ventre » (339). Le prince a passé tout son règne à jouir.

Pendant ce temps, la population demeure plongée dans la misère et le désenchantement. Le narrateur Voyageur, porte-parole du peuple, met en lumière le contraste frappant entre les conditions de vie des dirigeants et celles des citoyens ordinaires :

Joli palais ! Oui, joli palais en vérité ! Si j'en juge par la façade, l'intérieur doit être une espèce de paradis, un domaine des dieux. Heureux sont les mortels qui vivent là. Joli palais et curieux pays ! Je viens de dépasser la ville proche et Dieu sait si elle est misérable avec ses masures délabrées, ses toits de tôle rouillée, sa marmaille sale dans ses rues sordides. Quel contraste ! (81).

Ce contraste révèle une profonde inégalité sociale, héritée en partie du système colonial. La ville postcoloniale reste marquée par une forte stratification sociale, opposant quartiers luxueux et bidonvilles insalubres. Cette dualité rappelle celle décrite dans *Ville cruelle*, où s'opposent espaces de richesse et zones de pauvreté. Tanga Nord et Tanga Sud. Au Tanga Nord, c'est la richesse, tandis qu'au Sud, c'est la misère. Au Nord vivent les dominants, au Sud les dominés. Au Nord les colonisateurs, au Sud, les colonisés. Au Nord ceux qui disposent du pouvoir et de l'argent, au Sud le gagne-petit et les chômeurs sans avenir et sans espoir. Le Sud travaille pour le Nord. Le matin, il se vide de sa population qui se rend au Nord où il exerce de petits métiers au profit des Blancs. Vendeurs dans les boutiques, boys, garçons de course, balayeurs. L'indépendance a changé la couleur des riches qui sont désormais les Noirs. Mais la juxtaposition très contrastée de l'extrême misère pour le grand nombre et de la richesse pour une négligeable minorité. Selon, Kuju :

La ville postcoloniale garde encore les structures de la stratification sociale léguées par le système colonial. Ainsi, il y abonde, d'une part, des cités réservées bien aménagées, et d'autre part des quartiers ou bidonvilles mal entretenus. Alors que les unes sont occupées par des dignitaires, des hauts fonctionnaires et d'autres élus du système en place, les autres sont habitées par les damnés de la terre. Les unes, situées aux lieux choisis de la ville, luisent avec leurs villas splendides et immenses, bien équipées. Les autres, situées à l'écart du centre-ville, dégoûtent avec leurs bicoques, dénuées. (111)

Ainsi, l'indépendance n'a pas véritablement transformé les structures sociales, mais a simplement modifié l'identité des élites dominantes. Les anciens colonisateurs ont été remplacés par une classe dirigeante locale, qui reproduit les mêmes mécanismes d'exploitation. Cette ségrégation est la raison pour laquelle le Voyageur le qualifie « curieux pays » (81) où la classe dirigeante vit dans les belles maisons aux beaux quartiers différemment de la majorité de la population qui sont entassées dans des bidonvilles. Cette comparaison du palais et de l'autre ville que le Voyageur vient de passer reflète par excellent la situation sociopolitique de la ville africaine à l'ère postcoloniale. Le palais représente le milieu, où habitent la classe dirigeante et les autres privilégiés. L'image que nous présente le Voyageur dans l'autre ville est celle de la misère, de l'injustice sociale, de la répression et de l'exploitation du peuple par la classe dirigeante. Koné semble, nous présenter la population africaine où la majorité vit au-dessous du seuil de la pauvreté, de la misère, de l'injustice, de la répression et de l'exploitation. Une image attestée par le Prince lui-même : « Je réfléchissais à la condition humaine. J'ai vu qu'il y avait trop de misère au monde. Partout. Trop de misère... » (113). Le récit du narrateur Voyageur, relatant son expérience de travailleur, illustre cette réalité :

... J'ai été cuisinier boy...il faut préparer les meilleurs repas pour le maître et le soir rentrer chez soi pour manger des saletés...je suis devenu manœuvre dans une entreprise de construction. Ah ! On construisait de belles maisons, de très belles villas. Le travail se faisait matin, midi, et soir, sous le soleil, la pluie. Le soir, quand je me retrouvais chez moi dans le bidonville, je ne pouvais m'empêcher de comparer ma boîte aux belles villas que nous construisions. J'en ai eu assez, je suis parti. (93)

Ce témoignage met en évidence l'injustice sociale et l'exploitation dont sont victimes les populations les plus défavorisées. Le Prince, installé dans le palais, oublie sa vision et sa mission de réduire l'écart entre les riches et les pauvres. Par les comportements du Prince, il est facile de déduire que le Prince se concentre sur la jouissance au lieu d'épanouir sa communauté. Ceci reflète l'état de gouvernance des pays africains caractérisée par le problème de leadership. Nombreux leaders africains se sont engagés dans des pratiques et des comportements qui n'ont pas favorisé et ne favorisent pas le

développement de leurs pays. Koné dans cette pièce, nous révèle ainsi la vie excessive ou outrancière de nos leaders. La plupart de ces leaders vivent au détriment de leurs peuples.

Conclusion

Cette étude démontre que *De la chaire au trône* d'Amadou Koné constitue une critique virulente du leadership africain postcolonial. À travers le personnage du Prince, l'auteur met en scène la transformation d'un dirigeant animé par des idéaux de justice en un homme dominé par le pouvoir, le luxe et les plaisirs personnels. Le Prince symbolise ainsi les élites africaines qui trahissent les aspirations populaires une fois au pouvoir. L'approche postcoloniale permet de mettre en évidence les contradictions des sociétés africaines après les indépendances. Le palais et les bidonvilles représentent respectivement les espaces de privilège et de marginalisation sociale. Cette opposition révèle la permanence des inégalités et de l'exclusion dans les États postcoloniaux. Koné montre que les nouvelles élites reproduisent souvent les mécanismes de domination hérités de la colonisation. L'œuvre dénonce une gouvernance fondée sur l'intérêt personnel plutôt que sur le bien-être collectif. Elle invite ainsi à une réflexion sur les responsabilités éthiques et politiques des dirigeants africains. Cette recherche contribue à enrichir les études consacrées au théâtre d'Amadou Koné en proposant une lecture centrée sur l'avidité des élites et la misère populaire. Elle met également en évidence l'intérêt de l'approche postcoloniale pour comprendre les rapports entre pouvoir, richesse et injustice sociale dans l'œuvre. En outre, elle comble une lacune de la critique en analysant cette problématique sous un angle encore peu exploré. Elle ouvre ainsi de nouvelles perspectives de recherche sur la représentation du leadership dans le théâtre africain contemporain. En définitive, *De la chaire au trône* s'impose comme une œuvre de dénonciation et de conscientisation face aux dérives du pouvoir. Elle rappelle enfin que le véritable leadership repose sur le service du peuple, la justice sociale et la recherche du bien commun.

Œuvres citées

- Beti Mongo. *Ville cruelle*. Paris : Présence africaine, 1954
- Chevrier, Jacques. *Littérature nègre*. Paris : Armand Colin, 1984.
- Fiangor, Rogo Koffi. *Le théâtre africain francophone : analyse de l'écriture, de l'évolution et des rapports interculturels*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 2002.
- Koné, Amadou. *De la chaire au trône*. Paris : Hatier International, 2002.
- Kuju, Chris Michael. « Du ventre au bas- ventre : analyse sociocritique du pouvoir dans le roman africain ». Ifeoma Mabel Onyemelukwe, ed. *New Perspectives in African Literature and Criticism*. Zaria: Department of French, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, (2015): 338-351.
- Kwahulé, Koffi. *Pour une critique du théâtre ivoirien contemporain*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996.
- Onyemelukwe, Ifeoma. *The Theme of Madness in African Literature*. Zaria: Labelle Educational Publishers, 2009.
- . « Tragédie, pharmakos et catharsis : une étude de *Le respect des morts* et *De la chaire au trône* d'Amadou Koné » *Northern Inter-University French Journal* 2.1 (2010) : 3-28.
- . *Violence and Politics in Postcolonial Literature*. Zaria: Labelle Educational Publishers, 2009.
- Tansi, Sony Labou. *La vie et demie*. Paris: Seuil, 1979.



La déscolarisation des filles comme violence structurelle dans le Roman Francophone Africain : une étude des textes choisis

Musa Yusuf Ya'u¹, Fatima Musa² & Hadiza Kamilu³

¹Department of Languages and Linguistics

University of Maiduguri,

^{2&3}Department of French,

Federal University, Dutsinma,

Katsina State

Nigeria.

RESUME

La présente étude, fondée sur l'approche sociocritique de Claude Duchet, met en évidence les Africaines à travers les romans *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur* de Mongo Beti, *Rebelle* de Fatou Keïta et *Les impatientes* de Djaili Amadou Amal que la déscolarisation des filles constitue une forme de violence structurelle dans les sociétés. L'étude démontre que les traditions patriarcales privilégient souvent la scolarisation des garçons au détriment de celle des filles. Ainsi, de nombreuses filles sont fréquemment arrachées de l'école afin être mariées précocement. Dans les corpus de base, Perpétue dans *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur*, est forcée d'abandonner ses études pour être mariée malgré son intelligence et son rêve d'être une infirmière. De même Ramla dans *Les impatientes*, voit ses ambitions scolaires détruites par un mariage imposé, tandis que Malimouna dans *Rebelle*, est privée d'accès scolaire dès son enfance à cause des inégalités sociales et du statut défavorisé accordé aux filles. Les auteurs étudiés dénoncent les conséquences psychologiques, sociale et économiques de cette déscolarisation. Ils présentent l'éducation comme un moyen essentiel d'émancipation et d'autonomie pour les femmes. En conclusion, l'étude invite à un changement des mentalités et garantir aux filles un accès égal et durable à l'éducation.

ABSTRACT

This study, based on the sociocritical approach developed by Claude Duchet, highlights the fact that girls' school dropout is a form of structural violence in many African societies in *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur* de Mongo Beti, *Rebelle* de Fatou Keïta and in *Les impatientes* de Djaili Amadou Amal. It demonstrates that patriarchal traditions often favour boys' education at the expense of girls' schooling. As a result, many young girls are withdrawn from schooling in order to be married off at an early age.

In the works studied, Perpétue in *Perpétue et l'habitude du Malheur*, is forced to abandon her studies because of an imposed marriage, despite her intelligence and dream of becoming a nurse. Likewise, Ramla in *Les impatientes*, sees her educational ambitions destroyed by a forced marriage, while Malimouna in *Rebelle*, is denied access to education from childhood because of social inequalities and the disadvantaged status assigned to girls. The selected authors denounce the psychological, social and economic consequences of girls' school dropout. They portray education as an essential means for women emancipation, empowerment, and self-fulfilment. In conclusion, the study calls for a need for change in mentalities and guarantee girls equal and lasting access to education.

Mots clés/Keywords

déscolarisation, la jeune fille, violence structurelle, éducation et littérature africaine
school dropout, young girl, structural violence, education and African literature

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

Introduction

Malgré, l'adage populaire « Éduquer une femme, c'est éduquer toute une nation », dans de nombreuses sociétés africaines, l'éducation de la jeune fille n'est généralement pas considérée comme une priorité. Cette dernière est souvent destinée à des rôles traditionnels liés au mariage, à la maternité et aux tâches domestiques. Ainsi, les parents privilégient la scolarisation des garçons au détriment des filles, surtout en zone rurale. Selon L'UNICEF, certaines familles africaines « envoient en priorité leurs fils à l'école tandis que les filles restent à la maison pour aider aux tâches domestiques (cuisine, linge, ménage, travail) » (2) <http://www.myunicef.fr>. Cette réalité révèle la persistance des pratiques patriarcales qui limitent l'accès des filles à l'éducation et favorisent leur enfermement dans des rôles traditionnels d'épouse et de mère.

Dans cette idéologie patriarcale, la dignité d'une femme réside dans le mariage et par sa capacité à donner naissance à des enfants. Le mariage précoce et forcé apparaît alors comme l'une des pratiques néfastes, qui prive non seulement les filles d'éducation et d'opportunités mais aggrave leur condition féminine et augmente le risque des violences qu'elles subissent.

La déscolarisation des filles constitue ainsi une forme de violence structurelle qui compromet leur épanouissement personnel, leur autonomie économique ainsi que leur liberté de choix. Elle constitue une réalité sombre que souffrent de nombreuses filles africaines. D'après le rapport de la Banque mondiale, « 45% des adolescentes en Afrique de l'ouest et du centre, soit 16 millions des filles sont déscolarisées, certaines d'entre elles subissent des mariages précoces ». Ce taux élevé de déscolarisation de la jeune fille peut être attribué aux inégalités entre les genres et aux pressions sociales exercées sur les jeunes filles.

À travers *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur* de Mongo Beti, *Rebelle* de Fatou Keïta et *Les impatientes* de Djaili Amadou Amal, les auteurs dénoncent les conséquences sociales, psychologiques et existentielles de cette exclusion scolaire des jeunes filles africaines. La présente étude vise à formuler la problématique en posant la question suivante : en quoi la privation du droit à l'éducation contribue-t-elle à renforcer la marginalisation, la dépendance et les violences subies par les femmes dans les sociétés africaines décrites par ces auteurs ? La présente réflexion tente de porter un œil critique sur la persistance des inégalités de genre et des pratiques patriarcales qui entravent encore l'accès des filles à une éducation approfondie dans un contexte africain.

Les romans étudiés reflètent non seulement des destins individuels tragiques ; mais également des réalités sociales profondément ancrées dans de nombreuses sociétés africaines où le mariage précoce, les traditions patriarcales et la pauvreté sont des obstacles majeurs à la scolarisation des jeunes filles. Ainsi, la littérature devient un espace privilégié où les écrivains dénoncent les mécanismes sociaux qui marginalisent les jeunes filles et les femmes en général.

Dans ce travail, nous analyserons d'abord la déscolarisation comme un instrument de domination patriarcale, ensuite nous révélerons ses conséquences psychologiques et sociales sur les jeunes filles. Pour entreprendre cette analyse, nous nous appuyons sur la richesse de l'approche sociocritique de Claude Duchet qui permet d'examiner les rapports entre le texte littéraire et la société.

L'approche sociocritique :

La sociocritique est mot créé par Claude Duchet en 1971. La théorie propose une lecture socio-historique du texte littéraire. D'après Claude Duchet, elle tente de construire « une poétique de la socialité, inséparable d'une lecture de l'idéologique dans sa spécificité textuelle » (4). La sociocritique est une approche du fait littéraire qui s'intéresse à l'univers social présent dans le texte. Elle s'inspire de disciplines proches comme la sociologie de la littérature qu'on a tendance à les confondre. En d'autres termes, elle étudie les relations d'interdépendance entre le littéraire et le social. C'est une approche qui cherche à établir une corrélation entre l'œuvre littéraire et la société qui la produit. Dans la présente étude, la sociocritique, nous permet d'analyser la manière dont les

œuvres choisies représentent les structures sociales africaines. Nos corpus de base mettent en scène des rapports de domination fondées sur le genre, où les filles sont classées au rang des subalternes dépourvues de pouvoir décisionnel dans la prise des décisions qui concernent leur avenir. À travers leurs personnages féminins, nos auteurs choisis dévoilent les conflits entre traditions et modernité, ainsi que les contradictions d'une société qui valorise le mariage féminin au détriment de leur instruction. Cette approche nous permet de bien cerner à travers les œuvres étudiées la réflexion des réalités sociales liées à la déscolarisation des jeunes filles et leur enfermement dans des rôles traditionnels qu'impose le patriarcat africain.

L'analyse textuelle

Dans *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur*, Mongo Beti critique l'idéologie traditionnelle qui empêche l'émancipation féminine. La déscolarisation de l'héroïne marque le point de départ de son malheur. Perpétue qualifiée d'un « puits de science » (133), est une élève dotée « d'une intelligence aussi foudroyante que pénétrante » (135). Elle nourrit un rêve de devenir infirmière pour aider sa communauté et pour soulager les souffrances des femmes, notamment lors des accouchements. Perpétue : « rêvait de soigner les malades un jour [...] Cela était venu à l'écolière par l'admiration de Mademoiselle Delestrane docteur en médecine, venue séjourner, sans doute en accomplissement d'un vœu, à la mission que dirigeait son propre frère, le Père Delestrane » (95).

Son aspiration dépasse ainsi le simple accomplissement professionnel : elle s'inscrit dans une perspective humanitaire et sociale. Autrement dit, Perpétue souhaite non seulement soigner les malades, mais également contribuer au développement de son pays. À travers Perpétue, Mongo Beti évoque les aspirations de nombreuses jeunes filles africaines au lendemain des indépendances désireuses d'occuper une place active dans la société.

Cependant, malgré leurs ambitions et leurs rêves, ces jeunes filles sont souvent retirées précocement de l'école par leurs proches, qui considèrent que l'éducation occidentale est inutile pour les filles et que la place de la femme se trouve exclusivement au foyer. Les filles sont contraintes d'interrompre leur scolarité pour se marier. Cette représentation que nous fait Mongo Beti est le reflet de la réalité socio-éducative des jeunes filles dans certaines sociétés africaines post indépendance.

Cependant, malgré ses capacités et ses ambitions, Perpétue est brutalement retirée de l'école par sa mère afin d'être donnée en mariage. Comme le rapporte Crescentia, « le jour fatidique où sa mère a surgi devant la classe, une bonne heure avant la sortie ... » (57), pour arracher Perpétue des bancs de l'école. Cette dernière est une fille à peine pubère qu'elle n'hésite pas à arracher à la classe. Maria lui annonce alors : « Je suis venue te faire sortir définitivement d'ici où tu n'as plus rien à faire maintenant, viens, suis ta mère. Partons de Ngwa-Ekeleu dès que j'aurai rempli toutes les formalités. Tu rencontreras ton futur époux dès demain » (102). En retirant Perpétue de bancs d'école malgré son intelligence et ses ambitions, la société représentée dans l'œuvre refuse à la jeune fille la possibilité de construire librement son avenir.

Malgré ses protestations et sa forte volonté de poursuivre ses études, Perpétue est contrainte d'abandonner l'école. Elle « tente de protester, se dit effrayée de tant de précipitation. Elle plaide d'une voix brisée que le certificat d'études aura-lieu dans deux mois et que son succès ne fait pas de doute » (102 – 103). Mais sa voix reste sans effet. L'héroïne bétienne est ainsi déscolarisée de force afin d'être soumise à un mariage précoce et forcé.

Cette décision prise sans son consentement, illustre la primauté des traditions sur l'épanouissement individuel. L'école est perçue comme secondaire, voire inutile, pour une fille dont le destin serait exclusivement conjugal et maternel. La mère de Perpétue considère même que l'instruction « faussait l'ordre naturel des choses : pour une femme, l'école n'est qu'un jeu auquel la mode et les mœurs modernes contraignent les petites filles et non l'assise sur la quelle bâtir une vie » (97).

L'école paraît donc, aux yeux de Maria, la mère de Perpétue, ici représentante de la société, comme une perte de temps et une source d'idées étrangères : « cette fille me navre avec ses livres, son école,

cette femme docteur. Voilà bien des idées étranges pour une petite fille de nous. M'arrivera – t-il jamais de caresse un petit- fils comme tant des femmes de mon âge ? qu'ai – je donc fait au bon Dieu ? » (97). Cette citation montre clairement que la valeur de la jeune fille africaine, représentée ici par Perpétue, réside dans sa capacité à donner des enfants, non dans son épanouissement personnel, sa capacité intellectuelle ou sa contribution au développement au sein de la communauté. Perpétue est déboussolée par la décision prise, et profondément frustrée et désespérée, car elle est consciente de son potentiel et de ses aspirations. Son arrachement de banc de l'école devient alors une source de souffrance psychologique et existentielle. Elle est dans ce contexte une victime du système sociale qui enferme la femme et la jeune fille dans un rôle préétabli : épouse, mère et femme soumise.

Ainsi, la valeur de la jeune fille est réduite à sa capacité reproductive. Elle n'est pas envisagée comme un sujet autonome, mais comme un instrument de continuité de la famille, comme l'exprime le vieux Zambo : « ...je cherche une jeune fille réservée, qui puisse nous assurer une lignée » (99). La déscolarisation constitue donc une violence symbolique majeure que souffre Perpétue : elle lui prive des outils intellectuels nécessaires pour son épanouissement et son indépendance économique. Elle la condamne à la dépendance économique et affective. Mongo Beti dénonce ainsi la structure sociale qui réduit la femme à sa fonction reproductive et nie son droit à l'autonomie intellectuelle.

À travers Perpétue, Mongo Beti dépeint la réalité socio-éducative de nombreuses jeunes filles africaines contraintes d'abandonner l'école et d'être mariées très jeunes. Cette représentation romanesque reflète la réalité sociale dans plusieurs sociétés africaines traditionnelles, la jeune fille est souvent socialisée dès l'enfance à devenir épouse et mère. Cette conception patriarcale fait du mariage une priorité sociale supérieure à l'éducation, ce qui explique la déscolarisation précoce de nombreuses filles. Dans la perspective progressive, l'éducation représente l'espoir d'émancipation et la clé de la transformation de la vie des femmes et des jeunes filles. Selon l'UNICEF « Les filles qui bénéficient d'une éducation ont moins de risques de se marier jeunes et plus de chances de mener des vies productives, en bonne santé. Leurs revenus sont plus élevés, elles participent aux décisions qui les concernent le plus et elles construisent un avenir meilleur pour elles-mêmes et pour leur famille ». Les filles sont la clé de notre avenir, mais leur bien-être et leur développement se heurtent à des défis de taille qui compromettent leurs capacités à atteindre leur plein potentiel et les empêchent de contribuer au développement. Tandis que le mariage précoce symbolise l'impédiment aux filles de réaliser leur épanouissement. Le mariage est ainsi l'enfermement de rêve d'un avenir meilleur des jeunes filles. La trajectoire tragique de Perpétue devient ainsi emblématique du destin de nombreuses jeunes filles sacrifiées par un système patriarcal qui refuse aux femmes le savoir et l'autonomie. En fin de cette partie, nous soumettons que, Perpétue comme tant de femmes et de filles africaines souffrent d'inégalités entre les genres et la déscolarisation, qui constitue une violation de leur droit à l'éducation. Ceci contrevient la Convention internationale des droits de l'enfant qui précise également que l'éducation doit viser à « préparer l'enfant à assumer les responsabilités de la vie dans une société libre », notamment « dans un esprit de compréhension, de paix, de tolérance, d'égalité entre les sexes » (1).

En outre, le roman reflète également les tensions du contexte postcolonial africain dans lequel l'école représente un instrument de modernité et de promotion sociale. Cependant, cette modernité entre en conflit avec certaines traditions patriarcales qui considèrent l'éducation des filles comme inutile ou dangereuse pour l'ordre social établi.

À l'instar de Mongo Beti, Djaili Amadou Amal, met en scène les conséquences de la déscolarisation de la jeune fille à travers Ramla, l'une de ses héroïnes dans *Les impatientes*. Ramla constate que la majorité de ses camarades abandonnent progressivement l'école pour se marier : « Depuis le cm2, j'ai vu toutes mes amies et mes camarades de classe se marier les unes après les autres. Au cours préparatoire, nous étions une cinquantaine ; à présent, nous ne sommes plus que dix. Mais, pour moi et comme pour les autres, c'est juste une question de temps » (14). À travers cette révélation de l'héroïne amalienne, l'auteure met en évidence une réalité sociale préoccupante dans la société

décrite dans *Les impatientes*, le mariage tend à remplacer l'école comme unique horizon pour les jeunes filles. L'abandon scolaire apparaît ainsi comme l'un des premiers obstacles auxquels se heurtent les femmes africaines. Cette image frappante révèle également les inégalités entre garçons et filles, dans la mesure où la scolarité des filles est jugée moins prioritaire que celle des garçons. La déscolarisation devient alors un moyen de contrôle social qui prive les femmes de leur autonomie et les rend dépendantes des hommes.

Ramla est une jeune fille intelligente et ambitieuse. Elle aime l'école et rêve de poursuivre ses études. Elle affirme ainsi : « Quand mes sœurs abandonnaient leurs études le plus tôt possible [...], je m'obstinais à aller au collège » (12). Cependant, son parcours scolaire est brutalement interrompu lorsque ses parents décident de la marier. Elle raconte : « Mes rêves n'ont pas duré longtemps. Quand oncle Hayatou a informé mon père que leur plus grand partenaire dans les affaires avait demandé ma main et qu'il la lui accordée ... » (16). À travers cette décision, Ramla est contrainte d'abandonner ses études afin d'épouser immédiatement un homme riche, Alhadji Issa. Dans la société décrite par Djaili Amadou Amal, le mariage est considéré donc plus important que l'éducation, car il permet d'améliorer le statut social et économique de la famille.

La date du mariage de Ramla « fut fixée pour le prochaines vacances [...] En attendant, je pouvais continuer d'aller au collège et de me préparer mon examen » (25). Toutefois, comme Perpétue dans *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur* de Mongo Beti, Ramla, se voit finalement happée par ce que la société considère comme le destin inévitable de la femme : le mariage. Cette rupture scolaire symbolise la confiscation de ses rêves et de ses ambitions. Elle confie d'ailleurs : « j'expliquais aux femmes de la famille mon ambition de devenir pharmacienne, ce qui les faisaient rire aux éclats, elles me traitaient de folle et vantaient les vertus du mariage et de la vie au foyer » (12).

Ramla incarne ainsi les rêves brisés de nombreuses jeunes filles qui aspirent à l'autonomie et à la liberté. Elle est confrontée au mariage forcé et à la polygamie, deux réalités qui l'obligent à abandonner ses études. Pour son père et ses oncles, une femme n'est pas destinée à poursuivre une scolarité prolongée ; l'éducation apparaît plutôt comme une distraction inutile.

Pourtant, Ramla perçoit clairement le rôle émancipateur de l'éducation. Elle affirme notamment : « quand je renchérisais sur l'épanouissement qu'une femme trouvait dans le plaisir d'avoir un emploi, de conduire sa voiture, de gérer son patrimoine » (12). Par cette réflexion, l'héroïne amalienne associe l'éducation à l'indépendance financière, à la liberté de mouvement et à l'épanouissement personnel. Elle comprend que le travail permet à la femme d'exister socialement en dehors du cadre matrimonial.

La déscolarisation de Ramla est renforcée par le système patriarcal, qui nie à la femme, le droit à l'épanouissement intellectuel et l'autonomie. Les décisions concernant sa vie sont prises sans son consentement, ce qui révèle son absence totale de pouvoir suivre son propre destin. Son exclusion du système éducative contribue ainsi à sceller son sort. En effet, privée d'éducation et de formation professionnelle, les femmes se trouvent souvent incapables d'accéder à l'emploi ou d'assurer leur indépendance financière. Elles deviennent alors dépendantes des hommes et se retrouvent exposées à diverses formes de domination et de violences, notamment économique.

Amal met en lumière une société où le mariage constitue encore l'horizon principal assignée aux jeunes filles. La déscolarisation de Ramla reflète ainsi les inégalités de genre qui persistent dans certaines sociétés africaines, où les ambitions scolaires et professionnelles des filles sont souvent sacrifiées au profit des intérêts familiaux.

À travers le parcours de Ramla, l'auteur développe une critique du système patriarcal qui prive les femmes de liberté et de pouvoir décisionnel. Les décisions relatives à son mariage sont prises sans son consentement, ce qui révèle sa position de dépendance au sein de la structure familiale.

Le roman dénonce également la violence symbolique exercée contre les femmes à travers les normes sociales et culturelles. En imposant le mariage comme unique voie d'accomplissement féminin, la

société représentée dans l'œuvre limite les possibilités d'épanouissement intellectuel et professionnel des jeunes filles.

À travers *Rebelle*, Fatou Keïta met en évidence les mécanismes de reproduction des inégalités sociales et éducatives dans certaines communautés africaines. Le refus d'instruire les filles apparaît comme un moyen de maintenir la domination masculine et de préserver les rapports de pouvoir traditionnels. Le personnage de Malimouna est privé d'accès à l'école dès son enfance. On constate cette privatisation frappante surtout dans les zones rurales où l'accès à l'éducation n'est pas une priorité pour les filles, comme nous le dépeint Keïta :

Elles (les violences faites aux femmes) passaient aussi soulignait – elle, par le refus du droit à l'instruction pour ces femmes. Il était clair, ajouta-t-elle, qu'il ne fallait pas que la femme devienne trop savante, il ne fallait pas qu'elle veuille se comporter comme une Occidentale et, qui sait, revendiquer des droits auxquels elle n'avait jamais pensé auparavant. Dans les zones rurales, on mettait, surtout les garçons à l'école. Les filles devaient en priorité apprendre à servir ceux qui seraient leurs maîtres, à tenir une maison et à élever des enfants. (189)

À travers ce passage, Fatou Keïta met en lumière une conception profondément patriarcal de la société, dans laquelle l'instruction de la femme est aperçue comme une menace à la suprématie masculine. Pour cette raison, comme le montre la citation ci-dessus, les femmes sont victimes de la discrimination sur le plan éducatif. Dans cette logique sociale, la femme est avant tout destinée à s'occuper du foyer plutôt qu'à poursuivre une carrière ou à accéder à l'instruction.

Malimouna victime de cette discrimination structurelle. Comme le souligne le roman : « Dans les zones rurales, on mettait, surtout les garçons à l'école. Les filles devaient en priorité apprendre à servir ceux qui seraient leurs maîtres, à tenir une maison et à élever des enfants » (189). Cette priorité accordée aux garçons dans l'accès à l'école reflète une réalité encore présente dans certaines zones rurales africaines, où les ressources familiales limitées conduisent les parents à investir prioritairement dans l'éducation des fils. Ceci s'accorde à une étude faite par l'UNICEF dans certains pays africains précisant que dans ces communautés « le mariage confère un statut social aux femmes, généralement perçues comme épouses et mères : leur rôle étant à l'intérieur du foyer, au service de leur mari et de leurs enfants. De nombreuses familles investissent dans l'éducation et l'avenir de leurs fils tout en laissant leurs filles s'occuper des tâches ménagères [...] ».

Cependant, malgré cette exclusion, Malimouna parvient à acquérir quelques rudiments d'instruction grâce à son amie Sanita, une citadine qui lui apprend le français pendant ses vacances au village : « Sanita avait même commencé à apprendre à écrire à Malimouna. Ensemble elles pouvaient passer des après-midis entiers à tracer des lettres sur une ardoise que Sanita avait offerte à son amie » (15).

Contrairement à Perpétue dans *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur* de Mongo Beti et à Ramla dans *Les impatientes* de Djaili Amadou Amal, qui voient leur scolarité interrompue, Malimouna est exclue dès son enfance du système éducatif. Elle reflète la condition de nombreuses femmes africaines privées d'éducation dès l'enfance. Son exclusion scolaire la place dans une situation de vulnérabilité sociale et économique, puisse qu'elle ne possède pas ni les connaissances ni les moyens nécessaires pour s'opposer aux décisions imposées par la société.

Toutefois, Malimouna ne reste pas passif face à cette situation. À travers elle, Fatou Keïta met en lumière l'importance de la sensibilisation des femmes à la question de l'éducation des filles. Après avoir organisé un meeting de sensibilisation, Malimouna espère que : « ces mères n'auraient plus d'excuse, lorsqu'elles enverraient leurs fils à l'école pendant que leurs filles resteraient à la maison pour faire les travaux domestiques. Elles avaient compris le message de Malimouna. Elles cesseraient d'être les complices passives d'une autodestruction générale » (220- 221). Dans cette perspective, Malimouna entreprend également de promouvoir l'alphabétisation des femmes à travers son association l'AAFD. Elle souhaite mettre sur pied un vaste programme d'alphabétisation des ménagères en milieu urbain. Comme elle l'affirme : « on semble oublier qu'en ville la majorité des

femmes ne savaient ni lire ni écrire. Les nombreux écoliers envahissant chaque jour les rues pour se rendre à l'école faisaient oublier toutes ces mamans ployant sous le fardeau des tâches quotidiennes » (183). Par ceci Malimouna incarne également une figure de résistance et de transformation sociale. À travers son engagement pour l'alphabétisation des femmes, Fatou Keïta valorise l'éducation comme un instrument de conscientisation et d'émancipation féminine.

Conclusion

Bien que les œuvres étudiées présentent des contextes socioculturels différents, elles mettent toutes en évidence la persistance des structures patriarcales qui limitent l'accès des filles à l'éducation. Perpétue incarne la victime tragique d'un système qui réduit ses ambitions, Ramla représente les rêves féminins confisqués par le mariage forcé, tandis que Malimouna apparaît comme une figure de résistance engagée dans la lutte pour l'émancipation des femmes.

À travers ces héroïnes, les auteurs montrent que la déscolarisation des filles ne constitue pas seulement un problème individuel, mais une question sociale et idéologique qui touche au développement, à la justice sociale et à l'égalité entre les sexes. Pour ce fait, cette réflexion invite ainsi à repenser les politiques éducatives et les mentalités sociales afin de garantir aux jeunes filles africaines un accès égal à l'éducation et à l'autonomie

Bibliographie

- Abdoulahi, Aïssatou. « L'œuvre de Djaïli Amadou Amal : Un miroir de la condition de la femme au Nord-Cameroun », in *LE QUELLEC COTTIER* (Christine), COSSY (Valérie) (dir.), *Africana. Figures de femmes et formes de pouvoir*. DOI : 10.48611/isbn.978-2-406-12735-2.p.0473.
- Adewale, Abigeal. « Le patriarcat et la marginalisation de la femme chez Amadou Amal et Samia Sharif ». Diss. (Maîtrise), Université du Manitoba, 2024.
- Adogbo, Micheal. *Research Methods in the Humanities*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd, 2009.
- Antonella, Colletta. « Mongo Beti, écrivain engagé ». *Acta fabula*. vol. 9, no. 7, Juillet-Août 2008. <https://www.fabula.org/revue/document4439.php>. DOI : 10.58282/acta
- Beti, Mongo. *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur*. Paris : Editions Buchet/Chastel, 1974.
- Boni, Tenella. *Que vivent les femmes d'Afrique ?* Paris : Editions Panoma, 2008.
- Boumazzou, Ibrahim. « Image et écriture de la femme noire dans *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur* de Mongo Beti ». *Norsud*, no. 12. Décembre 2018. Pp. 7 -18.
- . « Représentation du corps féminin dans le roman africain francophone : Les cas de Salimata dans *Les soleils des indépendances* d'Amadou Kourouma et Perpétue dans *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur* de Mongo Beti ». *Convergences Francophones*, Vol. 4, no. 1, 27 Juillet 2017, pp.111. mrujs.mtroyal.ca/index.php/cf/article/view/427. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29173/cf4> 27.
- Bouh, hassan. « Rebelle de Fatou Keïta ou la problématique de l'émancipation de la femme ». *Graphies francophones*, no. 002, Juin 2022, pp. 147-160.
- Cazenave, Odile. *Femme rebelle : naissance d'un nouveau roman africain au féminin*. Paris : L'harmattan, 1996.
- Chemain-Degrange, Arlette. *Emancipation féminine et le roman africain*. Dakar : Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1980.
- Chevrier, Jacques. *Littérature négre*. Paris : Armand Colin, 1984.
- Dabo, Abdoulaye. «Analyse des pesanteurs sociales dans le roman africain francophone contemporain ». Diss. (Maitrise), Université Assane seck, Ziguinchor, 2023.
- Amadou, Djaïli Amal. *Les impatientes*. Paris : Emmanuelle Collas, 2020.
- Beti, Mongo. *Perpétue et l'habitude du malheur*. Paris : Editions Buchet/Chastel, 1974.
- Duchet, Claude. *Introduction : socio-criticism*. Madison : Sub-Stance, 1976.
- Keita, Fatou. *Rebelle*. Paris : Présence Africaine, 1998.
- http://www.myunicef.fr/fiche_thematique_education_des_filles_0.pdf.
- www.banquemondiales.org/descolarisation/filles

unum.org/fr/le-mariage/precocce.

[un.org/education%20des%20filles%20 %20UNICEF.mhtml](http://un.org/education%20des%20filles%20%20UNICEF.mhtml).



جماليات التلاحم الإيماني في البيان النبوي:

دراسة تحليلية لحديث "مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم"

أ.د. ناصر أحمد صكتو

¹ قسم دراسات الأدب العربي،

جامعة عثمان بن فودي صكتو- نيجيريا

ABSTRACT

Prophetic Hadith represents one of the highest manifestations of Arabic eloquence, combining linguistic precision, rhetorical excellence, and profound semantic richness. This study investigates the aesthetics of spiritual solidarity in the Prophetic tradition: "The example of the believers in their mutual affection, mercy, and compassion is that of a single body; when one limb suffers, the whole body responds with sleeplessness and fever." The study aims to uncover the linguistic, rhetorical, and stylistic mechanisms through which the Hadith constructs its artistic imagery and effectively conveys the Islamic concept of communal unity and mutual responsibility. The research addresses the central question of how the linguistic structure and rhetorical configuration of the Hadith contribute to the formation of its aesthetic significance and persuasive power. To achieve this objective, the study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach, drawing upon linguistic analysis, Arabic rhetoric, stylistics, and discourse analysis to examine the lexical choices, syntactic organization, textual cohesion, figurative imagery, rhythmic patterns, and stylistic features embedded in the Prophetic discourse. The study is organized into four major sections. The first examines the linguistic structure and its role in shaping the semantic dimensions of spiritual solidarity. The second explores the aesthetic features of figurative expression, particularly the representative simile and its artistic impact. The third analyzes the stylistic characteristics of the Hadith, including lexical selection, internal rhythm, repetition, parallelism, and semantic progression. The final section investigates the psychological, social, and aesthetic dimensions embodied in the Prophetic discourse. The findings reveal that the Hadith is built upon a highly coherent artistic structure in which lexical precision, syntactic harmony, rhetorical imagery, and stylistic rhythm interact to produce a comprehensive representative image portraying the community of believers as a single living body. This artistic construction enhances the emotional and persuasive force of the discourse while reinforcing the universal values of empathy, solidarity, and social cohesion. The study further demonstrates that the Prophetic discourse successfully integrates aesthetic beauty with communicative effectiveness, offering a remarkable model of Arabic literary expression whose artistic qualities remain relevant to contemporary literary and linguistic scholarship.

المستخلص

يُعَدُّ الحديث النبوي الشريف من أرقى نماذج البيان العربي، إذ يجمع بين الدقة اللغوية والعمق الدلالي والجمال الفني، الأمر الذي يجعله مجالاً خصباً للدراسات الأدبية والبلاغية. ويهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل جماليات التلاحم الإيماني في حديث النبي ﷺ: "مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادِهِمْ وَتَرَاحِمِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ الْجَسَدِ، إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عَضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهْرِ وَالْحَمَى..."، من خلال الكشف عن الآليات اللغوية والبلاغية والأسلوبية التي أسهمت في بناء صورته الفنية، وإبراز أثرها في تجسيد مفهوم الوحدة الإيمانية وترسيخ قيم التضامن والتكافل بين المؤمنين. وينطلق البحث من إشكالية رئيسة تتمثل في بيان الكيفية التي أسهمت بها البنية اللغوية والتشكيل البلاغي في إنتاج الدلالة الجمالية للحديث، وفي بناء خطاب مؤثر يجمع بين الإقناع والإمتاع. ولتحقيق ذلك، اعتمد البحث على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، مستعيناً بآليات التحليل اللغوي والبلاغي والأسلوبي، مع الاستفادة من مبادئ تحليل الخطاب في تفسير العلاقات النصية والكشف عن الوظائف التعبيرية والجمالية لعناصر النص. وتخلص

الدراسة إلى أن البيان النبوي في هذا الحديث يقدم نموذجاً متكاملًا للتفاعل بين الوظيفة الجمالية والوظيفة التداولية للغة، ويؤكد أن الخطاب النبوي يمتلك من المقومات الأدبية والبلاغية ما يؤهله لأن يكون موضوعاً للدراسات النقدية واللسانية المعاصرة، فضلاً عن قيمته الدينية والتربوية، الأمر الذي يسهم في توسيع آفاق البحث في الأدب النبوي وإبراز مكانته في الدراسات الأدبية الحديثة

الكلمات / المفتاحية / Keywords

Prophetic Discourse; Prophetic Hadith; Spiritual Solidarity; Literary Analysis; Arabic Rhetoric; Stylistics

البيان النبوي، الحديث الشريف، التلاحم الإيماني، الدراسة الأدبية، التحليل البلاغي، الأسلوبية

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

المقدمة

يُعَدُّ الحديث النبوي الشريف أحدَ أسَى منابع البيان العربي، لما يتسم به من دقةٍ في اختيار الألفاظ، وإحكامٍ في بناء التراكيب، وروعةٍ في التصوير البياني، وتكاملٍ بين الوظيفة الإبداعية والقيمة الجمالية. وقد شكَّلت نصوص الحديث النبوي، إلى جانب القرآن الكريم، رافداً أصيلاً للدراسات اللغوية والبلاغية والأدبية؛ لما تنطوي عليه من طاقاتٍ تعبيرية وأساليب فنية تجسد المعاني في صور مؤثرة تجمع بين قوة الإقناع وروعة الإمتاع.

ومن النصوص النبوية التي بلغت ذروة الإبداع البياني في تصوير العلاقات الإنسانية حديث النبي ﷺ : "مثلُ المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم كمثل الجسد، إذا اشتكى منه عضو تداعى له سائر الجسد بالسهر والحمى"؛ إذ يقدم هذا الحديث صورةً تمثيليةً متكاملة تُجسِّد التلاحم الإيماني في أبهى صوره، من خلال تشبيه المجتمع المؤمن بالجسد الواحد الذي تتفاعل أعضاؤه في السراء والضراء، بما يعكس عمق الرابطة الإيمانية، ويجعلها حقيقةً محسوسة تتجاوز حدود التجريد إلى فضاء المشاهدة والتأثير.

وتنبع أهمية هذه الدراسة من سعيها إلى الكشف عن جماليات الخطاب النبوي في هذا الحديث من منظور أدبي، وذلك باستجلاء الخصائص اللغوية والبلاغية والأسلوبية التي أسهمت في بناء صورته الفنية، وبيان أثرها في إنتاج الدلالة وتعزيز فاعلية الخطاب في نفس المتلقي. فالحديث لا يقتصر على تقرير قيمة أخلاقية أو توجيه ديني، بل يصوغها في قالب فني رفيع يجمع بين دقة التعبير، وكثافة الدلالة، وجمال التصوير، وانسجام الإيقاع، الأمر الذي يجعله نموذجاً متفرداً من نماذج البيان العربي.

وتتحدد إشكالية البحث في الوقوف على الكيفية التي أسهمت بها البنية اللغوية، والصورة البيانية، والخصائص الأسلوبية في تجسيد مفهوم التلاحم الإيماني، وإبراز أبعاده النفسية والاجتماعية في خطاب موجز بالغ التأثير.

وتشتمل المقالة، بعد هذه المقدمة، على أربعة محاور على النحو التالي:

- البناء اللغوي وأثره في تشكيل دلالة التلاحم الإيماني

جماليات التلاحم الإيماني في البيان النبوي: دراسة تحليلية لحديث "مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم"

- جماليات التصوير البياني في الحديث
- الخصائص الأسلوبية والإيقاع الفني
- الأبعاد الجمالية للتلاحم الإيماني في البيان النبوي

البناء اللغوي وأثره في تشكيل دلالة التلاحم الإيماني

يمثل البناء اللغوي في الخطاب النبوي الأساس الذي تتولد منه الدلالات الجمالية، إذ لا تكتسب الألفاظ قيمتها من معانيها المعجمية المجردة، وإنما من انتظامها في سياق محكم تتفاعل فيه المستويات الصوتية والصرفية والتركيبية والدلالية لإنتاج خطاب يجمع بين الإيجاز والإحياء والتأثير. وقد قرر عبد القاهر الجرجاني أن سر البلاغة لا يكمن في الألفاظ منفردة، وإنما في طريقة نظمها والعلاقات التي تنشأ بينها داخل السياق، وهو ما يجعل البنية اللغوية منشئة للمعنى لا ناقلة له فحسب.⁽¹⁾

ويعد حديث النبي ﷺ: "مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم كمثل الجسد، إذا اشتكى منه عضو تداعى له سائر الجسد بالسهر والحمى" من أبلغ النصوص التي تتجلى فيها هذه الحقيقة؛ فقد شُيِّد على بناء لغوي متماسك تتآزر فيه المفردات والتراكيب لتكوين صورة كلية تجسد وحدة المؤمنين وتجعلها واقعاً محسوساً.

المعجم الدلالي لألفاظ الحديث

ينتهي المعجم اللغوي للحديث إلى حقل دلالي واحد، تتألف عناصره حول مفهوم التلاحم الإيماني؛ فابتدأ الخطاب بلفظ "المؤمنين" ليجعل الإيمان أساس العلاقات الإنسانية، ثم أعقبه بثلاثة مصادر جاءت على نسق واحد: "التواد، والتراحم، والتعاطف"، فجميعها وردت على صيغة المفاعلة، وهي صيغة تدل على المشاركة والتبادل⁽²⁾ مما يكشف أن العلاقة بين المؤمنين تقوم على التأثير المتبادل، لا على فعل يصدر من طرف واحد.⁽³⁾

ويلاحظ أن ترتيب هذه الألفاظ لم يكن عفويًا، بل جاء في تدرج دلالي دقيق؛ إذ يبدأ بالتواد بوصفه أصل العلاقة القلبية، ثم يرتقي إلى التراحم الذي يمثل الأثر الوجداني للمحبة، لينتهي إلى التعاطف الذي يجسد التفاعل العملي مع آلام الآخرين. وبهذا التدرج تتنامى الصورة من الشعور الداخلي إلى السلوك الخارجي، فيتحول المعنى من مجرد إحساس إلى منظومة اجتماعية متكاملة.

ثم ينتقل الحديث إلى الصورة المحسوسة باختيار لفظ "الجسد"، وهو اختيار بالغ الدقة؛ لأن الجسد يمثل وحدة عضوية مترابطة، لا يستقل فيها عضو عن بقية الأعضاء، فإذا اختل جزء منه انعكس أثر ذلك على الكل. ومن هنا تجاوز التشبيه مجرد المقاربة بين شيئين إلى بناء صورة تمثيلية كاملة تستحضر في ذهن المتلقي مشهداً حياً يجسد معنى التضامن الإيماني في أرقى صوره.⁽⁴⁾

وتتعمق الصورة مع الفعلين "اشتكى" و "تداعى"؛ فالأول يصور بداية الإحساس بالألم، في حين يدل الثاني على سرعة الاستجابة الجماعية دون تكلف أو انتظار، بما يضفي على الصورة حركةً وحيويةً ويجعلها أكثر قدرة على التأثير. أما لفظتا "السهر" و "الحمى" فقد جاءتا خاتمةً للصورة، لتصوير الأثر الطبيعي الذي يصيب الجسد كله عند مرض أحد أعضائه، وهو تصوير بالغ الإحياء، ينقل التفاعل بين المؤمنين من دائرة المجاز الذهني إلى دائرة الإحساس المعيش.

ويكشف هذا الاختيار المعجمي عن اقتصاد لغوي لافت؛ إذ استطاع الحديث، بألفاظ قليلة، أن يبني شبكة واسعة من الدلالات النفسية والاجتماعية والإنسانية، وهو ما يمثل إحدى أبرز سمات البيان النبوي.

البنية التركيبية وأثرها في تماسك النص

لا تقل البنية التركيبية أهمية عن المعجم في تشكيل دلالة الحديث؛ إذ جاء النص في بناء نحوي متماسك يحقق الانسجام بين عناصره. فقد افتتح بجملة اسمية: "مثل المؤمنين..."، وهي صيغة تفيد الثبوت والاستقرار، لتقرير أن التلاحم صفة أصيلة في المجتمع المؤمن، لا حالة طارئة.

ثم جاء التشبيه التمثيلي ليربط بين طرفين تجمعهما علاقة كلية، وأعقب ذلك بالشرط في قوله: "إذا اشتكى منه عضو"، وهو تركيب يفيد تحقق الوقوع، ثم أعقبه بجواب الشرط: "تداعى له سائر الجسد"، فجاءت النتيجة مترتبة على السبب ترتيباً طبيعياً يحقق الترابط المنطقي والبلاغي للنص.

كما أسهمت الضمائر المتعاقبة والروابط النحوية في إحكام الاتساق النصي؛ إذ أحالت جميعها إلى صورة واحدة متماسكة، مما جعل أجزاء الحديث مترابطة ترابط أعضاء الجسد الذي يصوره. ومن ثم فإن النظام التركيبي لم يكن مجرد إطار شكلي، بل كان عنصراً فاعلاً في بناء الدلالة، إذ أسهم في تحقيق الانسجام بين الألفاظ والمعاني، وأبرز التلاحم الإيماني في صورة لغوية متكاملة تمتاز فيها قوة التعبير بجمال التصوير، وهو ما يؤكد أن الإعجاز البياني في الحديث الشريف يقوم على التكامل بين البنية اللغوية والغاية الدلالية.

جماليات التصوير البياني في الحديث

يُعَدُّ التصوير البياني من أبرز السمات الفنية في البيان النبوي، إذ لا يقتصر على نقل المعنى أو تقريره، بل يتجاوزه إلى تجسيده في صورة محسوسة تستثير العقل والوجدان معاً. ومن ثم فإن الصورة البيانية في الحديث الشريف ليست عنصراً زخرفياً، وإنما وسيلة فنية تؤدي وظيفة دلالية وإقناعية وجمالية في آن واحد؛ فهي تُحوّل المعاني المجردة إلى مشاهد حية، وتمنحها حضوراً في نفس المتلقي، بما يحقق غاية الخطاب في التأثير والإقناع. ويُعَدُّ الحديث المدروس من أبدع النماذج البيانية التي تجلت فيها هذه الخصائص، إذ اجتمعت فيه دقة التصوير، ووحدة البناء، وعمق الدلالة، حتى غدت الصورة التمثيلية فيه من روائع البيان العربي.⁽⁵⁾

التشبيه التمثيلي وبناء الصورة الفنية

يقوم الحديث على تشبيه تمثيلي تُشَبَّه فيه هيئة بهيئة، لا مفرداً بمفرد؛ فوجه الشبه لا ينحصر في صفة واحدة، وإنما يتمثل في صورة كلية تتألف من عناصر متعددة مترابطة. فالمجتمع المؤمن، بما يجمع أفرادَه من مودة ورحمة وتعاطف، يقابل الجسد الحي الذي تتكامل أعضاؤه في الإحساس والاستجابة، فإذا ألمَّ الألمُ بعضو واحد، تجاوب معه سائر الجسد بالسر والحمى.

وتكمن روعة هذا التشبيه في أنه ينقل قيمةً معنوية مجردة، هي التلاحم الإيماني، إلى صورة حسية يدركها كل إنسان من واقع تجربته، فيصبح المعنى أقرب إلى الفهم، وأشد تأثيراً في النفس. وقد أشار عبد القاهر الجرجاني إلى أن التشبيه التمثيلي يبلغ غايته حين ينقل الذهن من المعقول إلى المحسوس، فيغدو المعنى كأنه ماثل أمام العين، وهو ما يتحقق بجلاء في هذا الحديث. وقد قرر عبد القاهر الجرجاني أن قيمة التشبيه التمثيلي تكمن في تقريب المعاني وإبرازها في صورة محسوسة، حتى تبدو للمتلقي كأنها مشاهدة، وهو ما يتحقق بجلاء في هذا الحديث.⁽⁶⁾

كما أن اختيار لفظ "الجسد" دون غيره من الصور يحمل دلالة دقيقة؛ لأن الجسد يمثل وحدة عضوية لا تقوم حياة عضو منها إلا بحياة بقية الأعضاء، وهو ما يجعل الصورة أقدر على التعبير عن حقيقة الترابط الإيماني، ويمنحها بعداً إنسانياً يتجاوز حدود الزمان والمكان.

الإيحاء البلاغي للصورة وأثرها في المتلقي

لا تتوقف قيمة الصورة عند حدود التشبيه، بل تمتد إلى ما تولده من إحياءات تتجاوز ظاهر الألفاظ. فقد أسهمت الأفعال المتتابعة "اشتكى" و"تداعى" في إضفاء الحركة على الصورة، فبدت وكأنها مشهد متجدد يتفاعل أمام المتلقي، لا وصفاً جامداً لحقيقة ذهنية. ويلاحظ أن التعبير بالفعل "تداعى" يوحي بسرعة الاستجابة وتلقائيتها، بما يرسخ معنى المبادرة إلى مواساة الآخرين، ويجعل المشاركة الوجدانية أثراً طبيعياً للإيمان الصادق. ويعزز هذا الإيحاء اقتران التداعي بلفظي "السهر" و"الحصى"؛ فهما لا يعبران عن مجرد الألم، وإنما يصوران استمرار المعاناة وامتداد أثرها إلى الجسد كله، وهو ما يجعل المتلقي يعيش التجربة الشعورية التي يرسمها النص، بدل أن يكتفي بفهمها عقلياً. وبهذا تنتقل الصورة من الإخبار إلى الإحساس، ومن التقرير إلى المعاشية، فتؤدي وظيفتها الإقناعية والجمالية في آنٍ واحد.

ومن ثم فإن الخطاب النبوي لا يخاطب العقل وحده، بل يخاطب الوجدان أيضاً، مستثمراً الطاقة الإيحائية للصورة الفنية في ترسيخ قيم المحبة والتكافل، حتى يغدو التلاحم الإيماني تجربةً شعورية يعيشها المتلقي قبل أن يدركها بوصفها حكماً أو توجيهاً.

القيمة الجمالية للصورة الكلية في الحديث

تنبع القيمة الجمالية لهذا الحديث من تكامل عناصره الفنية؛ فالصورة لا تقوم على التشبيه وحده، بل تشارك في بنائها الألفاظ المختارة، والتراكيب المحكمة، والإيقاع الهادئ، والتدرج الدلالي، حتى تتحد جميعها في بناء صورة كلية متماسكة. ويظهر هذا التكامل في الانتقال من الألفاظ الدالة على المشاعر (التواد، التراحم، التعاطف) إلى الصورة الحسية (الجسد) ثم إلى الحركة (اشتكى، تداعى) ثم إلى الأثر (السهر والحصى)، وهو انتقال يحقق تصاعداً فنياً يجعل المعنى ينمو تدريجياً حتى يبلغ ذروة التأثير.

كما تتسم الصورة بالاقتصاد اللغوي؛ إذ عبر الحديث بألفاظ قليلة عن منظومة واسعة من القيم الإنسانية والاجتماعية، دون إخلال بالوضوح أو التأثير، وهو ما يمثل إحدى خصائص البيان النبوي التي تجمع بين إيجاز الألفاظ وكثافة الدلالة. وقد أسهم هذا البناء الفني في منح الصورة طابعاً إنسانياً عالمياً، لأنها تستند إلى تجربة يشترك في إدراكها جميع الناس، وهي تفاعل أعضاء الجسد مع الألم، الأمر الذي يجعل الرسالة الأخلاقية للحديث أكثر رسوخاً في النفوس.

ويتضح من ذلك أن جمال الصورة في هذا الحديث لا يرجع إلى عنصر بلاغي منفرد، بل إلى تآزر جميع مكوناتها في بناء فني واحد، استطاع أن يحول مفهوم التلاحم الإيماني من معنى ذهني مجرد إلى مشهد إنساني نابض بالحياة، يجمع بين صدق التعبير، وروعة التصوير، وعمق التأثير، وهو ما يبرز المكانة الأدبية الرفيعة للبيان النبوي في التراث العربي.

الخصائص الأسلوبية والإيقاع الفني

يُعَدُّ الأسلوب أحد أبرز مظاهر الإبداع في الخطاب النبوي؛ إذ تتجلى فيه قدرة البيان على توظيف الإمكانيات اللغوية والصوتية والتركيبية لإنتاج خطاب يجمع بين الإقناع والتأثير والجمال. ولا تنبع القيمة الأسلوبية من المفردات منفردة، وإنما من طرائق اختيارها وتنظيمها في سياق يحقق الانسجام بين المبنى والمعنى، ويجعل البنية اللغوية مرآةً للمقصد الدلالي. وقد تجلت هذه الخصائص بوضوح في الحديث المدروس "مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم" حيث تتآزر الألفاظ، والإيقاع، والنظام التركيبي في بناء خطاب متكامل فيه الوظيفة الجمالية مع الرسالة الإيمانية، فتغدو الصورة البيانية أكثر رسوخاً وتأثيراً في المتلقي.⁽⁷⁾

جماليات الاختيار اللفظي

يمثل الاختيار اللفظي أحد أهم مظاهر البلاغة النبوية؛ إذ لم يأت لفظ في الحديث إلا وهو يؤدي وظيفة دلالية وجمالية محددة. فقد اختير لفظ "المؤمنين" دون غيره؛ لأن الإيمان هو الأساس الذي تنبثق منه علاقات الود والرحمة والتكافل، فجاء الوصف جامعاً بين الهوية العقدية والبعد الاجتماعي. كما أن المصادر الثلاثة: "التواد، والتراحم، والتعاطف" لم تُذكر على سبيل الترادف، وإنما رُتبت ترتيباً دلالياً يبرز تطور العلاقة الإنسانية من المحبة القلبية إلى الرحمة الوجدانية، ثم إلى المشاركة العملية في آلام الآخرين، وهو ترتيب يحقق ثراءً دلالياً ويمنح النص حركةً داخلية تنسجم مع مقصده.

ويكشف اختيار لفظ "الجسد" عن دقة تعبيرية بالغة؛ لأنه يوحي بالوحدة العضوية التي تتكامل فيها الوظائف وتتساند الأعضاء، فلا يقوم جزء منها بمعزل عن الآخر. أما الفعلان "اشتكى" و "تداعى" فقد أضفيا على النص طابعاً حركياً، فالأول يصور بدء الألم، والثاني يصور سرعة الاستجابة، فيتولد من التتابع الفعلي مشهد ديناميكي (صورة فنية) يجسد التفاعل الإنساني في أبلغ صورة. ويؤكد هذا الاختيار أن البيان النبوي يقوم على الاقتصاد اللغوي؛ إذ يؤدي بألفاظ قليلة بمعاني واسعة تتسم بالوضوح والعمق في آنٍ واحد.⁽⁸⁾

الإيقاع الصوتي والموسيقى الداخلية

لا يقتصر الجمال في الحديث على الدلالة، بل يمتد إلى الإيقاع الصوتي الذي يسهم في تعميق الأثر النفسي للنص. فقد جاء النسق الصوتي قائماً على توازن واضح بين ألفاظ "التواد، والتراحم، والتعاطف"؛ إذ تتحد في البنية الصرفية، وتتقارب في عدد المقاطع الصوتية، وتكرر فيها الحروف المهموسة والرخوة، مما يضفي على العبارة موسيقى هادئة تتناسب مع معاني الألفة والرحمة.

كما أن التوافق بين الأصوات في ألفاظ مثل "الجسد" و "السهل" و "الحى" ينسجم مع تطور الصورة الشعورية؛ إذ تنتقل الموسيقى الداخلية من الهدوء في بداية الحديث إلى نبرة توجي بالألم والمعاناة في خاتمته، دون أن تفقد انسجامها أو سلاستها. ويؤدي هذا التناغم الصوتي وظيفة فنية تتجاوز الزينة اللفظية، فيصبح الإيقاع عنصراً من عناصر إنتاج الدلالة، يعزز حضور الصورة في وجدان المتلقي، ويمنح الخطاب قوة تأثير تتناسب مع رسالته الإنسانية.⁽⁹⁾

التكرار والتوازي والتدرج الدلالي

اعتمد الحديث على عدد من الوسائل الأسلوبية التي أسهمت في إحكام بنائه الفني، وفي مقدمتها التكرار والتوازي والتدرج الدلالي. فقد تحقق التوازي في تعاقب المصادر الثلاثة: "التواد، والتراحم، والتعاطف"، وهي ألفاظ متقاربة

في الوزن الصرفي والتركيب النحوي، مما أوجد إيقاعًا منتظمًا يعكس انسجام العلاقات بين المؤمنين. ولم يكن هذا التوازي مجرد انتظام شكلي، بل كان وسيلة لتوكيد المعنى وترسيخه في ذهن المتلقي.

ويظهر التكرار في إعادة البنية الصرفية ذاتها، وفي تكرار ضمير الجمع، بما يعزز الإحساس بالجماعة، ويجعل روح المشاركة حاضرة في جميع أجزاء النص. أما التدرج الدلالي فيُعد من أبرز الخصائص الأسلوبية في الحديث؛ إذ تنتقل الدلالة من المشاعر الباطنة إلى آثارها العملية، ثم إلى الصورة الحسية التي تبلغ ذروتها في تفاعل الجسد كله مع أُلَم عضو واحد. وبهذا التدرج يتحول النص من تقرير قيمة أخلاقية إلى بناء مشهد إنساني نابض بالحياة، تتكامل فيه عناصر الأسلوب لتكوين صورة كلية ذات أثر نفسي وجمالي بالغ.⁽¹⁰⁾

ويكشف هذا التكامل بين الاختيار اللفظي، والإيقاع الصوتي، والتنظيم الأسلوبي، أن البيان النبوي لا يعتمد على عنصر بلاغي منفرد، وإنما يقوم على شبكة من العلاقات اللغوية المتداخلة التي تتضافر لإنتاج خطاب يجمع بين الإيجاز، والإحكام، وقوة التأثير. ومن ثم فإن الخصائص الأسلوبية في هذا الحديث ليست مظاهر شكلية، بل هي أدوات فنية تؤدي دورًا جوهريًا في تجسيد التلاحم الإيماني وإبراز أبعاده الإنسانية، وهو ما يرسخ مكانة الحديث النبوي في الذروة العليا للبيان العربي.

الأبعاد الجمالية للتلاحم الإيماني في البيان النبوي

لا تقف القيمة الفنية للبيان النبوي عند حدود جمال الصياغة أو براعة التصوير، بل تمتد إلى ما تُحدثه الصورة من أثر نفسي واجتماعي وإنساني في المتلقي؛ فالجمال في الخطاب النبوي جمالٌ وظيفي، يتخذ من الوسائل البلاغية سبيلًا إلى ترسيخ القيم وبناء الوعي، ويجعل المتلقي شريكًا في التجربة الشعورية التي يصوغها النص. ومن ثم فإن الصورة الفنية في حديث: «مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحيمهم وتعاطفهم كمثل الجسد، إذا اشتكى منه عضو تداعى له سائر الجسد بالسهر والحمى» تتجاوز كونها بناءً بلاغيًا محكمًا، لتغدو وسيلةً لتشكيل الوجدان الجمعي، وتعزيز روح التضامن والتكافل، وإبراز البعد الحضاري للأخوة الإيمانية.⁽¹¹⁾

البعد النفسي في بناء الصورة

تستمد الصورة التمثيلية في الحديث قوتها من قدرتها على استثارة الوجدان، إذ تجعل المتلقي يعيش التجربة الشعورية التي ينقلها النص، لا أن يكتفي بإدراكها الذهني. فالتشبيه بالجسد الواحد ينقل الإحساس بالألم من مستوى الفرد إلى مستوى الجماعة، ويجعل معاناة الآخر جزءًا من معاناة الذات، حتى يغدو التعاطف استجابةً فطرية لا تكلف فيها.

وقد أسهمت الأفعال الحركية، مثل «اشتكى» و«تداعى»، في إحياء الصورة وإكسابها بعدًا نفسيًا متجددًا، إذ توحى بسرعة التفاعل، واستمرار الإحساس، وشمول المشاركة الوجدانية، بينما جاءت لفظتا «السهر» و«الحمى» لتجسدا أثر الألم في صورة حسية تدفع المتلقي إلى التفاعل الوجداني مع مضمون الحديث. وهكذا يتحول الخطاب من مجرد تقرير لقيمة أخلاقية إلى تجربة شعورية تستثير العاطفة، وتغرس في النفس معنى المسؤولية المشتركة، وهو ما يمثل أحد أسرار التأثير في البيان النبوي.⁽¹²⁾

البعد الاجتماعي والإنساني

لا يقتصر الحديث على بناء علاقة وجدانية بين المؤمنين، بل يؤسس لرؤية اجتماعية متكاملة تقوم على التكافل والتعاون، وتجعل المجتمع كياناً واحداً تتكامل وظائفه كما تتكامل أعضاء الجسد. ومن ثم فإن التلاحم الإيماني في الحديث ليس قيمةً فردية، بل مبدأ اجتماعي يُسهم في حفظ تماسك المجتمع، ويحول دون تفككه أو انقسامه. وتتجاوز دلالة الصورة حدود المجتمع الإسلامي إلى بعدها الإنساني العام؛ لأن تشبيه المجتمع بالجسد يستند إلى تجربة إنسانية مشتركة يدركها كل إنسان، بصرف النظر عن بيئته أو ثقافته. ومن هنا اكتسبت الصورة طابعاً عالمياً، وأصبحت قادرة على مخاطبة الإنسان في كل زمان ومكان، بما تحمله من دعوة إلى الرحمة، والتعاون، ومشاركة الآخرين في آلامهم وآمالهم، وهي قيم تمثل أساس العمران الإنساني والاستقرار المجتمعي.

البعد التداولي وجمالية التأثير في الخطاب النبوي

تكشف القراءة التداولية للحديث أن الخطاب النبوي لم يُصغَ بقصد الإخبار فحسب، بل لتحقيق فعلٍ تأثيري يوجّه سلوك المتلقي ويعيد تشكيل منظومته القيمية. فالصورة التمثيلية لا تُقدّم وصفاً لحال المؤمنين، وإنما تدعوهم ضمناً إلى أن يكونوا على هذه الهيئة من التواد والتراحم والتعاطف، فتتحول اللغة من وسيلة لنقل المعنى إلى أداة لبناء السلوك الاجتماعي.

وقد تحقق هذا الأثر بفضل التلاحم بين البناء اللغوي، والصورة البيانية، والخصائص الأسلوبية، مما جعل الخطاب يجمع بين الإقناع العقلي، والتأثير الوجداني، والجمال الفني. وبهذا تجاوز الحديث حدود زمانه ومناسبته، ليظل نموذجاً خالداً للبيان العربي، تتجدد دلالاته بتجدد حاجات الإنسان إلى قيم التضامن والتكافل. ومن ثم فإن عالمية هذا النص لا ترجع إلى مضمونه الأخلاقي وحده، بل إلى بنيته الفنية المحكمة التي جعلت من الصورة وسيلةً لإنتاج معنى متجدد، قادر على التأثير في مختلف البيئات والثقافات.

الخاتمة

خلصت هذه الدراسة إلى أن الحديث النبوي الشريف: «مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم كمثل الجسد إذا اشتكى منه عضو تداعى له سائر الجسد بالسهر والحمى» يمثل نموذجاً رفيعاً للبيان النبوي، تتضافر فيه العناصر اللغوية والبلاغية والأسلوبية لتشكيل صورة فنية متكاملة، تجسد التلاحم الإيماني في أبلغ صوره. وقد أظهر التحليل أن البناء اللغوي، والتصوير البياني، والخصائص الأسلوبية، والأبعاد النفسية والاجتماعية للخطاب، جميعها أسهمت في إنتاج نص يجمع بين جمال التعبير وعمق الدلالة وقوة التأثير.

ويستنتج من الجولة:

- كشف البحث أن البناء اللغوي للحديث قائم على اختيار معجمي دقيق ونظام تركيب محكم، أسهما في ترسيخ مفهوم التلاحم الإيماني وإبراز دلالاته.
- أن التشبيه التمثيلي في الحديث يمثل محور الصورة الفنية، إذ نقل المعنى المجرد إلى صورة حسية نابضة بالحياة، مما عزز فاعلية الخطاب وأثره في المتلقي.
- أثبتت الدراسة أن الخصائص الأسلوبية، من اختيار الألفاظ، والإيقاع الداخلي، والتوازي، والتدرج الدلالي، لم تكن وسائل جمالية فحسب، بل أدت دورًا أساسيًا في بناء المعنى وتكثيف دلالاته.
- أبرزت الدراسة أن جماليات البيان النبوي تتجاوز الجانب الفني إلى أداء وظيفة نفسية واجتماعية، تسهم في ترسيخ قيم المحبة، والتكافل، والتراحم، وبناء الوعي الجماعي لدى أفراد المجتمع.

ويوصي الباحث إلى :

- توسيع نطاق الدراسات الأدبية والبلاغية للحديث النبوي، والاستفادة من مناهج النقد واللسانيات الحديثة في الكشف عن جماليات الخطاب النبوي وأبعاده التعبيرية.
- إعداد بحوث مقارنة بين البيان النبوي والنصوص العربية الرفيعة؛ لإبراز الخصائص الأسلوبية والبلاغية المميزة للحديث الشريف، وتعزيز حضوره في الدراسات الأدبية المعاصرة.

الهوامش

1. الجرجاني، عبد القاهر، دلائل الإعجاز، تحقيق محمود محمد شاكر، مكتبة الخانجي، القاهرة، ط3، 1992م، ص 102-118؛ وانظر: أسرار البلاغة، تحقيق محمود محمد شاكر، مطبعة المدني، القاهرة، ص 74-96.
2. انظر ابن عقيل، شرح ابن عقيل (602/2)
3. الجرجاني، أسرار البلاغة، المرجع السابق، ص 105-129؛ وانظر: السكاكي، الإيضاح في علوم البلاغة، تحقيق محمد عبد المنعم خفاجي، دار الجيل، بيروت، ص 235-249.
4. السكاكي، أبو يعقوب يوسف بن أبي بكر، مفتاح العلوم، تحقيق نعيم زرزور، دار الكتب العلمية، بيروت، ص 347-365؛ وانظر: البلاغة العربية: أسسها وعلومها وفنونها، دار القلم، دمشق، ج2، ص 15-42.
5. البيومي، محمد رجب، التصوير الفني في الحديث النبوي، القاهرة: دار الوفاء، بلا تاريخ ص 49-45.
6. الجرجاني، أسرار البلاغة، المرجع السابق، ص 74-79.
7. الجرجاني، دلائل الإعجاز، المرجع السابق، ص: 52-55.
8. انظر: محمد أبو موسى، البيان النبوي، القاهرة: مكتبة وهبة، ص 45-47.
9. المرجع السابق، ص 48-52.
10. الجرجاني، دلائل الإعجاز، المرجع السابق، ص 74-79.

11. محمد أبو موسى، البيان النبوي، المرجع السابق ص 59-63.

12. الجرجاني، دلائل الإعجاز، المرجع السابق، ص 85-89



صور الكارثة الطبيعية في مرآة الشعر العربي البرنوي: قصيدة أبابا ثاني " فيضان ميدغري " أمودجاً

¹ محمد جده محمد

¹ قسم الدراسات العربية، كلية الآداب، جامعة ميدغري، ولاية برنو- نيجيريا

ABSTRACT

This study examines the images of natural disaster in the poem *Maiduguri Flood* by the Nigerian poet Ababa Thani, with the aim of identifying the rhetorical and prosodic features employed in portraying the devastating flood that struck Maiduguri in 2024. Using a descriptive-analytical approach, the study analyzes the poem's artistic imagery, rhetorical devices, and rhythmic structure within its social and humanitarian context. The findings reveal that the poet effectively depicts the human, environmental, and urban consequences of the disaster through vivid imagery, employing metaphor, repetition, and expressive devices such as imperative and vocative forms to convey grief, hope, and supplication. The study also demonstrates the poet's adherence to the classical Arabic poetic form, composed in the truncated **al-Kāmil** meter, which enhances the poem's musicality and emotional impact. It concludes that Borno Arabic poetry serves not only as an artistic expression but also as a means of documenting natural disasters, preserving collective memory, and promoting resilience, solidarity, and social cohesion.

المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل صور الكارثة الطبيعية في قصيدة «فيضان ميدغري» للشاعر النيجيري أبابا ثاني، والكشف عن الخصائص البلاغية والعروضية التي وظفها في تصوير آثار الفيضان الذي اجتاحت مدينة ميدغري سنة 2024م. واعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، من خلال دراسة النص الشعري، وتحليل صورته الفنية، وأساليبه البلاغية، وبنية الإيقاعية، وربطها بالسياق الاجتماعي والإنساني للكارثة. وتوصلت الدراسة إلى أن الشاعر نجح في تجسيد مشاهد الدمار الإنساني والعمرائي والبيئي عبر صور شعرية مؤثرة، موظفًا الاستعارة والتكرار والأساليب الإنشائية، ولا سيما الأمر والنداء، لإبراز مشاعر الحزن والرجاء والتضرع. كما كشفت الدراسة عن التزام الشاعر بالبناء العمودي للقصيدة على البحر الكامل المجزوء، بما أسهم في تعزيز الإيقاع الموسيقي وانسجام التجربة الشعرية. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن الشعر العربي البرنوي يؤدي دورًا مهمًا في توثيق الكوارث الطبيعية، والتعبير عن معاناة المجتمع، وتعزيز قيم الصبر والتكافل والتضامن.

الكلمات المفتاحية/Keywords

Borno Arabic Poetry, Natural Disaster, Maiduguri Flood, Ababa Thani, Poetic Imagery, Rhetoric, Arabic Prosody
الشعر العربي البرنوي، الكارثة الطبيعية، فيضان ميدغري، أبابا ثاني، الصورة الشعرية، البلاغة، العروض

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

المقدمة:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل قصيدة " فيضان ميدغري " للشاعر أبابا ثاني، والوقوف على الخصائص البلاغية والعروضية مع التركيز على صور الكارثة الطبيعية الواردة فيها، وتتجلى أهمية الدراسة في إبراز شخصية الشاعر وأسلوبه في التعبير عن الواقع، وإظهار ما تفوم به القصيدة من توثيق وتوجيه للوجدان الجمعي. أما الإشكالية فتتمثل في كون القصيدة حافلة بالصور الفنية والأساليب البلاغية والعروضية المتنوعة التي تستدعي إلى الوقوف عنها بالتحليل. استخدم الباحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وقسم الدراسة إلى سبعة محاور:

- التعريف بالشاعر أبابا ثاني

- عرض قصيدة فيضان ميدغري

- مناسبة القصيدة، أفكارها، وشرحها

- الخصائص البلاغية والعروضية في القصيدة

- صور الكارثة الطبيعية في القصيدة

- الخاتم وأهم النتائج

- المصادر والمراجع

التعريف بالشاعر أبابا ثاني :

ولد الشاعر أبابا ثاني أباغوني في حي هُوساري في مدينة ميدغري ولاية برنو سنة 1391هـ الموافق 1970م. نشأ وترى على يد جده لأمه الشيخ أباغوني، قرأ عليه القرآن الكريم، كما أخذ عنه بعض الكتب الفقهية وبعض القصائد في المديح النبوي وكتب الطريقة التجانية.¹ وكان مقتديا بجده في الزهد والصبر، والتواضع، وقول الشعر، التحق أبابا ثاني بمدرسة الشيخ أباغوني الإسلامية عام 1980م. وتخرج منها عام 1987م، ثم التحق بكلية الدراسات الإسلامية بميدغري وتخرج منها عام 1992م، ثم واصل دراسته بجامعة ميدغري قسم اللغة العربية والدراسات الإسلامية عام 2000م. وبعد حصوله على شهادة الليسانس بدأ أبابا ثاني يُدرّس في مدرسة كابتل، درّس فيها لمدة شهر، ثم واصل العمل في كلية الكانفي للدراسات الإسلامية وعين رئيس لقسم اللغة العربية، لمدة سنة، ثم وظف أبابا ثاني أباغوني في قرية اللغة العربية (إنغالا) عام 2006م. وقد حصل أبابا ثاني على شهادة الماجستير في اللغة العربية بجامعة ميدغري عام 2012م واصل دراسته في نفس الجامعة (ميدغري) حيث حصل على درجة الدكتوراه في اللغة العربية عام 2020م.² وكان لأبابا أشعار كثيرة معظمها في مدح الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم، ومدح الشيوخ، والثناء، له ديوان يسمى: " الدموع المدار. ومازال الشاعر

¹ - معاذ محمد (الدكتور) وقفة مع بعض الشعراء الشباب في مدينة ميدغري من سنة 2000 - 1980 م الطبعة الأولى، الممتاز للتوزيع والنشر، 2011 م ص:

² - مقابلة مع الشاعر أبابا ثاني أباغوني في مكتبته بقرية اللغة العربية- إنغالا، ميدغري يوم الاثنين الموافق 2026/04/27م

على قيد الحياة يحاضر بقرية اللغة العربية، (إنغالا) ومدرس بكلية الكامي للدراسات الإسلامية، لتثقيف أبناء الأمة الإسلامية.³

عرض قصيدة فيضان ميدغري

هذه القصيدة نظمت على بحر الكامل الذي يجريه العروضيون على وزن متفاعِلن متفاعِلن متفاعِلن ثلاث تفعيلات في صدر البيت ومثلها في العجز، ذات احدى وثلاثين بيت، واختار الشاعر حرف (التاء) رويًا لقصيدته.

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. السَّيْلُ دَاهَمَ بِلَدَّتِي | * | بِجُيُوشِهِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ |
| 2. فَيْضَانٌ حَيَّرَ فِكْرَتِي | * | يَا وَيْحَ سَمَلِ الْأُمَّةِ |
| 3. الْفَيْضُ شَتَّتَ بِلَدَّتِي | * | وَفَشَى صُنُوفَ النِّقْمَةِ |
| 4. الزَّوْجُ فَارَقَ زَوْجَهُ | * | لَا وَصَلَ بَيْنَ الْأُسْرَةِ |
| 5. طِفْلٌ يَصِيحُ وَيَرْجِي | * | رُؤْيَا أَبِيهِ بِلَمَحَةٍ |
| 6. الْأُمُّ تَبْكِي فِي الدُّجَى | * | أَيْنَ الْبَنُونَ وَصَبِيَّتِي |
| 7. إِنَّ الْمَبَانِي هُدِمَتْ | * | أَمْوَالُنَا قَدْ ضَلَّتْ |
| 8. شَجَرُ الْمَدِينَةِ أَقْلَعَتْ | * | وَمِيَاهُ شُرِبَ قَلْتُ |
| 9. وَتَرَى الْمَوَاشِيَ مَيِّتَةً | * | أَفْزَعُ بِهَاتِي الْفَيْضَةِ |
| 10. أَجْسَامُ أَقْوَامٍ جُرَّتْ | * | مِثْلَ الْغَنَاءِ وَزُبْدَةٍ |
| 11. طُرُقُ الْمَدِينَةِ حُفِرَتْ | * | وَتَوَعَّرَتْ يَا حَسْرَتِي |
| 12. حُفِرَ وَآبَارٌ بُدَّتْ | * | فِي سَاحَةِ أَوْ غُرْفَةٍ |
| 13. جُلُّ الْمَزَارِعِ أَغْرَقَتْ | * | وَالْقُوتُ عَزَّ بِبِلَدَّتِي |
| 14. كَمْ مَسْجِدٍ قَدْ غَابَ عَنَّا | * | هُ السَّاجِدُونَ بِرُهَةٍ |
| 15. وَمَدَارِسٍ قَدْ أَقْفَلَتْ وَكَدَّ | * | ذَا جَمِيعِ الْخُلُوةِ |
| 16. كُلُّ الْأُمُورِ تَوَقَّفَتْ | * | فِي يَرَوْ يَا لِلصَّدَمَتِ |
| 17. أَبْكِي عَلَى سَيْلِ جَرَى | * | بَلْ هَدَّ كُلُّ الْبُنْيَةِ |
| 18. أَبْكِي عَلَى سَيْلِ غَدَا | * | سَبَبَ افْتِقَارِ الْأُمَّةِ |
| 19. أَبْكِي عَلَى سَيْلِ مَضَى | * | بِنُفُوسِ بَعْضِ النَّسَمَةِ |
| 20. عَقَّارُ يَا عَقَّارُ يَا | * | عَقَّارُ يَا ذَا الْعِزَّةِ |

³ - محمد جدة محمد، مراثٍ قيلت في رثاء المرحوم عبدالله غوني تجاني، بحث قدم لنيل شهادة الماجستير في اللغة العربية وآدابها، جامعة بايرو، كنو، 2015م،

21. اغْفِرْ لِمَوْتَانَا وَكُنْ * حَصْنًا وَدَفْعِ بَلِيَّةِ
22. واشْفِ إِلَاهِ جَمِيعَ مَنْ * عَانَى صُنُوفِ الْعِلَّةِ
23. يَا رَبِّ عَفْوًا تَرْتَجِي * فَرَجِ جَمِيعِ الْخُوبَةِ
24. وَالْطُّفِ بِنَا يَا رَبَّنَا * عَجَّلْ نَزُولَ النِّعْمَةِ
25. يَا رَبِّ قَوِّ ضَعْفَنَا * كَفِّرْ جَمِيعَ الرُّلَّةِ
26. رَبِّ الْعِبَادِ اغْنِهِمْ * عَوَضَ حَسَائِرِ مَجْنَّةِ
27. نَعَمْ الْإِنْسَانِ تَبَرَّعُوا * بِالْقُوتِ أَوْ بِالنِّيَرَةِ
28. يَا رَبِّ وَسِّعْ رِزْقَهُمْ * أَدْخِلْهُمْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ
29. يَا رَبِّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ * دَوْمًا عَلَى ذِي الْمِنَّةِ
30. خَيْرِ الْأَتَامِ مُحَمَّد * مَا حِي الدُّجَى وَالْفِتْنَةِ
31. وَعَلَى الصَّحَابِ وَآلِهِ * مَا لَاحَ نَجْمِ اللَّيْلَةِ⁴

مناسبة القصيدة:

هذه القصيدة قيلت في رثى مدينة ميدغري عاصمة ولاية برنو، شمال شرق نيجيريا عندما أصيبت بفيضان، سمها الشاعر فيضان ميدغري، الذي حدث يوم الثلاثاء العاشر من شهر سبتمبر عام 2024م.

أفكار القصيدة:

- التعبير عن الكارثة الطبيعية التي حلت بمدينة ميدغري، وما أثارته من حيرات وأحزان.
- تصوير حالة المجتمع البرناوي وما أعينوه من صعوبات ومشقات
- وصف ما خلفته الكارثة من تدمير المباني والطرق، وغرق المزارع، وموت المواشي وسقوط الأشجار والمساجد والمداس والخلوات القرآنية، وفقدان الأموال.
- الثناء على أهل الخير الذين ساعدوا بالتبرعات والدعاء لهم بالرزق وبدخول الجنة
- المناجاة والتضرع لله سبحانه وتعالى والدعاء للموتي بالرحمة والمغفرة. والصلاة والسلام على رسول صلى الله عليه وسلم وآله وصحبه.

شرح القصيدة:

4 - أبا ثانياً أبا غوني، (الدكتور) ديوان "الدموع المدرار" مخطوط، يوجد في مكتبة الشاعر بقرية اللغة العربية

- انغالا - ميدغري - نيجيريا. ص: 9

من البيت الأول إلى البيت الثالث (1-3) عبر الشاعر عن الكارثة الطبيعية التي هاجمة بلدته (مدينة ميدغري) مشيراً إلى مدى قوة السيل الذي غشاها فحينذ يشبه الجيش القوي الذي لا يرد، وصور ما أثارته هذه الكارثة من حيرة وارتباك وأسى من تشتت شمل الأمة، وما حلفته من أحزان وشر على البلاد والأمة.

وفي البيت الرابع إلى البيت الخامس (4-6) يصف الشاعر حال المجتمع البرناوي الذي أصيب بهذه الكارثة الشنيعة فعبّر عن الحزن والفراق الذي حدث بين الزوجين، ومعاناة الأطفال وترقبهم لرؤية آبائهم، وبكاء الأم ورغبتها لرؤية البنين مع أبيهم. مما يشير إلى التفكيك والضياع الذي خلفه هذا السيل حيث أصبحت المعيشة صعبة في البلاد.

ومن البيت السابع إلى البيت الثالث عشر (7-13) انقل الشاعر إلى وصف ما خلفه السيل من تدمير المباني والطرق، مما أدى إلى ظهور حفر وآبار، وغرق المزارع، وموت المواشي، وفقدان الأموال، وسقوط الأشجار، وقلة المياه الصالحة للشرب، فأدى إلى قلة القوت وازدياد الفقر في المدينة.

ومن البيت الرابع عشر إلى البيت السادس عشر، أشار الشاعر إلى أن دمار المساجد والمداس والخلوات القرآنية أدى إلى توفيق الحركات الاجتماعية والتعليمية اليومية مما يؤكد على شمولية الكارثة فتأسف الشاعر على هذا. ومن البيت السابع عشر إلى البيت التاسع عشر، استمر الشاعر في وصف حالات المجتمع وما أعاناه من أحزان وخسائر فبدأ ييكي على هذه الحادثة التي أصابت البلاد من هدم المباني، وافتقار الأمة ووفاة الكثير من الناس.

من البيت العشرين إلى البيت الثاني والثلاثين، أقبل الشاعر يناجي الله سبحانه وتعالى متضرعاً داعياً و طالباً للمغفرة والرحمة للموتى، والحصن في مواجهة هذه المحنة، وأن يشفي المرضى ويعيد المفقودين، وأثنى على أهل الخير الذين ساعدوا بالتبرعات ودعى لهم بالرزق وبدخول الجنة. ثم اختتم دعاءه بالصلاة والسلام على خير البرية محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى آله وأصحابه الأخيار.

الخصائص البلاغية والعروضية في القصيدة

من الأساليب التي خيمت في القصيدة المختارة الأساليب الأنشائية الطلبية من: أمر ونداء، وإليك بعض النماذج منها.
 مثال الأمر: هو " طلب حصول الفعل من المخاطب على وجه الإستعلاء، وله أربع صيغ: فعل الأمر، والمضارع المجزوم بلام الأمر، واسم فعل الأمر، والمصدر النائب عن فعل الأمر. وقد تخرج صيغ الأمر من معناها الأصلي إلى معان أخرى مجازية تستفاد من سياق الكلام وقرائن الأحوال كالدعاء، والالتماس، والإرشاد وغيرها.⁵ يقول الشاعر أبا بآ ثاني:

اغْفِرْ لِمَوْتَاتَا وَكُنْ حِصْنًا وَدَفْعَ بَلِيَّةٍ
 وَاشْفِ الْإِلَهَ جَمِيعَ مَنْ عَانَى صُئُوفَ الْعَلَّةِ
 يَا رَبِّ عَفْوَاً تَرْتَجِي فَرَجَ جَمِيعِ الْخُوبَةِ
 وَالْطُفْ بِنَا يَا رَبَّنَا عَجَلْ نَزُولَ النَّعْمَةِ
 يَا رَبِّ قَوِي ضَعْفَنَا كَفِّرْ جَمِيعَ الزُّلْمَةِ
 يَا رَبِّ وَسِعْ رِزْقَهُمْ أَدْخِلْهُمْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ

فالشاعر أبا بآ ثاني استخدم أفعال الأمر (اغفر - كن - اشف - فرج - الطف - عجل - قوي - كفر - ادخل - وسع). كلها افعال أمر خرجت من معانيها الأصلية الحقيقية إلى المعنى الذي يفيد الدعاء.

ومثال النداء: وهو طلب المتكلم إقبال المخاطب عليه بحرف نائب مناب أدعو المنقول من الخبر إلى الإنشاء، وأدواته ثمانية هي: الهمزة، و أي، و يا، و آ، و أي، و أيا، و هيا، و وا. وهي في الاستعمال نوعان: الهمزة، و أي، لنداء القريب، وباقي الأدوات لنداء البعيد". وقد تخرج ألفاظ النداء عن معناها الأصلي وهو "طلب الإقبال" إلى معان أخرى تستفاد من القرائن كالدعاء، والنصح، والتمني، والالتماس، والتعظيم وغيرها.⁶ كقول الشاعر أبا بآ ثاني أبا غوني:

يَا رَبِّ عَفْوَاً تَرْتَجِي فَرَجَ جَمِيعِ الْخُوبَةِ
 يَا رَبِّ قَوِي ضَعْفَنَا كَفِّرْ جَمِيعَ الزُّلْمَةِ
 يَا رَبِّ وَسِعْ رِزْقَهُمْ أَدْخِلْهُمْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ
 يَا رَبِّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَوْمًا عَلَى ذِي الْمِنَّةِ

الاستعارة: وهي في اللغة: مأخوذة من العارية، واستعار طلب العارية أي نقل من شخص إلى آخر حتى أصبحت العارية من خصائص المعار منه.⁷

وفي اصطلاح البيانين: " استعمال اللفظ في غير ما وضع له لعلاقة المشابهة بين المعنى المنقول عنه والمعنى المستعمل فيه، مع قرينة صارفة عن إرادة المعنى الأصلي، والاستعارة ليست إلا تشبيها مقتصرًا، لكنها أبلغ منه، كقولك: رأيت أسداً في المدرسة، فأصل هذه الاستعارة رأيت رجلاً شجاعاً كالأسد في المدرسة، فحذف المشبه "رجلاً" والأداة الكاف " ووجه

5 - الهاشمي، السيد أحمد. جواهر البلاغة في المعاني والبيان والبديع، القاهرة: شركة القدس للنشر والتوزيع، 2009م. ص: 55-56

6 - أحمد الهاشمي {السيد}. جواهر البلاغة؛ دار الفكر بيروت، 2000م، ص: 74-76

7 - أنعام نوال عكاري، المعجم في علوم البلاغة البديع، والبيان، والمعاني، طلعة جديدة منقحة، دار الكتب العلمية بيروت- لبنان - 1996م ص: 95

الشبه " الشجاعة " والحقته بقرينة " المدرسة " لتدل على أنك تريد بالأسد الشجاع.⁸ وأصل الاستعارة تشبيه حذف منه المشبه وأداة التشبيه ووجه الشبه ولم يبق إلا ما يدل على المشبه به بأسلوب استعارة اللفظ الدال على المشبه به أو استعارة بعض مشتقاته أو لوازمه. واستعمالها في الكلام بدلا عن ذكر لفظ المشبه⁹. يقول الشاعر أبا ثاني أبا غوني في قصيدة فيضان ميدغري:

السَّيْلُ دَاهَمَ بِلَدَّتِي بِحُيُوشِهِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ

شبه الشاعر السيل برجل قائد يقود جماعة، ثم حذف المشبه به ورمز إليه بشيء من لوازمه في قوله: " بحيوخه " على سبيل الاستعارة المكنية، والسر في ذلك يكمن في بيان مدى كثرته وقوته في هدم المباني والأشجار وترويع الناس.

التكرار: يأتي تكرار الألفاظ في الشعر، ليحمل غايتين أولاهما: غاية موسيقية تتمثل بزيادة النغم وتقوية الجرس الإيقاعي وثانيهما: غاية معنوية نفسية¹⁰ ودائما ما يكون التكرار لفظيا، يساعد على الموسيقى وكذلك تقوية المعنى أحيانا. فالتكرار: هو أن يعلق المتكلم لفظا من الكلام بمعنى، ثم يرددها بعينها. ويعلقها بمعنى آخر.¹¹ كما في تكرار جملة (أبكي على سيل) ثلاثة مرات عند قول الشاعر أبا ثاني :

أَبْكِي عَلَى سَيْلٍ جَزَى بَلْ هَدَّ كُلُّ الْبُنْيَةِ

أَبْكِي عَلَى سَيْلٍ عَدَا سَبَبِ افْتِقَارِ الْأُمَةِ

أَبْكِي عَلَى سَيْلٍ مَضَى بِنَفْسٍ بَعْضِ النَّسَمَةِ

ومن وسائل طلب الموسيقى الداخلية **التصريع**: جاء في اللغة: بالتشديد والتخفيف، صرع الباب، وصرع الشعر، أي جعله ذا شطرين متفقين في التقفية.¹² يقال للامر صرعان أي طرفان ومصرعا الباب، بابان منصوبان ينضمان جميعاً، مدخلهما في الوسط من المصراعين.¹³

والتصريع في الاصطلاح: " هو توازن الالفاظ مع توافق الأعجاز أو تقاربهما "¹⁴ أو هو أن يتفق آخر جزء من صدر البيت مع آخر جزء من عجزه في الوزن والاعراب والقافية.¹⁵ أو اتفاق نهاية شطري البيت الأول في حرف واحد، وأحسن ما يكون في أول القصيدة¹⁶. أو كل بيت يتساوى الجزء الأخير من صدره والجزء الأخير من عجزه في الوزن.¹⁷ وقد استحسّن البلاغيون هذا اللون البديعي لما ينطوي عليه من التمييز بين الابتداء وغيره، ولفهم روي القصيدة قبل تمام البيت الاول،

8 - أحمد الهاشمي، (السيد) جواهر البلاغة، المرجع السابق ص: 249

9 - عبدالرحمن حسن الميداني، البلاغة أساسها وعلومها وفنونها، الجزء الاول والثاني، الطبعة الأولى، دار العلم بيروت 1997م ص: 240

10 - راجع المرشد إلى فهم أشعار العرب وصناعتها، الجزء الثاني، ص: 568

11 - محمد عبد المطلب "الدكتور" البلاغة والأسلوبية، الطبعة الأولى دار نوبار: الشبكة المصرية العالمية للنشر، القاهرة/ 1994م، ص: 227

12 - مجمع اللغة العربية، المعجم الوسيط الطبعة الرابعة، مكتبة الشرق الدولية جمهورية مصر 2004 م، ص: 53 8

13 - أمين عبد الغني، الكافي في البلاغة، مرجع سابق ص: 241

14 - المرجع السابق نفسه والصفحة نفسها.

15 - لخطيب التبريزي، أبو وكريا يحيى بن علي بن محمد بن حسن بن بسطام الشيباني، كتاب الكافي، شرح وتحقيق الدكتور

محمد أحمد قاسم، المكتبة العصرية، صيد بيروت، 1430 هـ 2009 م، ص 242

16 - المرجع السابق، ص: 242

17 - كتاب الكافي، مرجع سابق، ص: 242

وهو ميدان متسع لتسابق الفحول من الشعراء والتعبير عن قدرتهم على الشعر، وسعة بحرهم.¹⁸ يعطي التصريح جرسا موسيقياً يأخذ بالاستماع والافهام، ويسعد النفس من خلال موسيقى الصوت. فالتصريح خاص بالشعر فقط، ويشابهه في النثر السجع. يقول الشاعر أبا با ثاني

السَّيْلُ دَاهَمَ بِلَدِّي بِجُيُوشِهِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ
فَيْضَانٌ حَيْرَ فِكْرِي يَا وَيْحَ سَمَلِ الْأُمَّةِ
الْفَيْضُ شَتَّتَ بِلَدِّي وَفَشَى صُنُوفَ النَّقْمَةِ

الايقاع الخارجي الوزن والقافية:

أ. الوزن: تكمن موسيقى الشعر العربي في بحوره وقوافيه، ويعد الوزن من أهم عناصره الموسيقية، وعده ابن رشيق: "أعظم أركان حد الشعر، وأولاها به خصوصية"¹⁹

والوزن هو: "الوسيلة التي تكمن الكلمات من أن يؤثرها بعضها في البعض الآخر على أكبر نطاق ممكن،"²⁰ كما يشمل أيضا "الإطار الخارجي الذي يمنع القصيدة من التعثر"²¹ فمصدر الموسيقى الخارجية هو الوزن والقافية اللذان ينشأ عنهما الانسجام الذي هو أساس الجمال الموسيقي، وقد أطلق العروضيون على هذا الانسجام الموسيقي اسم (البحر)، ويتألف البحر الشعري من مجموعة وأجزاء تختلف باختلاف حركاتها وسكناتها، وتسمى هذه الأجزاء بالتفعيلات، وتتركب التفعيلة من وتد وسبب أو من وتد وسببين. فالموسيقى إذن من أولويات الشعر، وهي تتألف من الوزون والقافية اللذين بدوئهما ليس هناك موسيقى، ومن ثمَّ ليس هناك شعر. فمن خلال دراسة هذه القصائد المختارة جاء البحر الكامل في المرتبة الأولى: "وهو: بحر يصلح لأكثر الأغراض والمعاني"²² مما يفسح المجال للشاعر للتعبير عن تجربته الشعرية وانفعالاته، والبحر الكامل بحر شجي عذب غاص بالنظم، لتماثل تفعيلاته الست، فالشاعر أبا با ثاني وظَّف البحر الكامل المجزوء في قصيدة فيضان ميدغري. وأجزاء الكامل ستة وهي:

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ متفاعِلنْ متفاعِلنْ متفاعِلنْ متفاعِلنْ متفاعِلنْ

18 - قدامة بن جعفر أبو الفرج، نقد الشعر، ص: 222

19 - إبراهيم أنيس، موسيقى الشعر، دار القلم، بيروت، لبنان، الطبعة الرابعة 1965م ص: 21

20 - السعيد الورقي، لغة الشعر العربي الحديث (مقوماتها الفنية وطاقتها الإبداعية)، مطبعة النهضة للطباعة والنشر، الطبعة الثالثة، 1984م ص: 272

21 - رجاء عيد (الدكتور) التجديد الموسيقي في الشعر العربي، داسة تأصيلية تطبيقية بين القديم والجديد لموسيقى الشعر العربي، منشأة المعارف الإسكندرية،

(د.ت)، ص: 39

22 - دراسات في النص الشعري عصر صدر الاسلام وبني أمية ص: 287

ثم إنّه في بعض الأحيان تحل (مستعلن) مكان (متفاعله)، ولهذا يعد (مستعلن) مقياساً لبحر الكامل لا تقل نسبة عن شيوخ (متفاعله) إن لم تزد عليه. ⁽²³⁾ ويدخل البحر الكامل من العلل " القطع والوقص والحذف، ⁽²⁴⁾ كما يدخل في حشوه الإضمار بحسن". ²⁵

التقطيع العروضي لمطلع القصيدة

أسيل دا - هم بلدتي
 . / . / . / - . / . / . /
 مستعلن - متفاعله

بجوشيهي - في ليلتي
 - / . / . / - . / . / . /
 - متفاعله - مستعلن

القصيدة من البحر الكامل المجزوء بعروضة مجزوءة صحيحة (متفاعله) وضربها مضمر " متفاعله" بتسكين التاء.
 ب/ القافية: في اصطلاح اللغويين، " مؤخر العنق، وآخر كل شيء ". ²⁶ وهي مأخوذة من قفا يقفوا إذا تتبّع ما قبلها من البيت. جاء في مختار الصحاح: " قفا أثره؛ تبعه، ومنه قوافي الشعر لأنّ بعضها يتبع أثر بعض ". ²⁷ فالقافية تشكل جزءاً مهماً من موسيقى الشعر العربي وتكرارها في خواتم الأبيات هو ما يضفي على القصيدة وحدة نغمية، إذ هي المقاطع الصوتية التي تكون في أواخر أبيات القصيدة أي المقاطع التي يلزم تكرار نوعها في كل بيت. ²⁸ ومن خلال تتبع الباحث لقافية القصيدة المختارة للدراسة أثبت أن القافية المطلقة ²⁹ هي المستخدمة، ومن الأمثلة على ذلك قول الشاعر أبا نبي الثاني:

السَّيْلُ دَاهَمَ بِلَدَّتِي بِجُوشِيهِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ
 فَيُضَانُ حَيْرَ فِكْرِي يَا وَيْحَ سَمَلِ الْأُمَةِ
 الْفَيْضُ شَتَّتَ بِلَدِّي وَفَشَى صُنُوفُ النَّقْمَةِ

23 موسيقى الشعر، مرجع سابق، ص 64.

24 - القطع: حذف ساكن الوند المجموع وتسكين ما قبله. والوقص: حذف الثاني المتحرك. والحذف: حذف الوند المجموع من آخر التفعيلة. والإضمار: تسكين الثاني المتحرك.

25 - المفصل في العروض والقافية وفنون الشعر، عدنان حقي، دار الرشيد، ومؤسسة الإيمان، بيروت - لبنان، الطبعة الثانية، 1421 هـ: ص 64. بتصرف

26 - المعجم الوسيط، ج 2، ص: 787.

27 - مختار الصحاح، ص 547.

28 - عبد العزيز عفيف، علم العروض والقافية، دار النهضة العربية، بيروت 1974 م ص: 143

29 - هي التي يكون رويها متحركاً

الروي: يعرفه العلماء بأنه "مشتق من الرويّة، وهي الفكرة، لأنّ الإنسان يتفكّر فيه فهو فعيل بمعنى مفعول، أو مأخوذ من الرواء، وهو الحبل الذي يضم به شيء إلى شيء لأنّه يضم أجزاء البيت ويصل بعضها ببعض فهو فعيل بمعنى فاعل".³⁰

وفي اصطلاح العروضيين: الروي حرف من حروف القافية ملتزم في كل أبيات القصيدة وتبنى عليه، وتنسب إليه فيقال قصيدة بائية إذا كان رويها باء...³¹

فالروي أحد أحرف القافية التي تبنى عليها القصيدة وتكرر بتكرار أبياتها وتنسب إليه عادة.³² وعرفه الخطيب التبريزي في كتابه بقوله: "هو الحرف الذي تبنى عليه القصيدة، وتنسب إليه فيقال: "قصيدة (دالية) أو (رائية) ويلزم في آخر كل بيت منها ولا بد لكل شعر قل أو كثر من روي.³³ والروي أقل ما يراعى فيه أن يشترك في كل أبيات القصيدة، و"لا يكون الشعر مقفياً إلا أن يشتمل على ذلك الصوت المكرّر في أواخر الأبيات".³⁴ فالشاعر استعمل حرف التاء ليكون روي لقصيدته وذلك عند قوله (ليلة) (النّفمة) (الأمة) (ا) (الأسرة) (بلمحة)

صور الكارثة الطبيعية في القصيدة

صور الشاعر أبابا ثاني الكارثة الطبيعية في قصيدته تصويراً متدرجاً، ينتقل فيه من وصف الحدث إلى أثره، ومن الهول المادي إلى الألم الإنساني، على النحو التالي:

أولاً: صورة الاجتياح والهجوم العسكري:

افتتح الشاعر مشهد الكارثة بتشخيص السيل وجعله كائناً عسكرياً منظماً، يقود جيشاً. لم يقل "جاء السيل" قال: " (السَّيْلُ دَاهَمَ) (بِجُيُوشِهِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ) وقت النوم والضعف، يوحى بالمفاجأة والاعتداء. لم يعد ماء عادي. فتتحول الكارثة إلى معركة خاسرة يواجهها إنسان أعزل.

ثانياً: صورة التفكك الأسري والاجتماعي:

هنا ينتقل الشاعر من تصوير الدمار المادي إلى المأساة الإنسانية التفكك الأسري. وضياح الروابط وصورة الطفل الباحث عن أبيه، (يَصْبِيحُ وَيَرْتَجِي) والام الباكية، (تَبْكِي فِي الدُّجَى) وتتساءل (أَيْنَ الْبَنُونَ وَصَبِيَّتِي) كلها صور تعكس انهيار البنية الاجتماعية أمام قوة الماء.

ثالثاً: صورة الخراب البيئي والمعيشي

30 - المفصل في العروض والقافية وفنون الشعر، ص: 145 - 150.

31 - المعجم الوسيط، ص 408. والمنجد في اللغة والأعلام، ص: 288. والمفصل في العروض والقافية وفنون الشعر، ص 150. واللباب في العروض والقافية، ص 124.

32 - معجم المصطلحات العربية في الادب واللغة مرجع سابق ص: 107 - 109

33 - الكافي في العروض والقوافي، شرح وتعليق محمد أحمد قاسم ص: 117

34 - موسيقى الشعر، ص: 247.

صور الكارثة الطبيعية في مرآة الشعر العربي البرنوي: قصيدة أبابا ثاني " فيضان ميدغري" أنموذجاً

إقلاغ الشجر، وهي رمز الإستقرار والظل في البيئة البرنوية الحارة، ونقص الماء الصالح للشرب، وتلف المزارع، ندرة القوت، وانقلاب المكان الآمن إلى مصدر خطر، فالساحة والغرفة تحولتا " حفر وآبار.

رابعاً: صورة الفناء والإهانة الانسانية

صور الشاعر في هذا المشهد جثث الضحايا وهي تجرفها المياه بالقيمة، في صورة صادمة تبرز هوان الإنسان أمام الكارثة.

خامساً: صورة توقف الحركات اليومية

في قول الشاعر "كل الامور توقت في يرو يا للصدمت" توفّق الحركات الاجتماعية والتعليمية اليومية، "مسجد قد غاب عنه الساجدون" ومدارس قد أقفلت " وكذا جميع الخلوة، " من مؤسسات ومدارس التعليم.

سادساً: صورة النهوض بالدعاء والرجاء:

بعد ما خلص الشاعر من وصف الدمار غير المشهد كله من البصري إلى مشهد روحي، نقل القصيدة إلى فضاء العبادة والرجاء فصور المجتمع متضرعاً إلى الله: " غفار يا غفار، اغفر لموتانا، واشف مرضانا، والطف بنا وقو ضعفنا.

ثامناً: صورة الشكر والتكافل:

انتقل بعد الرجاء بتصوير مشهد التكافل الاجتماعي في قوله: "نعم الاناس تبرعوا بالقوت أو بالنيرة، وختم بالصلاة على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم طلباً للبركة ورفع البلاء.

الخاتمة

بهذا وصل الباحث إلى ختام هذه الدراسة المعنون بـ (صور الكارثة الطبيعية في مرآة الشعر العربي البرنوي قصيدة أبابا ثاني " فيضان ميدغري" أنموذجاً) وقد تناولت الدراسة ترجمة الشاعر أبابا ثاني، وعرضت النص المختارة للدراسة وشرحته وقفت على أبرز خصائصه البلاغية والعروضية مع التركيز على صور الكارثة الطبيعية الواردة فيه. وقد توصلت الدراسة على النتائج الآتية:

- أن الشعر العربي البرنوي شعر حيّ متصل بواقع أمته، لا ينفك عن همومها الاجتماعية والدينية.
- أثبتت الدراسة بأن الشعر في المجتمع البرناوي يقوم بوظيفة التاريخ وتوثيق الكوارث وبث الصبر والتكافل. ولم يكن بكاء الشاعر أبابا ثاني في القصيدة بكاء ضعف، بل كان توثيقاً وشهادة. وكأنه يقول: " لن ننسى ما حدث".
- يلاحظ ان الشاعر نظم قصيدته على النظام الشعر العمودي فكان ملتزماً في استخدام الأزواج الشعرية الخليلية التي ألفها العرب منذ العصر الجاهلي، فوردت القصيدة على وزن البحر الكامل المجزوء.

المصادر والمراجع

- أبا ثانياً غوني، (الدكتور) ديوان "الدموع المذراة" مخطوط، يوجد في مكتبة الشاعر بقرية اللغة العربية - انغالا - ميدغري - نيجيريا.
- إبراهيم أنيس، موسيقي الشعر، دار القلم، بيروت، لبنان، الطبعة الرابعة 1965م
- أنعام نوال عكاري، المعجم في علوم البلاغة البديع، والبيان، والمعاني، طلبة جديدة منقحة، دار الكتب العلمية بيروت - لبنان - 1996م.
- الخطيب التريزي، أبو وكري يحيى بن علي بن محمد بن حسن بن بسطام الشيباني، كتاب الكافي، شرح وتحقيق الدكتور محمد أحمد قاسم، المكتبة العصرية، صيد بيروت، 1430هـ 2009م.
- رجاء عيد (الدكتور) التجديد الموسيقي في الشعر العربي، داسة تأصيلية تطبيقية بين القديم والجديد لموسيقي الشعر العربي، منشأة المعارف الإسكندرية، (د.ت)،
- السعيد الورقي، لغة الشعر العربي الحديث (مقوماتها الفنية وطاقاتها الإبداعية)، مطبعة النهضة للطباعة والنشر، الطبعة الثالثة، 1984م.
- عبدالرحمن حسن الميداني، البلاغة أساسها وعلومها وفنونها، الجزء الاول والثاني، الطبعة الأولى، دار العلم بيروت 1997م.
- عبد العزيز عفيف، علم العروض والقافية، دار النهضة العربية، بيروت 1974م.
- عدنان حقي، المفصل في العروض والقافية وفنون الشعر، دار الرشيد، ومؤسسة الإيمان، بيروت - لبنان، الطبعة الثانية، 1421هـ ص:
- مجمع اللغة العربية، المعجم الوسيط الطبعة الرابعة، مكتبة الشرق الدولية جمهورية مصر 2004 م
- محمد عبد المطلب "الدكتور" البلاغة والأسلوبية، الطبعة الأولى دار نوبار: الشركة المصرية العالمية للنشر، القاهرة/ 1994م.
- معاذ محمد (الدكتور) وقفة مع بعض الشعراء الشباب في مدينة ميدغري من سنة 2000 - 1980م الطبعة الأولى، الممتاز للتوزيع والنشر، 2011م.
- محمد جده محمد، مراث قيلت في رثاء المرحوم عبدالله غوني تجاني، بحث قدم لنيل شهادة الماجستير في اللغة العربية وآدابها، جامعة بايرو، كنو، 2015م
- الهاشمي، السيد أحمد. جواهر البلاغة في المعاني والبيان والبديع، القاهرة شركة القدس للنشر والتوزيع، 2009م.



التعليم المهني وأثره في تنمية مهارات التوظيف لدى طلبة جامعة ميدغوري النيجيرية

¹أ.د. يهوذا عبد الله محمد

¹قسم الدراسات العربية، كلية الآداب، جامعة ميدغوري، ولاية برنو، نيجيريا.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of vocational education in developing employability skills among students of the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, in light of the growing challenges of graduate unemployment and the mismatch between university education and labor market requirements. The study adopted a descriptive-analytical approach based on reviewing relevant literature, documents, and institutional reports, as well as analyzing the activities and training programs of the Centre. The findings revealed that vocational education plays a significant role in enhancing practical skills, promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment, and improving graduates' employment opportunities. The study recommends increasing investment in vocational education centers, aligning training programs with labor market needs, strengthening partnerships between universities and the private sector, and providing incentives that encourage students to participate in vocational training programs, thereby producing graduates who are better equipped for employment and sustainable economic development.

الملخص

تناولت هذه الدراسة دور التعليم المهني في تنمية مهارات التوظيف لدى طلاب جامعة مايدوغوري في نيجيريا، في ضوء التحديات المتزايدة المتمثلة في بطالة الخريجين وعدم التوافق بين التعليم الجامعي ومتطلبات سوق العمل. اعتمدت الدراسة منهجًا وصفيًا تحليليًا، استنادًا إلى مراجعة الأدبيات والوثائق والتقارير المؤسسية ذات الصلة، فضلًا عن تحليل أنشطة وبرامج التدريب التي يقدمها المركز. وكشفت النتائج أن التعليم المهني يؤدي دورًا هامًا في تعزيز المهارات العملية، ودعم ريادة الأعمال والعمل الحر، وتحسين فرص توظيف الخريجين. وتوصي الدراسة بزيادة الاستثمار في مراكز التعليم المهني، ومواءمة برامج التدريب مع احتياجات سوق العمل، وتعزيز الشراكات بين الجامعات والقطاع الخاص، وتقديم حوافز تشجع الطلاب على المشاركة في برامج التدريب المهني، مما يسهم في تخريج كوادر مؤهلة بشكل أفضل للتوظيف وتحقيق التنمية الاقتصادية المستدامة.

Keywords

Political discourse, rhetorical and persuasive strategies, rhetorical lexical and ideology

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

المقدمة:

الحمد لله الذي خلق الإنسان وعلمه ما لم يكن يعلم، بعد أن أخرجه من بطن أمه وهو لا يعلم شيئاً، وخلق له من وسائل التعليم ما يعينه من سمع وبصر وفؤاد، التي بها يتأمل ويتدبر ويتعقل وبواسطتها يستخدم القلم الذي به تحفظ العلوم وتضبط الحقائق.

قد يرضى به العقل البشري إذا قيل بأن بني آدم ليسوا على مستوى واحد في قدرة الفهم والإدراك، حيث يراعي فيهم الفروق الفردية من حيث السن والقدرة والكفاءة. ومراعات هذه الفروق تأتي من جانب المرسلين والمستقبلين، من هنا يمكن القول بأن الطلاب في الجامعات النيجيرية في العصور الماضية، كان معظمهم ذوي العقول النيرة والهمم العالية، لأنهم في ذلكم الحين كانوا يهتمون بكل ما يساعدهم في تطور حياتهم. ويراعون كل ما يسهم في تقدم بلادهم وتنظيم سياستها. وهم في ذلك موحدون ومتعاونون فيما يخص تقدم البلاد وترقي شؤونها. ولكن الآن تغيرت الأوضاع حيث ترى معظم الطلاب في الجامعات النيجيرية صغاراً في السن، وعقولهم غير ناضجة كما يتوقع، الأمر الذي أدى إلى تسليب كفاءتهم وقدرتهم ومنعهم ذلك من القيام بواجباتهم نحو الدراسة والدولة وإدارة حياتهم كما ينبغي. ومع هذا فهناك طائفة منهم من يريد نجاحاً في أعمالهم الأكاديمية، منهم من يشتغل نفسه للعمل الدؤب بواسطة حضور المحاضرات والقراءات والبحث في المكتبات بالإضافة إلى زيارة المراكز العلمية الأخرى في الجامعات وخارجها للحصول على المعلومات النافعة، وهكذا يتصلون بالشبكة العنكبوتية والشع. ولعل ما أدى إلى هذه المشكلة، عدم وجود الإرشاد المباشر (Counseling Directive) وعدم تركيزه على مشكلة الإرشاد أو على مشكلة المسترشد بحيث لا يهتم المسؤولون بالمسترشد ولا يتعامل هذا النظام مع الإرشاد من الجانب العقلي ولا الانفعالي.³⁵

فالتعليم المهني عبارة عن التربية المهنية في إعداد الأفراد لمهنة ماهرة، وهو النوع من التعليم المقدم للفرد لإعداداته للعمل بأجر أو لحسابه الخاص بالمهارات اللازمة.³⁶ وهو نظام مفتوح يمكن للمتعلمين الانخراط فيه مدى الحياة والتنقل بمرونة بين مستويات التدريب وفقاً لاحتياجاتهم في تطوير حياتهم المهنية.³⁷ فهو مجال واسع لكسب المعارف والخبرات العلمية والعملية من حيث الممارسة والتمرين والتدريب. لذا، أرادت هذه الورقة أن تسلط الضوء عن أهميته لدى طالب وخريج جامعة ميدغري النيجيرية.

مشكلة الدراسة

تتمثل مشكلة هذه الدراسة في وجود فجوة بين التعليم الجامعي ومتطلبات سوق العمل في نيجيريا، وما يترتب على ذلك من ارتفاع معدلات البطالة بين الخريجين وضعف امتلاكهم للمهارات المهنية والتقنية اللازمة للاندماج في الحياة

³⁵ - محمود كاظم محمود التميمي، الإرشاد الجامعي، مركز دبيونو لتعليم التفكير، دبي، ص 28

³⁶ - Lawan, Abdurrahman W. Technical and vocational education, a tool for national development in Nigeria.

Mediterranean, Journal of social sciences, 2013. Pp 85.

³⁷ - فام أنه توان، تمهيد الطريق للتعليم المهني، الصادر عن هيئة البحث والمعلومات GP-TTDT ترخيص رقم 108 الإلكترونية بالتاريخ 15 يوليو 2025

العملية. وعلى الرغم من إنشاء مركز التعليم المهني بجامعة ميدغري وتقديمه برامج تدريبية متنوعة، فإن مدى إسهام هذه البرامج في تنمية مهارات الطلبة والخريجين وتحقيق الاعتماد على الذات ما يزال بحاجة إلى دراسة وتحليل.

أهداف الدراسة

تستهدف هذه الدراسة الى التعرف على دور التعليم المهني في تنمية المهارات المهنية وتعزيز فرص العمل لدى طلبة وخريجي جامعة ميدغري النيجيرية.

الأهداف الفرعية

منها؛

1. بيان مفهوم التعليم المهني والتقني وخصائصه .
2. توضيح الفرق بين التعليم المهني والتعليم التقني .
3. التعرف على التخصصات المهنية المتاحة في جامعة ميدغري .
4. إبراز دور مركز التعليم المهني في إعداد الطلبة لسوق العمل .
5. بيان الفوائد الاقتصادية والاجتماعية للتعليم المهني .
6. الكشف عن التحديات والصعوبات التي تواجه التعليم المهني في البيئة الجامعية .

أهمية الدراسة

تمكن أهمية هذه الدراسة في:

1. تسهم في إثراء الدراسات العربية المتعلقة بالتعليم المهني في الجامعات النيجيرية .
2. تقدم إطاراً نظرياً حول مفهوم التعليم المهني ودوره في التنمية البشرية .
3. توفر مادة علمية يمكن أن يستفيد منها الباحثون في مجال التربية والتعليم وسوق العمل .
4. تساعد إدارات الجامعات على تطوير برامج التدريب المهني .
5. تسهم في توجيه الطلبة نحو اكتساب المهارات المطلوبة في سوق العمل .
6. تدعم جهود الحد من البطالة بين الخريجين .
7. تعزز ثقافة العمل الحر والاعتماد على الذات .

منهج الدراسة

اعتمدت الدراسة على **المنهج الوصفي التحليلي**؛ لأنه الأنسب لوصف واقع التعليم المهني في جامعة ميدغري وتحليل برامج وأهدافه وآثاره على الطلبة والخريجين، من خلال مراجعة الأدبيات والوثائق والتقارير المتعلقة بالتعليم المهني، وتحليل المعلومات المتعلقة بمركز التعليم المهني وبرامجه التدريبية.

الدراسات السابقة

لقد أجري بعض البحوث في نيجيريا وخارجها عن التعليم المهني وما يتعلق به، غير أن يد الباحث لم تصل إلى معظمها سوى البعض منها؛

- لوان عبدالرحمن، التعليم المهني أداة التطور الوطني في نيجيريا، مقالة كتبها في مجلة العلوم الاجتماعية الإلكترونية الصادرة في العام 2013م على الموقع www.linked edu.com. فيها تكلم عن تعريف التعليم المهني ومساهمته في تطور الوطن النيجيري فهذه الدراسة ركزت على إسهامات التعليم المهني في نيجيريا عامة بينما الدراسة الراهنة تتحدث عن التعليم المهني وأثره في تنمية مهارات التوظيف لدى طلبة جامعة ميدغري النيجيرية.

- محمود كاظم محمود التميمي، **الإرشاد الجامعي**، مركز ديونو لتعليم التفكير، دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة، الطبعة الأولى، 2016م. في هذا الكتاب تكلم صاحبه عن الإرشاد الجامعي من حيث وجهات النظر المختلفة عن موضوعه هذا، حيث ناقش الإرشاد ودلالاته ونشأته وحاجته وأهدافه العلمية والمستفيدين منه والأساليب المستعملة في تحقيقه والأهداف التي يسعى المرشد التربوي إلى تحقيقها وأنواع الإرشاد المباشر وغير المباشر وغير ذلك من الأمور المتعلقة بالإرشاد الجامعي.

فإذا نظرنا إلى هذا الكتاب نجد كاتبه ركز حديثه على الإرشادات الأولية التي يحتاج إليها طالب التعليم المهني من حيث إختيار المهنة واكتساب مهارتها وكيفية إستئنافها وهلم جرا. والفرق الجوهرى والفاصل بين هذا الكتاب هو انه ركزت دراسته على جانب الإرشادات الأولية دون ان يحوض في لب الموضوع "التعليم المهني" واما الدراسة الراهنة فهي تتناول المهنة ذاتها وما يتعلق بها من مهارات وإنتاجات وجودتها وعلاقة ذلك بسوق العمل.

مفهوم التعليم المهني والتقني:

التعليم المهني في اللغة، يعني رسم الشيء بسمة يعرف بها، ومن دلالاته أيضا، التلقين، كتلقين المرء ألوان المعارف بالجميل على الحفظ والاستظهار، والتحصيل كما يقال، تحصيل المعارف وتكوينها، منه قولك، تكوين

المهارات³⁸. وفي الاصطلاح هو تهذيب الحس الخُلقي والفني، ومن مركباته، التعليم الرسمي والخاص، والمهني والجامعي.³⁹

فالتعليم المهني مهنة يطلق عليها أسماء كثيرة منها؛ التكوين المهني، والتعليم التقني، كل هذا عبارة عن مجال لكسب المعارف والخبرات العلمية والعملية عن طريق الممارسة والتدريب والتطبيق في العديد من الميادين الحرفية والمهنية. فهو التعليم الذي يحضره الطلاب للعمل ما في الاختصاص أو حرفة أو صناعة ما ليصبح خبيراً فيها.⁴⁰ وفي هذا يمكن المتدرب أن يكون من وُلوج عالم الشغل على حسب طبيعة التخصص ومدى أهميته في سوق العمل بعد فترة التكوين التي تتراوح بين سنة وثلاث سنوات، حيث تؤخر مؤسسات التكوين بالإضافة إلى التكوين النظري والتطبيقي لا مكانية الاحتكاك بعالم الشغل.

وهذا يكون بتنظيم زيارات وتدرّيات داخل ورشة البناء والمقاولات الصناعية من هنا وهناك. من هذا المنطلق يمكن القول بأن التكوين المهني عبارة عن مجال يناسب الطلاب الذين يرغبون في وُلوج عالم الشغل سريعاً ولا يرغبون في متابعة دراسة طويلة. كما أنه يليق بالطلاب الذين يرغبون في إنشاء مقاولاتهم الخاصة والاعتماد الذاتي. ويفترض أن يكون هذا على أساس الاختيار الشخصي الإرشادي وأن يكون عقلياً وعلمياً.⁴¹

الفرق بين التكوين المهني والتعليم التقني:

فالذي يتأمل بين هذين التكوينين، يدرك أن الفارق الجوهرى بينهما يقتصر على أن التعليم يتكون من الكوادر بالمعلومات الكافية، والتكوين يركز على صقل المهارات القيادية وتنميتها وتطويرها تطويراً علمياً دقيقاً وسليماً بجميع الوسائل التعليمية والتدريبية في ظل القيم والمبادئ المستقرة في ضمير المجتمع.⁴²

مؤهلات التعليم المهني:

من الصفات والسمات التي تؤهل الشخص للانضمام إلى مقاعد التعليم والتدريب المهني ما يلي:

1. **الاستقلال:** واجب بحيث لا يضيف إليه أعمال أخرى، سوى التدريب والممارسة والتمرين.
2. **محبة العمل:** ينبغي للطالب أن يكون راغباً في المهنة التي يتعلمها، وأن يعد لها آلات مرجوة التي تساعد في تنفيذ عمله.
3. **المهارة:** هذه تتكون من صحة البدن و طاقة العمل والخبرة.

38 - عصام نور الدين، معجم نور الدين، الوسيط دار الكتب العلمية، بيروت لبنان، 2009م، ص: 400

39 - عصام نور الدين المرجع السابق ص: 360

40 - معجم نور الدين الوسيط المرجع السابق، ص: 363

41 - محمود كاظم محمود التميمي، الإرشاد الجامعي، مرجع سابق، ص 32

42 - بتصرف من مذكرة مكتب التكوين الهني وانعاش الشغل المغربي.

4. القدرة: هي القيام بنشاطات في الأعمال الأكاديمية المتدنية وغيرها.⁴³ من عدم الرغبة في الميل إلى نحو الاتجاه الأكاديمي.⁴⁴

التخصصات المهنية:

1. الصناعات الميكانيكية والحديدية منها؛ اصلاح السيارات بشتى أنواعها والدراجات النارية والكهربائية وغيرها. والمحارث والمحركات والعربات إلكترونية والعادية.
 2. الصناعات المعدنية، من الذهب والفضة والتحاسن والديمون وغيرها.
 3. النجارة: حيث يستعمل الخشب في صناعة التآثيثات، من أسرة وكراسي، ورفوف، ودروج، وأبواب وغيرها.
 4. الكهرباء وإلكترونيات منها؛ اصلاح آلات الحاسوب والاذاعات والساعات والمصورات والفيديو والردات وصيانة الكهرباء وغير ذلك.
 5. الكيمياءات المطاطية: هنا يستخدم المواد البلاستيكية في صناعة النعل والدلو، والكأس، والطابق والصفرة والصندوق وغيرها.
 6. الصناعات الغذائية، من مشروبات ومأكولات ومشويات ومطبخات وغيرها.
 7. الصناعات للزجاجات والمرايا.
 8. الزراعة منها؛ تربية السمك ورعايته، وتربية الدجاج ورعي المواشي، من الأبقار والإبل والغنم.
 9. النسيج: منه يصنع الالبسة، والأقمشة والخياطات.
 10. الدبغ، منه دبغ الجلود والاسباغ وغيره.
- ومن المهن، تقنية سمعية وبصرية واتصالية وإدارية واعلام آلي وبنوك وتأمينات وغيرها. من الصناعات اليدوية والخدماتية⁴⁵
- جامعة ميدغري في السطور:

تقع جامعة ميدغري في شارع باما بمدينة ميدغري عاصمة ولاية برنو نيجيريا وقد أسست عام 1975. ولها إدارت ومكتبات متنوعة، فيها مبنى جديد اسمه محمد بخاري للشيخوخ، فيه مكتبة عميد الجامعة ومكتبتا نائبيه الإداري والأكاديمي ومكتبة المسجل، ومجلس الشيخوخ ووحدة التنظيم والإعلانات ومكتبة الشورة للشرعة والقانون ومكتبة الموارد البشرية. ولها مكتبة أخرى خارج هذا المبنى وهي مكتبة الجامعة المركزية ولها أيضا إذاعة ومطبعة⁴⁶.

43 - مركز التكوين المهني والتمهين، هواري، برمدن سيدي علي، 1767-1855 withem.von.humbolt.

44- وزارة التكوين والتعليم المهنيين <https://met.gov.dz>

45 - مكتب التكوين المهني وانعشا الشغل المغربي مرجع سابق.

46 - Unimaid, *Hallmarks of academic excellence University of Maiduguri 1975-2001*, Edited by D.S.M Koroma, CSS - 46 Bookshop, Lagos, Nigeria, 2004. pp 3

ولهذه الجامعة اقسام شتى منها؛ القسم المالي، وقسم التخطيط الأكاديمي وقسم السجلات والامتحانات وقسم الأعمال والخدمات الداخلية وقسم الأمن والحماية. وفيها مراكز منها؛ مركز الدراسات عبر الصحراء، ومركز السلم وحل النزاعات والدبلوماسية، ومركز الدراسات الحاسوبية، ومركز الدراسات الأوروبية، ومركز الدراسات عن بُعد، ومركز الدراسات المناطق الجافة، ومركز الاستثمار، ومركز التعليم المهني.⁴⁷

وفيها كليات، منها؛ كلية الآداب؛ ومن اقسامها: قسم الدراسات العربية، وقسم الدراسات الإنجليزية، وقسم اللسانيات وقسم الدراسات الإسلامية، وقسم التاريخ والدراسات الاستراتيجية، وقسم الفن والمسرحية. وكلية الطب؛ ومن أقسامها: قسم الأسنان والعيون والحلقوم، وقسم طب الأحياء، وقسم التصوير الشمسي وغيرها. وكلية الشريعة والقانون؛ ومن أقسامها: قسم الشريعة والقانون، وقسم القانون المدني، وقسم قانون المصانع، وقسم قانون الإجرام وغيرها. وكلية العلوم الاجتماعية؛ من اقسامها: قسم الدراسات الاقتصادية، وقسم الفلسفة وعلم النفس، وقسم العلوم السياسية، وقسم الدراسات الصحافية، وقسم الدراسات الإدارية، وهلم جرا. وكلية الهندسة؛ ومن اقسامها: قسم الهندسة المعمارية، وقسم الهندسة المدنية، وقسم الهندسة الكهربائية، وقسم الهندسة البنائية وقسم هندسة تخطيط المدن والقرى وغيرها. وكلية العلوم من اقسامها؛ قسم الرياضيات وقسم المعادن والموارد المائية، وقسم الدراسات الجغرافية، وقسم الدراسات التخطيطية، وغيرها. وكلية الزراعة؛ ومن اقسامها: قسم الزراعات العامة، وقسم الخضروات، وقسم الحيوانات، وهلم جرا. وكلية التربية والتعليم؛ ومن أقسامها: قسم تعليم الكبار، وقسم تعليم الصغار، وقسم التعليم المستمر، وغيرها. وكليات أخرى.⁴⁸

ولجامعة ميدغري مبينات ومهاجع لطلابها، منها؛ مسكن آدو بايرو، ومبيت عائشة بخاري، وعائشة، وشطيما علي منغنو، ومرتضى، وإبراهيم إمام، وبي أو تي وتاتانك شقة E وتفاوبليوا شقة C وسردونا شقتا B وD ومسكن الذكور الجديد شقتا A وB ومسكن طلبة الدراسات العليا.⁴⁹

مطبعة جامعة ميدغري

أنشأت مطبعة جامعة ميدغري عام 1982. ثم بدأت أعمالها الطباعية في عام 1985. حينئذ كانت تحت إشراف قسم الأعمال والخدمات الداخلية ومقرها وراء مهجع الطالبات، كان عميد الجامعة يدير أمورها لأول الوهلة ثم انتقلت قيادتها الى القسم المالي للجامعة. والآن هي تحت إشراف مركز الإستثمار ولها اقسام عدة منها؛ قسم مطبعة الكتب والمجلات والدوريات وقسم الخدمات الداخلية كالتجليد والتصميم وطباعة اوراق الإمتحان ومن فروعها مكتب التصوير وآلة الطبع ومكتب آلة التنظيم وآلة الإتمام وآلة التجليد والتصميم وفيها مكتب المدير ومكتب المشرف ومكبة الإدارة والخزانة.

47 المرجع السابق-14 pp

48 - المرجع السابق 26 pp

49 - المرجع السابق 200 pp

ومن أهداف تأسيس هذه المطبعة؛ تكوين صلة تجارية داخل الجامعة وخارجها، وأن يكون لها القدرة على تأليف الكتب والصحف والمجلات والدوريات وغيرها. لينتفع بها عمالها وغيرهم وان يكون للجامعة طريق اكتساب المال.

مركز التعليم المهني في جامعة ميدغري:

لجامعة ميدغري مركز للتعليم المهني الواقع بجانب مبنى حامد القاضي بكلية الشريعة والقانون، بجوار المكتبة العامة للجامعة المشهورة (برماد)، وكلية الهندسة بقرب من مبنى (CBN) وقد دُهِنَ جدار هذا المركز بلون أصفر وفي داخله غُرسَ أشجار شتى جميلة. وفيه قاعات متنوعة منها؛ قاعة إدارة الحاسوب، وقاعة صابونة، ومطهر، وقاعة متعددة الأهداف، وقاعة الخياط، والألبسة وقاعة التحليم والتلفيق. وفي هذا المبنى مكاتب منها مكتبة المدير ومكتبة الإدارة وهلم جرا.

وقد فازت جامعة ميدغري من بين الجامعات النيجيرية التي حصلت على الدعم المالي والتبرعات من قبل بعض الأغنياء النيجيريين لتأسيس هذا المركز عام 2011م. حيث ساعدها عبد الصمد بن إسحاق رابع بأموال لهذا الهدف. ومن الجامعات النيجيرية التي استفادت من هذه الهبة جامعة أحمد بلو زاريا وجامعة إبادان. وقد دربت جامعة ميدغري أكثر من أربعين ألف طالباً منذ تأسيس هذا المركز إلى اليوم.

إيجابيات وسلبيات التعليم المهني:

من إيجابياته نذكر الآتي:

1. الاعتماد على الذات وتحمل المسؤولية.
2. السعي إلى اكتساب المهارات وتطويرها
3. تعلم بعض الأمور الجديدة في الحياة
4. اكتساب خبرات مهنية جديدة
5. عدم ارتفاع تكاليف الدراسة.
6. الحصول على خبرة العمل التي يؤدي إلى النجاح في سوق العمل.
7. الحرية وعدم الاعتماد على الغير من حيث دفع الرواتب بل الاستقلال التام.

ومن السلبيات ما يلي:

1. نظرة الناس إلى المتخصص بعين الاحتقار والإهانة
2. شهادة التدريب ليس لها قيمة مرموقة كما لشهادة الجامعة، حيث يفضل بعض أصحاب العمل الثانية على الأولى في الدرجة.

3. قد يحتاج الطالب إلى إنفاق الكثير من الأموال في شراء الأدوات المستخدمة في ورشة التدريب بغض النظر عن قلة التكاليف الدراسية.

والحق أن العلماء في هذا المجال يُدرِّسون التعليم المهني ويستخدمون شتى الأساليب منها التقليدي، بحيث يتعاونون مع زملائهم في العملية التعليمية، من حيث استخدام الأدوات المتمثلة في الخطّاط والتدريب والمصادر وأوراق العمل وأدوات أخرى. لأن هذا يضم الخريج ووظيفته في قطاع العمل. ويشمل الدارس والمواد والمساقات التي تدرس في التعليم عدة الحقول.

الخاتمة:

لقد تحدث الباحث في هذه الورقة عن أمور كثيرة منها، التعريف بالتعليم المهني، في نظرة اللغة والاصطلاح، منه مناقشة الفرق بين التكوين المهني والتعليم التقني، ثم ذكر شيئاً عن مؤهلات التعليم المهني وتناول الحديث عن التخصصات المهنية وتكلم عن جامعة ميدغري في السطور ثم ركز الحديث على التعليم المهني فيها منه إلى إيجابيات وسلبياته وفي الأخير توصل الباحث إلى النتائج منها؛ أن معظم أصحاب العمل يحترمون شهادة الجامعة أكثر من شهادة التدريب مع أن معظم الذين يحملون شهادة التدريب يتمتعون بحرية مطلقة. من حيث الاعتماد على الذات والاستقلال غير أن الكثير من الناس ينظرون إليهم باحتقار وإهانة مع أنهم يستطيعون أن يحملوا مسؤولية أنفسهم.

النتائج

1. يسهم التعليم المهني في تعزيز مهارات العمل الحر .
2. يرفع فرص التشغيل بين الخريجين .
3. يواجه بعض التحديات المرتبطة بالنظرة الاجتماعية السلبية لبعض المهن .

التوصيات

1. زيادة التمويل المخصص لمراكز التدريب المهني .
2. ربط البرامج التدريبية باحتياجات سوق العمل .
3. توفير حوافز للطلبة للالتحاق بالتدريب المهني .
4. تعزيز الشراكات بين الجامعة والقطاع الخاص .

المصادر والمراجع:

- عصام، نور الدين، معجم نور الدين الوسيط، دار الكتب العلمية، بيروت، لبنان، 2009م.

- فام أنه توان، تمهيد الطريق للتعليم المهني، الصادر عن هيئة البحث والمعلومات GP-TTDT/ ترخيص رقم 108 الإلكترونية بالتاريخ 15 يوليو 2025
 - محمود كاظم محمود التميمي، الإرشاد الجامعي، مركز ديونو لتعليم التفكير، دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة، الطبعة الأولى، 2016م
 - مذكرة مركز مكتب التكوين المهني وانعاش الشغل مغرب
 - مذكرة مركز التكوين المهني والتمهين، هواري بومدين، سيد علي. withem.von.humbolt.1767-1855
 - مذكرة السنة الأولى للمادة المهارة جامعة ميدغري 2026م-
 - وزارة التكوين والتعليم المهنيين 2026م <https://met.gov.dz>
- Unimaid, *Hallmarks of academic excellence University of Maiduguri 1975-2001*, Edited by D.S.M. Koroma, CSS Bookshop, Lagos, Nigeria. 2004. Lawan, Abdurrahman W. Technical and vocational education, a tool for national development in Nigeria. Mediterranean, Journal of social sciences, 2013.



الإعراب في اللغة العربية: دراسة وصفية تحليلية في الوظيفة الدلالية

¹أحمد الحاج أجي و

²محمد أحمد ارطو

^{1,2}قسم الدراسات العربية، كلية الآداب، جامعة ميدغري، ولاية برنو، نيجيريا.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the concept of *i'rāb* (grammatical inflection) in the Arabic language and to highlight its significance as a precise linguistic system that distinguishes Arabic from many other languages. The study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach, exploring the linguistic and technical definitions of *i'rāb* and outlining its primary and secondary markers within grammatical usage. It further investigates the semantic function of *i'rāb* and its role in determining meaning, eliminating ambiguity, and enhancing expressive flexibility in Arabic sentence structure. The study concludes that *i'rāb* is not merely a formal or phonetic feature, but a fundamental component in meaning construction and an essential tool for accurate interpretation of religious and literary texts. The study recommends adopting functional and modern pedagogical approaches in teaching *i'rāb* to bridge the gap between grammatical rules and actual language use, thereby improving learners' linguistic competence.

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بيان مفهوم الإعراب في اللغة العربية والكشف عن أهميته بوصفه نظامًا نحويًا دقيقًا يميز العربية عن غيرها من اللغات. اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، حيث تناولت الإعراب من حيث تعريفه اللغوي والاصطلاحي، وعرضت علاماته الأصلية والفرعية في ضوء الاستعمال النحوي. كما سعت إلى إبراز الوظيفة الدلالية للإعراب ودوره في تحديد المعنى ومنع اللبس، إلى جانب بيان أثره في تحقيق السعة التعبيرية ومرونة التركيب في اللغة العربية. وقد خلصت الدراسة إلى أن الإعراب ليس مجرد ظاهرة شكلية، بل هو عنصر أساسي في بناء المعنى، وأداة فعالة في فهم النصوص الشرعية والأدبية فهمًا دقيقًا. وتوصي الدراسة بضرورة العناية بتدريس الإعراب وفق مقاربات وظيفية حديثة تربط بين القاعدة والاستعمال، بما يساهم في تنمية الكفاية اللغوية لدى المتعلمين.

الكلمات المفتاحية/Keywords

I'rāb, Arabic Grammar, Semantics, Linguistic Function, Inflectional Markers.

الإعراب، النحو العربي، الدلالة، الوظيفة اللغوية، العلامات الإعرابية

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
27th March, 2026

المقدمة:

تُعتبر اللغة العربية من أغنى لغات العالم بناءً ودقة، فقد خصها الله بمزايا مختلفة جعلتها وعاءً للوحي الإلهي. ومن أهم هذه المزايا "الإعراب"، الذي يمثل النظام الحوكمي الذي يضبط أواخر الكلمات ويكشف عن وظائفها داخل السياق

النصي. يهدف هذا البحث إلى الإجابة عن تساؤلات محورية: ما حقيقة الإعراب لغة واصطلاحاً؟ وما هي تجلياته في بنية الجملة؟ وكيف يسهم في تحديد المعنى وفتح آفاق السعة التعبيرية؟

حظي موضوع الإعراب بعناية كبيرة لدى علماء العربية قديماً وحديثاً؛ فقد تناوله النحاة الأوائل بوصفه أساساً لفهم بنية اللغة العربية، كما يظهر في مؤلفات مثل الكتاب لسيبويه، وشرح الأجرومية، ودلائل الإعجاز لعبد القاهر الجرجاني، حيث ربطوا بين الإعراب والمعنى ربطاً وثيقاً.

وفي الدراسات الحديثة، اتجه بعض الباحثين إلى تناول الإعراب من منظور وظيفي ولساني، فبحثوا في علاقته بالدلالة والسياق، وأثره في تحقيق الفهم الصحيح للنصوص، وخاصة النص القرآني. كما ركزت بعض الدراسات المعاصرة على إشكالية تدريس الإعراب، وضرورة ربطه بالاستعمال اللغوي بدل الاختصار على الجانب الشكلي. ومع كثرة هذه الدراسات، فإن هذه الدراسة تتميز بمحاولة الجمع بين التأصيل النظري والتحليل الدلالي، مع إبراز البعد الوظيفي للإعراب في بناء المعنى، وهو ما تسعى إلى توضيحه بشكل منهجي.

الإعراب في اللغة:

وردت لفظة (عرب) في المعاجم العربية للدلالة على أحد المعاني الثلاثة؛ وهي:

الفصاحة والبيان: يقال "عرب اللسان" أي فصح وصار عربياً، و"أعرب الرجل" إذا تكلم بالعربية الفصيحة.

الإبانة: أعرب عما في نفسه "أي أظهر وأبان".

التغيير والصحة: ويأتي بمعنى الفساد في قولهم "عرب بطنه" أي فسد، ولكن في السياق النحوي، غلب عليه معنى

الإبانة والكشف (إبراهيم أنيس، ص 620، وأحمد العايد ...، 1989م، ص 830)

الإعراب اصطلاحاً:

عرف علماء النحو الإعراب بتعريفات عدة، والتي مفادها: التغييرات التي تطرأ لحركات أواخر الكلمات العربية خلال تركيبها. وهذه الحركات قد تكون للبناء (الضم، والفتح، والكسر، والسكون) وقد تكون للإعراب (الرفع، والنصب، والجر، والجزم). وكذلك تكون الحركات ظاهرة أو مقدرة، فالظاهرة هي التي ذكرناها، أما المقدرة؛ فقد تكون ألفاً أو واو أو ياء، وذلك نظراً لمكانة الكلمة في التركيب - نصبا ورفعا وجرًا. وعليه يقول يحيى العمر بطي (الصنهاجي، متن الأجرومية، ص 20)

إعرابهم تغيير آخر الكلم تقديراً أو لفظاً لعامل علم

علامات الإعراب

من المعلوم في اللغة العربية أن كلماتها إما أن تكون مبنية أو معربة ولكن في هذا الصدد سنناقش المعرب دون المبني. والمعرب له ملامح وصفات وعلامات يعرف بها، منها؛ الرفع وهي الضمة والنصب وهي الفتحة والخفض وهي الكسرة والجزم وهو السكون وهذه العلامات هي التي تظهر في أواخر الكلم وتغير المقاصد منها. تتوزع حالات الإعراب على أربعة أنواع رئيسية، تتقاسمها الأسماء والأفعال وذلك موضح في الجدول التالي:

العلامة الأصلية	المجال (الأسماء/الأفعال)	نوع الإعراب
الضمة	الأسماء والأفعال	الرفع
الفتحة	الأسماء والأفعال	النصب
الكسرة	الأسماء فقط	الجر (الخفض)
السكون	الأفعال (المضارع) فقط	الجزم

فالفعل المعرب يتغير آخره بالرفع والنصب والجزم مثل: يقرأ، لن يقرأ، لم يقرأ والاسم المعرب يتغير آخره بالرفع والنصب والجر، مثل: العلم نافع، علمت أن العلم نافعاً، اشتغلت بالعلم النافع. (العنيمين، الدرة النحوية، ص14) مما تقدم نرى بأن الرفع والنصب يكونان في الفعل والاسم المعربين، وأن الجزم مختص بالفعل والجر مختص بالاسم.

أنواع الإعراب

اختلف العلماء في تحديد أنواع الإعراب منهم من قال ثلاثة وهي الرفع والنصب والجر ومنهم من أضاف إليها الجزم (التحفة السنية، مرجع سابق ص 19). ويفهم من هذا أن العوامل هي التي تسبب التغيرات في اواخر الكلمات من حيث علامات الإعراب كلها. فمثلاً إذا تأملت في جمل "حضر محمد" ورأيت محمداً ومررت بمحمد، ترى أن محمداً تغيرت أحواله تارة بالرفع وتارة بالنصب وتارة بالجر لسبب العامل الدخيل في الجملة والعامل في الجملة الأولى هو "حضر" لأنه فعل ماضٍ يحتاج إلى فاعل وهو محمد بالرفع لا بالنصب ولا بالجر. ومثل "لن يسافر إبراهيم" ولم يسافر إبراهيم بالجزم (مرجع سابق). قد يلاحظ القارئ في هذين الجملتين التغيرات الحاصلة الأولى بعد "لن" ففعل يسافر منصوب بالفتحة والثاني بعد "لم" مجزوم بالسكون. وجميع هذه العوامل تسمى لفظية.

وأما الإعراب المقدر هذا يختص الكلمات المعربة التي يتعذر أو يثقل ظهور حركة الإعراب على آخرها لسبب كالمجانسة أو العلة، فتظل الحركة مستترة في الذهن (مثل: "جاء الفتى"؛ فالفتى فاعل مرفوع بضمّة مقدرة)، بينما الإعراب المحلي يخص الكلمات والضمائر المبنية التي تلزم حركة واحدة ثابتة لا تتغير، وتكتسب موقعها الإعرابي (رفعاً أو نصباً أو جرّاً) بناءً على مكانها في الجملة فقط (مثل: "جاء هؤلاء"؛ فهؤلاء اسم إشارة مبني على الكسر في محل رفع فاعل).

أقسام علامات الإعراب

قسم النحاة علامات الإعراب إلى قسمين وهما:

1- العلامات الأصلية

2- العلامات الفرعية

العلامات الأصلية

وهي : الضمة، والفتحة، والكسرة، والسكون

- 1- الضمة للرفع، وتكون في الأسماء والأفعال نحو : محمد يقرأن محمد اسم، ويقرأ فعل
- 2- الفتحة للنصب، وتكون في الأسماء والأفعال مثل : إن محمدا لن يكذب، محمد اسم منصوب بالفتحة، ويكذب فعل مضارع منصوب بلن.
- 3- الكسرة للجزم، وتكون في الأسماء خاصة ولا تدخل على الأفعال، نحو سلمت على المدرس
- 4- السكون للجزم، وهي خاصة بالأفعال ولا تدخل الأسماء نحو قوله (لم يلد ولم يولد) سورة الإخلاص الآية 3.

العلامات الفرعية

وهي العلامات التي تنوب عن العلامات الأصلية حينما لا يمكن استعمالها كأن تنوب الواو عن الضمة في الأسماء الخمسة، والألف عن الفتحة فيها، والياء عن الكسرة أيضا، وكذلك ثبوت النون أو حذفه وكذلك حروف العلة حذفها أو إثباتها.

والعلامات الفرعية تقع في الأبواب التالية:

- 1- الأسماء الستة وهي أب، أخ، حم، فم، ذو، حن، حيث ترفع بالواو، وتنصب بالألف، وتجر بالياء ، نحو: جاء أبوك، ورأيت أباك ومررت بأبيك
- 2- المثنى، حيث يرفع بالألف، وينصب ويجر بالياء، ونحو : جاء محمدان، رأيت محمدين ومررت بمحمدين
- 3- جمع المذكر السالم، حيث يرفع بالواو وينصب ويجر بالياء، نحو : جاء المسلمون، رأيت المسلمين، مررت بالمسلمين
- 4- الأفعال الخمسة، ترفع بثبوت النون وتنصب وتجزم بحذفها نحو: يفعلان، لن يفعلا، لم يفعلا.
- 5- الفعل المضارع المعتل الآخر، حيث يرفع بثبوت حرف العلة، وينصب ويجزم بحذفها. نحو يخشى لن يخش، لم يخش

الوظيفة الدلالية وأهمية الإعراب

كما ذكرنا في الماضي أن من دلالات الإعراب الإبانة والإظهار والفصاحة وغير ذلك في اللغة وكذلك في الاصطلاح من دلالاته تغيير أحوال أواخر الكلم من نصب ورفع وجر وهلم جرا. ولهذه التغييرات المقاصد والمعاني تدل عليها ولا يقتصر الإعراب على كونه "حلية" لفظية، بل هو أداة جوهرية لتحديد المعنى، وتتجلى أهميته في:

أولا: التعبير عن المعاني

من الإعراب في اللغة العربية التعبير عن المعاني، فأصل كلمة "إعراب" من الفعل "أعرب أي بمعنى "أبان" بالنسبة للغة العربية كثير من التعبيرات يصعب و يستحيل أن يُعرف معناها دون الإعراب و أحيانا تختلف معاني الجمل تماما باختلاف حركة إعرابها.

مثال:

كيف أنت و محمد؟ دلالة المعنى هي السؤال عن المخاطب و عن محمد
كيف أنت و محمد؟ دلالة المعنى هو السؤال عن كيف العلاقة بينهما
مثال آخر عن فائدة الإعراب

كم رجلاً عندك قال الحق : كم استفهامية تسأل عن العدد ؟
كم رجلٍ عندك قال الحق : كم خبرية تفيد التأكيد و الاخبار بالكثرة
كم رجلٌ عندك قال الحق : سؤال عن رجلٍ واحد فقط في كم مرة قال الحق
مثال آخر عن أهمية الإعراب

سلْ أَيْتُهُم قام ؟ استفهام لمعرفة من الذي قام ؟
سلْ أَيْتُهُم قام؟ للدلالة على اسم الموصول، سل الذي قام أو سل من قام
مثال آخر عن قوة وأهمية الإعراب

لا يذهبُ محمد : ” لا ” الناهية للدلالة على الأمر
لا يذهبُ محمد : ” لا ” النافية للدلالة على النفي

ثانياً: سعة التعبير وحرية الرتبة

من أغراض الإعراب أنه يعطي للغة العربية السعة والحرية في التعبير عن الدلالات مع الحفاظ على المعنى العام، وهو ما لا نجده في اللغات المبنية

مثال عن سعة اللغة العربية وحريتها في التعبير مع اختلاف التعبيرات:

أعطى محمد خالدا كتابا

محمدٌ أعطى خالدا كتابا

خالداً أعطى محمدٌ كتابا

كتاباً أعطى محمدٌ خالدا

كتابا خالدا أعطى محمد

تقابل جميع هذه الصيغ

Mohamed give khaled a book

أعطى خالدا كتابا محمدٌ

أعطى خالدًا محمدًا كتابًا

أعطى كتابًا محمد خالدًا

أعطى كتابًا خالدًا محمدًا (<https://arabicmind375595970.wordpress.com/2020/02/27/>)

ثالثًا: إبراز جمال اللغة العربية ومرونتها

فاللغة العربية لغة جمال ومرونة، فيمنح الإعراب المتكلم القدرة الكاملة على التقديم والتأخير دون غموض، مما يزيد بها جمالًا وبلاغة. ومثال ذلك:

أكلَ محمدٌ التفاحةَ

التفاحةَ أكلَ محمدٌ

فالجملتان صحيحتان، لأن الإعراب يوضح المعنى رغم التقديم والتأخير.

رابعًا: تحقيق الفهم الصحيح للمعنى: الإعراب يحدد وظيفة الكلمة في الجملة، وبذلك يمنع التباس المعاني ويظهر المقصود بدقة.

ضربَ زيدٌ عمرًا. فزيد هو الضارب، وعمر هو المضروب .

ضربَ زيدًا عمرٌ. فعمر هو الضارب، وزيد هو المضروب .

نلاحظ أن تغيّر الحركة فقط (الضمة والفتحة) غيّر المعنى بالكامل.

خامسًا: فهم النصوص الشرعية والأدبية: يمكن الإعراب من إدراك المعاني الدقيقة في القرآن الكريم والحديث الشريف والنصوص الأدبية. ومن أمثلة ذلك في القرآن الكريم:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ﴾

رفع "رسوله" يعني: أن الرسول ﷺ أيضًا بريء من المشركين.

ولو قيل: (ورسوله) بالنصب لتغيّر المعنى وأصبح فاسدًا.

الخاتمة

في هذه الجولة، عرفنا أن الإعراب ليس مجرد الحركات بل له مقاصد ودلالات أخرى في تأدية المعاني من الجمل ولهذا ناقشت هذه الورقة بعض الأمور المتعلقة به من تعريفه وأنواعه ووظائفه وملاحمه. إن الإعراب هو النظام المنطقي الذي يحكم هندسة اللغة العربية. فهو ليس مجرد حركات تُوضع على أواخر الكلمات، بل هو روح المعنى وأداة البيان. ومن خلاله، استطاعت العربية أن تحقق الموازنة بين الدقة العلمية والجمال الإيقاعي، مما يجعله ضرورة لا غنى عنها لفهم النصوص الشرعية والأدبية فهماً صحيحاً.

من النتائج التي توصل إليها هذا البحث كشف دور الإعراب في توضيح الدلالات اللغوية وإزالة الغموض في بناء الجمل وتركيبها مما يؤدي إلى فهم دقيق وصحيح للتغيرات المختلفة ذات مجالات متنوعة. وهكذا يبقى الإعراب حارساً أميناً لهوية العربية، ومرآة تعكس منطقها الداخلي، وجسراً يربط الأصالة بالمعاصرة في رحلة اللغة عبر الزمن.

المصادر والمراجع

- القرآن الكريم
- الدرة النحوية في شرح الأجرومية للشيخ محمد صالح العثيمين، ص 14
- متن المقدمة الأجرومية أبو عبدالله محمد بن محمد بن داود الصنهاجي المعروف بابن أجروم ص 20
- المعجم العربي الأساسي، تأليف جماعة من كبار اللغويين العرب بتكليف من المنظمة العربية للتراث والثقافة والعلوم، ص 830
- المعجم الوسيط للدكتور إبراهيم أنيس وغيره، الجزء الثاني ص 620
- أهمية الإعراب والبناء في اللغة العربية <https://mawdoo3.com/>

ما هو الإعراب؟ ما فائدة وأهمية والغرض <https://arabicmind375595970.wordpress.com/2020/02/27/>

SECTION TWO:

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION & HISTORY



Trajectory of Local Government Reforms in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges

Professor Garba Ibrahim¹

¹*Department of History and Strategic Studies,
University of Maiduguri,
Nigeria.*

ABSTRACT

It is very clear that Nigeria is yet to arrive at a workable system of local governance and administration. The obvious manifestation of the dysfunction is the way State governments appear to strangle their local governments financially and by manipulating constitutional provisions of control. This paper uses existing material to retrace the trajectory of local government reforms from the colonial era to the present in order to highlight the continuing struggle to arrive at a practical solution. It is found that the reforms appear to be in the direction of replacing what worked before with failed experiments. It suggests the need to retrace our steps and pick up from 1976, where we appear to have gone wrong, and proceed with more rational reforms.

Keywords

local governments, reforms, trajectory, prospects, challenges

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Ever since the Local Government Reforms of 1976 in Nigeria, the system has been in a fluid state. While it worked without much controversy under military rule, the constitutional provisions under democracy have generated serious questions of control and management. The issues of local government financing and autonomy have been lingering since 1999 when the present dispensation was inaugurated. There have been a series of reforms since early colonial times in an effort to find an order that strikes a balance between inclusiveness and efficiency, and between relative autonomy and control. This paper reviews existing material to survey the changes in the local government system, identify the trajectories and problems along the line, and consider current challenges and prospects for the future.

Local Government in Pre-Colonial Times

We have to begin by understanding local government as representing the lowest level of political organization and control in human polities⁵⁰. When a political entity extends to a size that makes it better controlled and administered through the delegation of certain powers and functions to subordinate units, the rudiments of local government is established. Naturally, the need to delegate may be determined by factors such as size, terrain, level of technology and even diversity.

In the Nigerian area in the period before the coming of European conquest and colonial rule, there were many communities and polities of various sizes and levels of organization. Polities such as Kanem-Borno, Mandara, Sokoto Caliphate, Oyo, Benin, Fika, Wukari, and Nupe existed alongside loosely organized ones such as the Marghi, Babur-Bura, Igbo, the Ngizim and the Tiv. When these were conquered and incorporated into the British Empire, their political institutions were used to

K. Ajayi, *Theory and Practice of Local Government*, University of Ado Ekiti, 2000⁵⁰

form the bases of the local governments to which the new rulers delegated responsibilities. It will, therefore, be better for us to briefly outline the systems of political and administrative organisations that existed prior to the imposition of colonial rule.⁵¹

Pre-colonial Government in Northern Nigeria

The territory that became Northern Nigeria is large and diverse, and cannot be treated in detail in this short presentation. There were large entities such as Kanem-Borno and the Sokoto Caliphate, and there were medium entities such as Nupe, Fika and Wukari, and very small statelets with organisation only at village level. There were also communities with non-centralised political structures such as the Tiv (formerly “Munchi”) of Benue State.

In Borno in the nineteenth century, the government was centralised, headed by the Shehu. The Shehu was assisted and advised by a *Majlis* consisting of high officials of state, who were also fief holders. In their capacity as fief holders, they were called *Chima Kura*. The entire land was divided to them and some other fief holders such as members of the royal family and top military commanders. The *Chima Kuras* were resident at the capital, and their fiefs were administered on their behalf by *Chima Gana*. Except for the Galadima at Nguru, all *Chima Kura* resided at the capital, and their fiefs were scattered. The Galadima alone resided in his fief, which was the only consolidated one.⁵² A scattered fief is one which consisted of small pieces of territory or groups of villages that were scattered all over the kingdom and not connected. A consolidated fief consisted of large territories under one fief holder.

All the other centralised polities in the North, such as the Hausa states, Nupe, Fika and Wukari replicated the Borno structure with few local adjustments. In the case of the Hausa states, they were incorporated into the Sokoto Caliphate as Emirates in the 19th century, but each Emirate operated as an autonomous unit paying allegiance to the Caliph (or *Amirul Muminina*) at Sokoto. Within each Emirate, there was an Emir, a *Majlis*, and fief holders who resided in the capital, just like in Borno. All of these entities levied taxes on their subjects on agricultural produce, livestock, crafts and commerce to raise revenue, and as the 19th century wore on, they were increasingly engaged in trans-Atlantic slave trade.⁵³

The situation is less clear in the non-centralised societies, where authority was diffuse. However, there is an increasing number of micro-studies in the histories of these societies, and these are shedding light on their patterns of authority among other things.⁵⁴ Notwithstanding their actual states

O.O. Adeyemi, “Local Government Administration in Nigeria: Historical Perspective”, *Journal of Public Administration and Government*, 2019, 9(2)

G. Ibrahim, [2019] “Background to the Colonial Occupation of Borno”, *Papers on Nigerian History*, Monimod J. Venture, Jimeta, Yola, Nigeria, 2019. For a more in-depth treatment of the subject, see Nuru Alkali, (1985), “The Structure of Government in Kanem-Borno under the Sayfawa”, and J.E. Lavers, , “Kanem and Borno under Three Dynasties: Some Aspects of Change and Development c. 700-1900”, both in J.F.A. Ajayi, and Bashir Ikara, *The Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria*, UPL, and Kaduna State Council for Arts and Culture, 1985.

A. Abdullahi and A. Sanusi, [2018], “Local Governance and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: An Imperative for Sustainable Development”, *International Journal for Development and Sustainability*, 2028, 7(4), 1522-1532

See, for instance, Aliyu A. Idrees and Yakubu A. Ochefu, *Studies in the History of Central Nigeria*, Volume I, CSS Limited, Lagos, Nigeria, 2002. This volume served to whet the appetite of Historians, who eagerly awaited the promised second volume. It is still awaited. Other works in print include: Joseph N. Ukwedeh, *History of the Igala Kingdom* (c. 1534-1854), Arewa House Studies Series, Kaduna, Nigeria, 2003; Sule Mohammed, *History of the Emirate of Bida to 1899 AD*, Ahmadu Bello University Press, Zaria, Nigeria, 2011; A.M. Adejo, *Makurdi: A History of its Rise and Development up to 2010*, Aboki Publishers, Makurdi, Nigeria, 2021; Absolom S. Dilli, *Mbula Traditional Society and a New Dawn*, privately published in Yola, Nigeria, 2010; Bukar Usman, *A History of Biu*, Klamidas Communications Limited, Biu Emirate Studies Series (BESS 003), Abuja, Nigeria, 2015; Gwandang Y. Ndirmbita, *A History of the Kibaku*, privately published in 2000 and printed by Baraka Press, Kaduna (Gwandang had a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Maiduguri and proceeded to work on a PhD. However, this book was written from an adversary perspective as a champion of the Kibaku claim on the throne of Askira Emirate. The work should, therefore, be read *cum grano salis*; Ibrahim Garndawa, *A Brief History of the Hill Districts of Gwoza in Dikwa Division of Borno State*, privately published and Printed at the Borno State Government Printer, Maiduguri, 2008; Alhaji Mohammed Adam MFR, *Major*

as at the onset of colonial rule, these societies were treated as “Pagan” communities and, therefore, “primitive”, and they needed to be guided and upgraded to enable them to function as “modern” local governments. “Pagan Administration” in colonial Northern Nigeria, that is, the phased nurturing of previously acephalous societies into centralised ones, is an area that is currently understudied.

Pre-colonial Government in Yoruba land

Western Nigeria was also the home of several kingdoms on the eve of colonial occupation. The largest were Oyo and Ife, followed by the smaller but powerful ones like Ijebu, Egba, Ekiti and Owo. Indeed, Yoruba civilisation, like the Chadic system up North, was centred on cities, and Yorubaland was the most urbanised throughout West Africa. Though Ile-Ife was the cradle of Yoruba civilisation, Oyo had, uncharacteristically, risen by the 16th century to become an empire controlling a far-flung territory and maintaining a sort of stability all over the land. However, this state of affairs was disrupted when the empire collapsed following the exit of Ilorin, which had been absorbed into the Sokoto Caliphate as an Emirate. The Ilorin threat and the constant forays of the kingdom of Dahomey to the west plunged the land into a civil war that created turmoil, leading to the re-emergence of smaller but powerful states centred on older and newer cities.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Oyo had developed a political system with checks and balances, which might have provided a model for the rest of Yoruba land, similar to the role played by Borno in the central *Bilad-al-Sudan*. The system was monarchical, headed by the *Alaafin*, who was the spiritual and political head, and also the chief executive officer of the state. In the administrative sphere, he was assisted by numerous officials, including his close relations and wives, and some title holders. He was also the controller of the large army of the state, which was headed by the *Aare Ona Kakanfo*, or Commander. The *Aare Ona Kakanfo* was responsible to the *Alaafin*, and was charged with the responsibility of never allowing the army to be defeated. Should this happen, then the Commander had to either commit suicide or go into exile.⁵⁶

The *Alaafin* was assisted with advice by the High Council of Oyo, or *Oyo Mesi*, headed by the *Bashorun*. It was their duty, besides advising the *Alaafin*, to appoint and crown a new one, and to remove an unpopular *Alaafin* by presenting him with an empty calabash after completing the judicial processes. This consisted of consulting prominent community leaders and then subjecting the matter to the Ifa Oracle, which was in the jurisdiction of the powerful cult called the Ogboni Society. This society was usually loyal to the *Alaafin*, and helped to check possible reckless abuse of power by the *Oyo Mesi*.

This system was more or less replicated in the smaller Yoruba states, though with less rigorous elaboration. But further to the south, the Kingdom of Benin displayed far more centralisation. It also had a long history of imperial control and with greater sophistication. However, by the nineteenth century it had become much smaller and weaker. Nevertheless, its influence was dominant across the South-South region. It was headed by the *Oba*, who was assisted by his family members in territorial control and the collection of tribute. The highest Council of the land was the *Uzama* who were advisors and king makers, but without the power to depose. Below them was a series of title holders who were appointed by the *Oba* to perform specific functions for him.⁵⁷

Landmarks in the Political History of Dikwa Emirate since 1900, Privately published and printed at the Kola Printing Industries LTD, Lagos; Gerhard Muller-Kosack, *Azzaghvana: A Fragmentary History of the Dghwede of Mandara Mountains*, Mandras Publishing, Kent, UK, 202 (though he calls it a history, it is actually an excellent work of cultural archaeology. He appears to write from a faith-based perspective, and his historical sketches should be read accordingly.

S.A. Akintoye, *Revolution and Power Politics in Yorubaland: 1840-1983*, Longman, London, 1971.⁵⁵

See I.A. Akinjogbin & E.A. Ayandele, “Yorubaland up to 1800”, in Obaro Ikime, *Groundwork of Nigerian History*,⁵⁶

Heinemann Educational Books PLC, Ibadan, 1980, pp121-143., and Ad

D.M. Bondarenko, “The Benin Kingdom (13th-19th centuries) as a Mega Community”, *Social Evolution and History*,⁵⁷

2025, 14(2) 46-76.

Administration in Igbo Societies in Pre-colonial Times

By the nineteenth century, the Igbo were a largely rural people, with political organisation not extending beyond the level of village communities. There were a few centres of emerging centralisation, notably at Onitsha on the lower Niger River. Onitsha was a relatively cosmopolitan settlement, with traders and craftsmen from the inner Igboland and neighbouring communities up and down (and even across) the river. The town was headed by a ruler called the *Obi*, and the organisation was heavily influenced by Benin. In the interior of Igboland, communities appear to have been divided into two groups: those under the influence of Onitsha and those under the influence of Arochukwu. The two groups appear to have been rivals, but all seemed to respect the Oracle at Arochukwu called the Long Juju⁵⁸.

Apart from these anomalies, the bulk of the Igbo were organised at community level, but without a recognisable head. Affairs were settled at village meetings attended by a combination of elders and prominent farmers, businessmen and master craftsmen, all of them holding titles which they earned and never inherited. Decisions of the village councils were enforced by masquerades manned by age grades.

One of the significant characteristics of the Oyo and Benin kingdoms was that they were tribute-gathering states with no formal system of internal taxation to generate revenue. When their powers waned, the rulers became progressively dependent on personal trading to cater to their personal and state responsibilities. In the nineteenth century the most lucrative trade was the slave trade, with which these coastal states raised the money to buy guns and gun powder to defend their lands, gather more tribute and capture more slaves. When the Europeans decided to abolish this trade, the coastal and forest kingdoms found themselves in serious economic decline, leading to increased wars and general instability.

Local Government in Early Colonial Times

British acquisition of Nigeria as a colony took place over a period of fifty years, starting with the annexation of Lagos on August 6, 1861. Though the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria was proclaimed on January 1, 1900, Borno was not occupied until March, 1902, and Sokoto was defeated on 15th March 1903. After that, there were many battles with minorities in the East, the Middle Belt and even in the Northeast, where Chibok and other communities were conquered later. Everywhere they went, the British established systems of control and administration over the territories, and so there were differences that emerged due to circumstances on the ground. The general idea was to use local political and administrative systems of control so as to maintain law and order, and also to help collect tribute and taxes, and facilitate the extraction of mineral and agricultural resources.

Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria

The most famous system emerged in Northern Nigeria and was called Indirect Rule. It was a system of colonial administration in which the British legally recognised the traditional institutions of the conquered peoples and enlisted them to govern on their behalf. The first Governor, Colonel Frederick John Dealtry (later Lord) Lugard, wrote in his Political Memoranda that:

The cardinal principle under which the Administration of Northern Nigeria was based was what has been commonly called “Indirect Rule”, viz, rule through the Native Chiefs, who are regarded as an integral part of the machinery of Government, with well-defined powers and functions recognised by Government and by law and not dependent on the caprice of an Executive Officer⁵⁹

C.O. Obasi and R.G. Nnamani, “The Role of Umuada Igbo in Conflict Management and Development in Nigeria”, ⁵⁸
Open Journal of Political Science, 2015, 5

Lord Lugard, *Political Memoranda*, Frank Cass, London, 1970. These memoranda were originally issued in 1906 ⁵⁹
for the guidance of colonial political officers serving in Northern Nigeria. They were subsequently reissued several
times after the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914.

It was very successful because Borno, the Emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate and the Chiefdoms of all the centralised societies in the North had already established effective systems of government and administration, complete with judicial systems and assured sources of revenue. All the British did was to superimpose themselves on the existing structures, with slight modifications to suit their ideas of “natural justice” and probity. Of course, they abolished the Sokoto Caliphate and restricted the legal and political jurisdiction of the Caliph to Sokoto Emirate, while giving autonomy to the other Emirates under the Governor. The British also restricted the powers of the traditional *Majlis* and other Councils to only the selection of new rulers. The Emirates and Chiefdoms were constituted into Local Governments, and the Emirs and Chiefs were recognised as Sole Native Authorities. The Colonial government posted District Officers (DOs) to each Emirate and Chiefdom to oversee and guide the rulers. The Native Authorities had structures of modern local governments, with Departments to handle such areas as Education, Health, Works, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Forestry, Police and Prisons. There were also judges to handle all cases, including criminal cases, and to pass judgements. Modern Treasuries were established to manage and control finances. In areas where centralised systems had not emerged before the coming of the British, the policy was to regard them as backward, and “help” them to gradually accept the introduction and adoption of such systems, usually under the tutelage of their “more advanced” neighbours⁶⁰.

To raise revenues, the government reorganized the system of taxation, allowing the Native Authorities to collect such taxes as *Haraji* from farmers, *Jangali*, on livestock, fees on market stalls, fishing, hunting, crafts, and later bicycle licenses, oxcart licences, and so on. Each year, when the total amounts were collected, fifty *per cent* was transmitted to the Regional Government at Kaduna, and fifty *per cent* was retained by the Native Authorities, with which to perform their new functions. These included building laterite roads, culverts and half-bridges, building and running primary schools, building and running health dispensaries and primary healthcare centres, paying the salaries of the NA officials and workers, establishing and running prisons, disease isolation centres, planting and caring for trees, rest houses and so on.

Over the years, under the guide of the British, the Native Authorities became increasingly efficient in providing the services of modern local governments at a relatively low cost. But as the years rolled by and people who acquired education at various levels began to mature, certain problems with the system began to show. We will come back to this issue under “Reforms”.

Colonial Local Government in Western Nigeria

In the Western Region, traditional institutions had evolved into centralised political systems just like in the Emirates and Kingdoms of the North. On the surface, therefore, the necessary conditions for the implementation of Indirect Rule existed. However, there were important issues that made the system unsuitable, at least temporarily, for the region.⁶¹ Firstly, the judicial system was not the type that the Europeans understood to deliver justice. The Europeans did not accept trial by ordeal or by oracles as proper and civilised means of adjudication. Therefore, they had to jettison the entire justice system and replace it with their own. Secondly, the Yoruba traditional political system depended on tribute instead of taxation, and the Europeans did not recognise tribute to anyone other than to themselves. Besides, tributes, even when compulsory, did not assure a steady source of assured income for the government. Thirdly, many of the Yoruba kingdoms were too small to constitute viable local governments, especially as the colonial regime had to post a District Officer to each Native Authority as in the classic Northern system. This forced them to group many small kingdoms into one Native Authority, with rotating Chairs. This, on some occasions, caused bad blood and disputes, as some Chiefs would not serve under others. It is, therefore, generally accepted that Indirect Rule was only a partial success in the Western Region⁶².

Sa’ad Abubakar, “Northern Nigeria under Colonial Rule”, in Obaro Ikime, *Groundwork of Nigerian History*,⁶⁰ Heinemann, Ibadan, 1980, pp. 447-481

A.I. Asiwaju, *Western Yorubaland under European Rule*, Longman, London, 1976⁶¹

O. Oyediran, *Essays on Local Government Administration in Nigeria*, Lagos, Project Publications Limited, 1988.⁶²

Failure of Local Government in Early Colonial Eastern Nigeria

If the attempt to impose Indirect Rule in Western Nigeria was only a partial success, it was a total failure in the Eastern Region. None of the conditions necessary for its implementation existed there. There were no centralised traditional political institutions to build on. Each village community was independent, and there were no rulers beyond the nuclear family level, with each village having its elders and title holders to discuss common issues. Without a structure to support, there was no system of taxation, not even tributes. Adjudication was by ordeal and oracles, as there were no formal judges and a legal code. After occupation, the Europeans tried to create centralised political structures by appointing Chiefs by warrant to preside over groups of communities⁶³. These Warrant Chiefs had no local legitimacy or recognition, and their rule was enforced only by force. To make matters worse, many of them were chosen from among local scoundrels who were despised by the communities, and who used their newfound powers to settle scores. Most of them were corrupt and used their positions to acquire wealth, which they flaunted before the people. As a result, there were many revolts and riots, and calls for reform⁶⁴.

Local Government Reforms Under Colonial Rule

It was only by the early 1950s that the colonial administration was forced to embark on local government reforms. In the North, the system had worked successfully until the 1940s when lack of popular representation started to draw criticism from the newly educated elite. This category of citizens was the first to imbibe new ideas of representative democracy and to feel the need to curb the excessive powers of the Sole Native Authorities. They felt that, despite the impressive progress made in administration and the implementation of projects *vis-à-vis* the South, the time had come to allow them to participate at the highest levels of decision making. In the West, similar agitation was afoot, even more forcefully, owing to the fact that they had more and better qualified educated elite. In the East, the Warrant Chief system had become so discredited that local government never had any chance of success. It was not surprising, therefore, that it was from the East that reforms started.

Local Government Reforms in Colonial Eastern Region

A Local Government Ordinance was proclaimed in 1950 which created three tiers of Councils in the Eastern Provinces. A County Council contained between six to ten District Councils; each District Council had six to ten Local Councils. Each of these was established by law with defined powers and functions, and with clear jurisdictions. Direct elections were held into the Local Councils, and indirect elections were held from the Local Councils to the District and County Councils. The tenure of council members was three years. Councils had power to make standing rules for local governance, and to appoint, discipline and dismiss their own staff. They had power to impose taxes and raise loans. All of these powers were exercised under the direction and supervision of the Regional Government. This Law was replaced in 1955 with another one that abolished the three tiers and created consolidated local governments as we know them today. This was because the 1950 experiment had led to inordinate competition for election into the three tiers. Further, those who got elected embarked on grandiose display of wealth which they acquired illegally through siphoning public funds. As a result, taxes were imposed indiscriminately and the local governments were burdened with loans. The 1955 reforms took the Region to Independence⁶⁵. However, it did not fare better than its predecessor, because the behaviours of the elected officials remained the same, and it was with the greatest difficulty that regional authorities were able to manage them. This unfortunate behavioural pattern had been inherited from the Warrant Chiefs of old, many of whom, having acquired prominence and wealth, continued to participate in the system as elected officials.

A.E. Afigbo, "Eastern Provinces under Colonial Rule", in Obaro Ikime, *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Heinemann, Ibadan, 1980, pp. 410-428.

O.O. Adeyemi, "Local Government Administration in Nigeria: Historical Perspective", in *Journal of Public Administration and Government*, 2019, 9(2)

O.O. Adeyemi, "Local Government Administration ... (*ibid*) Also A.E. Afigbo, "Eastern Provinces ... (*op. cit.*)"

Local Government Reforms in Colonial Western Region

In 1952, the government, like in the East, adopted a three-tier system comprising Divisional, District and Local Councils. Each Council consisted of traditional rulers and elected councillors at a ratio of three elected councillors to one traditional ruler. Some of the Councils were Chiefs-in-Council, and others were Chiefs-and-Council, depending on their level of development. In 1957, another reform was instituted in order to address the problems of shortage of trained staff to man the numerous Councils. It allowed the councils to form joint services as well as raise taxes and levies. These reforms did little to solve the fundamental problems of local governments: shortage of funds and trained administrators. They only created more rooms for participation⁶⁶. Indeed, the grave for participation has been the main driver of most demands for local government reforms across the country. This focus on wider participation was, as seen in the Eastern Provinces, conditioned by concerns for material gain, but there was also some genuine concern for probity. What is almost absent everywhere was the need for administrative efficiency.

Local Government Reforms in Colonial Northern Nigeria

Even though there was some agitation for representation among the educated elite, and even some European officials were getting worried about the slow pace of development at the Native Authority level, it was only in 1954 that the Local Government Ordinance of that year was enacted. The Sole Native Authority system was abolished and was replaced with the Emir/Chief-in-Council and Emir/Chief-and-Council. An Emir-in-Council was obliged to Chair the meeting of the Emirate Council but was not bound by its decisions. This was for “developed” Emirates and Chiefdoms. Emir-and-Council must abide by the decisions of the Council. This was for lower-level Emirates and Chiefdoms. Later on, there were attempts at introducing sub-councils, called Outer Councils at District level, and elections were held in some Emirates, but this was abandoned as the country approached Independence⁶⁷.

The 1976 Local Government Reforms in Nigeria

In 1976, the Federal Government of Nigeria under military rule heeded the call of progressives for a radical reform of the local government system with a view to standardise it throughout the country. Before this reform, there was great instability in the local government systems, especially in the South, and this was hindering development. In the North, slowness was due to a combination of inertia on the part of Emirs and Chiefs and shortage of funds. According to some analysts, life could be injected into the system in the North by partial democratisation, and administrative efficiency could be injected into the South by the pooling of personnel under the control of the States.

The 1976 reform spelt out the terms and mission of local government as follows:

1. To make appropriate services and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiatives by devolving and delegating them to local government representative bodies;
2. To facilitate the exercise of democratic self-government to the grassroots of society and to encourage initiative and leadership potentials;
3. To facilitate the mobilisation of human and material resources through the involvement of members of the public in their development;

A.I. Asiwaju, “Western Provinces under Colonial Rule” ... (*op. cit.*)⁶⁶
A. Abdullahi and A. Sanusi, “Local Governance and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: An Imperative for Sustainable Development”, in *International Journal for Development and Sustainability*, 2017, 7(4), 1522-1532. There are few interesting historical studies covering this important period in the introduction of politics at the grassroots in Nigeria, and how this has impacted on local governance. In the North, two important studies are in print: A.D. Yahaya, *Native Authority System in Northern Nigeria, 1950-1970*, Ahmadu Bello University Press, Zaria, 1983; and Babagana Wakil, *The Dynamics of the Political Processes in Borno Division within an Emergent Nigerian State, 1950-1966*, Borno Sahara and Sudan Series, Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Maiduguri, Nigeria, 2021 (see especially, chapters 4-8).

4. To provide a two-way channel of communication between the local communities and government (both State and Federal).

In the words of the Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo when announcing the Reform in 1976

In embarking on these reforms, the Federal Military Government was essentially motivated by the necessity to stabilise and rationalise government at the local level. This must of necessity entail the decentralisation of some significant functions of State Governments to local levels in order to harness local resources for rapid development. The Federal Military Government has, therefore, decided to recognise Local Governments as a third tier of governmental activity in the nation, Local Governments should do precisely what the word government implies i.e., governing at the grassroots or local level⁶⁸.

Perhaps the most important feature of the new system was that Local Government was made a third tier of government in the Nigerian constitution, entitled to a 10% share of the statutory allocation of funds, the first and only such arrangement in the world. It also featured a unified local government service through the Local Government Service Commission controlled by the State government. The traditional institution was now completely divorced from local government, except for membership of some committees allowed for some traditional rulers at the district level. The most prominent of these committees was the security committee of the Local Government, in which District heads whose District fell within their jurisdiction were members. Another important feature was that local governments were no longer synonymous with traditional boundaries. They were now created according to population of between 150,000 and 800,000. There are now 774 local government areas in Nigeria.

The 1976 local government reforms actually took the country back the system established in the Eastern Region in 1955, a system that was based on the failed Warrant Chiefs system. Without any roots in the traditions and cultures of the affected peoples, the system lacks social legitimacy and does not afford any moral sanctions on the operators. Indeed, tradition influence and authority were not only sidelined, they were subordinated to an alien local authority. Instead of serving as a moral check, traditional authority has been forced to serve as a mere tool.

Challenges and Prospects

There is no doubt that properly functioning local governments are the true anchors of development in any country. It is at this level that human and material resources can be harnessed for development, and it is at this level that challenges can be met with the support and full participation of the people. Nigeria, with its land size and population, has the potential for rapid industrialisation and the provision of infrastructure and for raising the standard of living of the people. However, these lofty goals can only be achieved if the country gets the right bearing in the matter of local government.

Challenges

In the North, the Native Authorities were relatively effective mainly because of their sizes. Some of the Native Authorities covered territories and populations now in a whole State, or even two States. Kano Native Authority now covers most of Kano and Jigawa States. Borno Native Authority now covers most of Borno and Yobe States. Many Emirates now contain many post-1976 Local Government Areas. They, therefore, had enough land resources and populations to sustain the Native Authorities with their produce and taxes. The post-1976 Local Governments are too small in land area and population to sustain even the payment of salaries of staff.

The decision to pool local government senior staff in the Local Government Service Commissions may have made some sense in the South. In the North, it is a set-back for the local governments, depriving them of their former capacity to recruit and manage their staff. However, with reduction in

Federal Military Government, 1976.⁶⁸

land area and population, the range of services that local government can provide is very narrow indeed. Most technical services are now beyond the capacity of local governments. The failure of local governments to pay teachers' salaries was the reason behind the creation of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) by the Federal government so as to facilitate direct federal intervention in this critical sector. Local governments are increasingly unable to construct standard laterite roads, culverts and bridges, and they even have to be assisted with primary health care and the provision of rural water.

Another major problem that has been created is that of turning the local government councils into potential political rivals to the State Governors. Before 1976, the Emirs and Chiefs and their respective Councils worked hand-in-glove with their Governors. Since the constitution now requires that the Councils are elected on partisan basis, the ground is set for electoral battles, as the State Governors try to ensure that the positions are filled with their nominees. At another level, in States with governments controlled by parties in opposition to the Federal Government, the President will try to use the local government Councils against the State Governments, using allocation of funds. This would cause major political upheavals in the States and preclude any positive developments.

The present local government system lacks the capacity to reach down to the lowest levels of community life because it is not designed to do so. Its purpose was to facilitate inclusion and participation in decision-making, and not to ensure community control and administration. It focusses more on governance than on administration. As such, the power and presence of present-day local governments do not extend beyond the Secretariat. The traditional system reaches down to communities and households, but it no longer has executive function. Thus, most of the country, especially in the rural areas, is described as ungoverned space, facilitating all sorts of illegal and anti-social activities.

Prospects

Even though we have noted some possible issues with the system, the prospects of local government autonomy can attract quality leadership from among the political class. If this happens, then the possibilities of real development may be looming around the corner. Even with current economic downturn and the challenges of insecurity, quality leadership can make the difference between survival and total collapse. The elite and their political parties must, therefore, in the interest of the future, improve on their leadership recruitment drives at the local government level.

One of the challenges of local governance is the failure to attract higher grades of administrators, technocrats and professionals. This may have something to do with the pay and prospects for career progression. With the teeming unemployed graduates of all description, it should be possible to recruit higher grade staff of these categories, and this would uplift the profile of local government administration, and lead to better initiation and implementation of development projects by local governments.

In the event of the failure to conceive and implement positive projects due to size, it should be possible for contiguous local governments to collaborate. Large agricultural schemes as well as such projects as reforestation and the reclamation of eroded lands can be achieved if contiguous local governments collaborate. This may even be upgraded to joint services in specific sectors.

It is not too late to redesign the local government system to enable them to harness the immense influence and reach of the traditional system so as to spearhead the development of the country. There is no reason for insisting on uniformity of systems in a country that is so diverse. Importing a system originally designed for acephalous societies and imposing it on societies that are centralised is a recipe for failure. Understandably, the divestment of traditional authority in a democratic republic looked and sounded rational and fashionable, but it has been tested and found wanting, there is no reason why it should continue. Initially, even in the North, the Western Educated Elite and the politicians saw tradition authority as a rival and sought to defang it. There is sufficient skill, wisdom and confidence now to realise that it is force to be harnessed, and not an enemy to be destroyed.

Foot Note:

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at a retreat organised for Local Government officials from Yobe State, Nigeria 2025 in Kano. The retreat was organised by SML Consults Limited, who engaged me as a resource person. My gratitude goes to Professor Shehu Mustapha Liberty of the Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Maiduguri. Comments, observations and criticisms obtained from the participants, as well as from academic colleagues working on the field have led to a major revision. These are acknowledged.

² K. Ajayi, *Theory and Practice of Local Government*, University of Ado Ekiti, 2000

³ O.O. Adeyemi, "Local Government Administration in Nigeria: Historical Perspective", *Journal of Public Administration and Government*, 2019, 9(2)

⁴ G. Ibrahim, [2019] "Background to the Colonial Occupation of Borno", *Papers on Nigerian History*, Monimod J. Venture, Jimeta, Yola, Nigeria, 2019. For a more in-depth treatment of the subject, see Nuru Alkali, (1985), "The Structure of Government in Kanem-Borno under the Sayfawa", and J.E. Lavers, , "Kanem and Borno under Three Dynasties: Some Aspects of Change and Development c. 700-1900", both in J.F.A. Ajayi, and Bashir Ikara, *The Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria*, UPL, and Kaduna State Council for Arts and Culture, 1985.

⁵ A. Abdullahi and A. Sanusi, [2018], "Local Governance and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: An Imperative for Sustainable Development", *International Journal for Development and Sustainability*, 2028, 7(4), 1522-1532

⁶ See, for instance, Aliyu A. Idrees and Yakubu A. Ochefu, *Studies in the History of Central Nigeria*, Volume I, CSS Limited, Lagos, Nigeria, 2002. This volume served to whet the appetite of Historians, who eagerly awaited the promised second volume. It is still awaited. Other works in print include: Joseph N. Ukwedeh, *History of the Igala Kingdom* (c. 1534-1854), Arewa House Studies Series, Kaduna, Nigeria, 2003; Sule Mohammed, *History of the Emirate of Bida to 1899 AD*, Ahmadu Bello University Press, Zaria, Nigeria, 2011; A.M. Adejo, *Makurdi: A History of its Rise and Development up to 2010*, Aboki Publishers, Makurdi, Nigeria, 2021; Absolom S. Dilli, *Mbula Traditional Society and a New Dawn*, privately published in Yola, Nigeria, 2010; Bukar Usman, *A History of Biu*, Klamidas Communications Limited, Biu Emirate Studies Series (BESS 003), Abuja, Nigeria, 2015; Gwandang Y. Ndirmbita, *A History of the Kibaku*, privately published in 2000 and printed by Baraka Press, Kaduna (Gwandang had a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Maiduguri and proceeded to work on a PhD. However, this book was written from an adversary perspective as a champion of the Kibaku claim on the throne of Askira Emirate. The work should, therefore, be read *cum grano salis*; Ibrahim Garndawa, *A Brief History of the Hill Districts of Gwoza in Dikwa Division of Borno State*, privately published and Printed at the Borno State Government Printer, Maiduguri, 2008; Alhaji Mohammed Adam MFR, *Major Landmarks in the Political History of Dikwa Emirate since 1900*, Privately published and printed at the Kola Printing Industries LTD, Lagos; Gerhard Muller-Kosack, *Azzaghvana: A Fragmentary History of the Dghwede of Mandara Mountains*, Mandras Publishing, Kent, UK, 202 (though he calls it a history, it is actually an excellent work of cultural archaeology. He appears to write from a faith-based perspective, and his historical sketches should be read accordingly.

⁷ S.A. Akintoye, *Revolution and Power Politics in Yorubaland: 1840-1983*, Longman, London, 1971.

⁸ See I.A. Akinjogbin & E.A. Ayandele, "Yorubaland up to 1800", in Obaro Ikime, *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Heinemann Educational Books PLC, Ibadan, 1980, pp121-143., and Ad

⁹ D.M. Bondarenko, "The Benin Kingdom (13th-19th centuries) as a Mega Community", *Social Evolution and History*, 2025, 14(2) 46-76.

¹⁰ C.O. Obasi and R.G. Nnamani, "The Role of Umuada Igbo in Conflict Management and Development in Nigeria", *Open Journal of Political Science*, 2015,

¹¹ Lord Lugard, *Political Memoranda*, Frank Cass, London, 1970. These memoranda were originally issued in 1906 for the guidance of colonial political officers serving in Northern Nigeria. They were subsequently reissued several times after the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914.

- ¹² Sa'ad Abubakar, "Northern Nigeria under Colonial Rule", in Obaro Ikime, *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Heinemann, Ibadan, 1980, pp. 447-481
- ¹³ A.I. Asiwaju, *Western Yorubaland under European Rule*, Longman, London, 1976
- ¹⁴ O. Oyediran, *Essays on Local Government Administration in Nigeria*, Lagos, Project Publications Limited, 1988.
- ¹⁵ A.E. Afigbo, "Eastern Provinces under Colonial Rule", in Obaro Ikime, *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Heinemann, Ibadan, 1980, pp. 410-428.
- ¹⁶ O.O. Adeyemi, "Local Government Administration in Nigeria: Historical Perspective", in *Journal of Public Administration and Government*, 2019, 9(2)
- ¹⁷ O.O. Adeyemi, "Local Government Administration ... (*ibid*) Also A.E. Afigbo, "Eastern Provinces ... (*op. cit.*)
- ¹⁸ A.I. Asiwaju, "Western Provinces under Colonial Rule" ... (*op. cit.*)
- ¹⁹ A. Abdullahi and A. Sanusi, "Local Governance and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: An Imperative for Sustainable Development", in *International Journal for Development and Sustainability*, 2017, 7(4), 1522-1532. There are few interesting historical studies covering this important period in the introduction of politics at the grassroots in Nigeria, and how this has impacted on local governance. In the North, two important studies are in print: A.D. Yahaya, *Native Authority System in Northern Nigeria, 1950-1970*, Ahmadu Bello University Press, Zaria, 1983; and Babagana Wakil, *The Dynamics of the Political Processes in Borno Division within an Emergent Nigerian State, 1950-1966*, Borno Sahara and Sudan Series, Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Maiduguri, Nigeria, 2021 (see especially, chapters 4-8).
- ²⁰ Federal Military Government, 1976.



The Shehu of Borno: Preserving Peace, Culture, and Heritage

Professor Abba Isa Tijani¹ & Mohammed Nur Shuwa²,

¹Former Director-General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments.

²Curator, Borno Emirate Palace Museum, Shehu's Palace, Maiduguri

Abstract

This paper examines the cultural, political, and spiritual leadership of His Royal Highness, Alhaji (Dr.) Abubakar Ibn Umar Garbai El-Kanemi, CFR, the Shehu of Borno. Drawing on historical scholarship on the Kanem-Borno Empire, traditional rulership in Nigeria, and Durbar culture, the study situates the Shehu's contemporary leadership within a millennium-long tradition of Kanuri statecraft. The analysis highlights his contributions to peace-building, cultural preservation, and heritage diplomacy. The looked at a case study of the seating arrangement within the Kundairam - a precisely ordered hierarchy that visually expresses the administrative, spiritual, and cultural structure of the Borno Emirate. The Shehu occupies the apex, with all other positions radiating outward according to rank and function.

Keywords

Kanem-Borno Empire, culture, politics, and spiritual leadership of Shehu of Borno

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

The Shehu of Borno occupies a unique position in Nigeria's traditional governance system, rooted in the legacy of the Kanem-Borno Empire—one of Africa's longest-lasting political formations (Hiribarren, 2016). His Royal Highness, Alhaji (Dr.) Abubakar Ibn Umar Garbai El-Kanemi, CFR, ascended the throne on 4 March 2009 during a period of insecurity in Northeastern Nigeria. His reign has emphasized peace, cultural continuity, and community resilience, aligning with broader scholarship on the governance role of traditional rulers in northern Nigeria (Mlambo, 2020). The paper presents a case study of the Kundairam—the ceremonial court of the Borno Emirate—as a spatial articulation of hierarchy, legitimacy, and political philosophy. The seating arrangement of the Kundairam is a living testament to the political and cultural sophistication of the Borno Emirate.

Historical Foundations: The Kanem-Borno Legacy

The Kanem-Borno Empire, founded around the 8th–9th century CE, developed a sophisticated administrative and Islamic scholarly tradition that shaped Kanuri political identity (Adekilekun, 2025; Hiribarren, 2016). The transition from the Sayfawa dynasty to the al-Kanemi line in the 19th century followed the rise of Muhammad al-Amin al-Kanemi, a scholar-statesman who defended Borno against the Sokoto jihad and reorganized its governance (Akinwale, 2026).

This historical continuity provides the institutional foundation for the modern Shehu's authority.

Custodianship of Kanuri Cultural Heritage

The Shehu's leadership includes active preservation of Kanuri cultural expressions, most prominently the **Sallah Durbar**. Durbar festivals—grand equestrian processions marking Eid celebrations—have deep historical roots across northern Nigeria and symbolize loyalty, military heritage, and cultural identity (Olagunju, 2016).

Studies of Durbar traditions in Ilorin and Zaria similarly emphasize their role in cultural continuity, tourism, and communal pride (Sanusi, 2025; Sulaiman & Olarongbe, 2024).

The Borno Durbar, renowned for its ornate horse regalia and skilled horsemen, reflects the Kanuri mastery of equestrian culture documented in regional histories.

Revitalization of Palace Institutions

The Shehu has strengthened palace-based governance structures such as the **Kundairam**, where traditional titleholders, district heads, and community groups pay homage and receive guidance. This aligns with research showing that traditional rulers remain influential gatekeepers in northern Nigerian governance, despite constitutional limitations (Mlambo, 2020).

Community-oriented customs—such as palace-sponsored circumcisions and Sallah distributions—reflect the welfare functions historically associated with traditional institutions (Omligbe, 2025).

Revival of Dormant Traditional Titles

The Kanem-Borno Emirate historically possesses **over 300 traditional titles**, only a fraction of which is hereditary. Hereditary titles are regarded as **first-class titles**, passed within specific families. Non-hereditary titles are conferred based on merit, service, and contributions to the Emirate.

In his commitment to cultural preservation, the Shehu has revived several long-dormant titles, including:

- Shettima Kuburi
- Aji Sudani
- Barma
- Mallam Tatali
- Shettima Ngolloma
- Mala Maidu
- Kachallah Mahri
- Mala Kambar
- Others

This revival strengthens cultural continuity and honours individuals who uphold the values of the Emirate.

A Case Study: The Spatial Politics of Authority: An Examination of the Kundairam Seating Arrangement in the Borno Emirate

The Kundairam, the ceremonial court of the Borno Emirate, represents one of the most enduring institutional expressions of political order in the Central Sudanic region. Its seating arrangement is not merely a matter of protocol but a spatial articulation of hierarchy, legitimacy, and the interdependence of political and religious authority. Rooted in the administrative traditions of the Kanem-Borno Empire, the arrangement reflects a political philosophy in which spatial organization

communicates social structure and reinforces the ideological foundations of governance. Scholars such as Cohen (1967), Brenner (1973), and Palmer (1936) have emphasized that the Borno court is a cultural system in which symbolism and authority are inseparable. The Kundairam exemplifies this synthesis through its meticulously ordered seating hierarchy.

Historical Foundations of Court Structure in Kanem-Borno: The origins of the Borno court system can be traced to the Sayfawa dynasty, which ruled Kanem and later Borno for nearly a millennium. Early Arabic chroniclers, including Ibn Furtu, documented the elaborate court protocols under Mai Idris Alooma, whose reign (c. 1571–1603) marked a period of administrative reform, military expansion, and the consolidation of Islamic governance (Lavers, 1984). Alooma's court emphasized discipline, bureaucratic specialization, and the integration of Islamic scholarship into statecraft—principles that continue to shape the spatial logic of the Kundairam.

Following the decline of the Sayfawa dynasty in the early nineteenth century, the rise of the Al-Kanemi dynasty under Muhammad al-Kanemi reaffirmed the centrality of Islamic scholarship and bureaucratic hierarchy. Cohen (1967) describes the resulting political system as a “clerical-military aristocracy,” in which authority was distributed among scholars, nobles, and military officers. The spatial organization of the Kundairam reflects this tripartite structure, with each group occupying a distinct position relative to the Shehu.

The Shehu at the Apex of Authority: At the centre of the Kundairam's spatial hierarchy sits the Shehu of Borno, positioned on an elevated throne at the far end of the chamber. This elevation symbolizes the Shehu's role as the embodiment of political sovereignty, spiritual leadership, and ancestral continuity. His placement mirrors classical Islamic court models, where rulers occupy central, elevated seats to signify divine trust (*amanah*) and the responsibility of just governance (Last, 1980). The Shehu's position also reflects the Kanuri conception of kingship, in which the ruler is both a political leader and a custodian of tradition (*maisugum*). The court's orientation toward him reinforces the idea that authority radiates outward from a single, divinely sanctioned source.

The Right Side: Administrative and Military Authority: To the Shehu's right sit the principal officers of state, beginning with the Waziri, the highest-ranking adviser and head of the Emirate's administrative machinery. Historically, the Waziri served as the Shehu's chief counselor, a role comparable to the viziers of North African and Middle Eastern Islamic polities (Brenner, 1973). His proximity to the Shehu reflects his influence in matters of governance, diplomacy, and judicial oversight. Other senior titleholders on this side—such as Mallam Terab, Ibrahim Wadama, Shettima Kuburi, Shettima Kanuribe, the Kaigama (military commander), and the Galadima—represent the bureaucratic and military elite. Their arrangement mirrors the layered administrative structure described by Cohen (1967), who observed that Borno's governance relied on a complex network of hereditary and appointed offices. Behind these senior figures sit district and village heads bearing titles such as Zanna and Mala, followed by lower-ranking officials and palace servants. This spatial progression reflects the administrative hierarchy through which authority is delegated across the Emirate's territories.

The Left Side: Scholarship, Lineage, and Royal Stewardship: The left side of the Shehu accommodates figures whose authority derives from scholarship, noble lineage, and palace tradition. This includes Mallam Ahmad Gonimi, Aji Sudani, the Yarima (often the heir-apparent), and other senior nobles such as Abba Bodai, Abba Bunu, and Zanna Boguma. Their placement underscores the Emirate's long-standing reverence for Islamic learning and aristocratic heritage. Behind them sit the princes, arranged according to seniority and responsibility. The Kura Abbaye, head of the princes, occupies a distinguished position, followed by princes who serve as district or village heads. This arrangement reflects the dual nature of royal authority in Borno: it is inherited through lineage but validated through service to the state (Lavers, 1984).

Islamic Scholars: Custodians of Moral and Legal Order: Islamic scholars occupy positions of honor on both sides of the Shehu, reflecting their indispensable role in shaping the Emirate’s moral and legal framework. To the right sit the Imam Idaini and the Chief Imam, custodians of religious rites and interpreters of Islamic law. To the left sit the Mainin Kinandi, Talba, Wali, and other Shettima Mallamabe, whose scholarship informs judicial decisions, ceremonial protocol, and the spiritual life of the court. Their placement near the Shehu symbolizes the integration of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) into governance—a hallmark of Borno’s political culture since the reforms of Idris Alooma. As Brenner (1973) notes, the scholars’ presence ensures that political authority remains anchored in moral legitimacy.

[RIGHT SIDE OF SHEHU]

1. Waziri
2. Mallam Terab
3. Ibrahim Wadaima
4. Shettima Kuburi
4. Shettima Kanuribe
5. Kaigama
6. Zanna Borkoma
7. Barma
8. Galadima
9. Zanna Arjinoma
10. Mala Wasangari
11. Mala Kambar

[District & Village Heads

With title of Zanna]

Zanna’a, Mala’a

[Behind Them]

Digma, Makinda, Aji Bazam,
Ballama, Mastarima, Zarma,
Shettima Abdulkarim,
Kazallahs, Palace Servants

[LEFT SIDE OF SHEHU]

1. Mallam Ahmad Gonimi
2. Aji Sudani
3. Yarima
4. Mala Maidu
5. Abba Bodai
6. Abba Bunu
7. Kachallah Ali Mahri
8. Zanna Boguma
9. Mala Maidu
10. Mala Dawami
11. Kachallah Ali Mahri
12. Zanna Kazalma

[District & Village Heads

with title of Zanna]

Zanna’a, Mala’a

[Behind Them]

Head of Princes (Kura Abbaye),
Awana Laminu, Marima,
Senior Princes, Princes
(including titleholders)

Figure 1. Seating hierarchy of the Kundairam, with all administrative, princely, and scholarly ranks positioned around the Shehu.

Heritage Conservation and Museum Development

*In 2023, the Shehu collaborated with the National Commission for Museums and Monuments to establish the permanent structure of **Borno Emirate Palace Museum**, a major step in preserving Kanuri material culture. Heritage preservation aligns with global trends in safeguarding indigenous knowledge and cultural assets (Sulaiman & Olarongbe, 2024). The Shehu’s Palace—originally established in 1907 and reconstructed in 1943—was later inscribed on the **Islamic World Heritage List** by ICESCO, reflecting its cultural significance within the Islamic world (ICESCO, 2024).*

Cultural Diplomacy: The Kanem-Borno Cultural Summit

The Shehu’s cultural diplomacy is exemplified by the **Kanem-Borno Cultural Summit** (2024, 2026), which brought together scholars, traditional rulers, and diaspora communities. Cultural festivals are widely recognized as catalysts for peace, identity formation, and socio-economic development (Lawrence-Hart, 2014; Fordjour & Cruz, 2023). By institutionalizing the summit as an

annual event, the Borno State Government has reinforced culture as a tool for regional stability and global engagement.

Honours, National Service, and Intellectual Leadership

The Shehu's contributions have earned him numerous honorary degrees and national distinctions, consistent with the historical role of traditional rulers as custodians of knowledge and moral authority (Omligbe, 2025). His national roles—including Deputy President-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and membership in the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council—reflect the enduring relevance of traditional institutions in contemporary governance.

Conclusion

His Royal Highness, Alhaji (Dr.) Abubakar Ibn Umar Garbai El-Kanemi, CFR, exemplifies the intellectual and cultural ideals associated with Nigeria's scholarly and traditional institutions. His leadership demonstrates how traditional authority, grounded in centuries of Kanuri statecraft, continues to contribute to peace-building, cultural preservation, and national unity. The restoration and expansion of Kundairam is a living testament to the political and cultural sophistication of the Borno Emirate. It encodes centuries of administrative evolution, Islamic scholarship, and aristocratic tradition into a spatial form that communicates hierarchy, legitimacy, and balance. In this way, the Kundairam is not merely a court; it is a visual constitution—one that continues to articulate the values and identity of the Borno Emirate in the twenty-first century.

References

- Adekilekun, A. (2025). *Kanem-Bornu Empire: Rise, reforms, and legacy*.
- Akinwale, G. (2026). *Al-Kanemi and the survival of Borno in the age of the Sokoto Jihad*.
- Brenner, L. (1973). *The Shehus of Kukawa: A History of the Al-Kanemi Dynasty of Bornu*. Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, R. (1967). *The Kanuri of Bornu*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Hiribarren, V. (2016). *Kanem-Bornu Empire*. In *The Encyclopedia of Empire* (pp. 1–6). Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118455074.wbeoe014>
- ICESCO. (2024). *Inscription of 91 historical sites and cultural elements on ICESCO Heritage Lists*.
- Lavers, J. (1984). *Kanem-Bornu: A Brief History*. In B. Barkindo (Ed.), *Studies in the History of Pre-Colonial Borno* (pp. 1–25). University of Maiduguri Press.
- Lawrence-Hart, G. (2014). Festivals: Catalyst for peace in Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4), 1–5.
- Last, M. (1980). *The Early Kingdoms of the Nigerian Savannah*. In J. F. Ade Ajayi & M. Crowder (Eds.), *History of West Africa* (Vol. 1, pp. 167–224). Longman.
- Mlambo, M. (2020). *Governance and traditional rulership in northern Nigeria*. University of Pretoria.
- Olagunju, A. T. (2016). *Durbar in Northern Nigeria*. Art Heritage Limited.
- Omligbe, J. O. (2025). The roles of traditional rulers in fostering peace in Nigerian communities. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(9), 397–408.
- Palmer, H. R. (1936). *The Bornu Sahara and Sudan*. John Murray
- Sanusi, A. K. (2025). *A history of Durbar festival in Ilorin Emirate since 1900*. Usmanu Danfodio University.
- Sulaiman, K. A., & Olarongbe, S. A. (2024). Digitization of indigenous knowledge: Focus on Ilorin Durbar Festival. *Indonesian Journal of Librarianship*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.33701/ijolib.v5i1.3707>

SECTION THREE:

Sharia and Jurisprudence



The Growth and Progress of Islamic Law of Inheritance: A Critical & Historical Study

Dr. Abdullahi Abubakar Ahmad¹ & Muhammad Lawan Galdi²,

^{1, 2}Federal University of Agriculture and
Entrepreneurship
P.M.B 16, Bama. Borno State,

Abstract

Islamic inheritance law, known as Fara'id, summaries explicit guidelines for distributing a deceased Muslim's estate among their heirs, as determined by the Qur'an and Sunnah (Prophet Muhammad's teachings). These laws prioritize the rights of blood relatives and allocate immovable shares to certain heirs, with sons generally receiving a greater share than daughters. While a will (Wasiya) is reinvigorated, it cannot exceed one-third of the estate and cannot disinherit rightful heirs. The Qur'an introduced a number of different rights and restrictions on matters of inheritance, including what were at that time general developments to the treatment of women and family life. The Qur'an also presented efforts to fix the laws of inheritance, and therefore forming a complete legal system. This development was in contrast to pre-Islamic societies where rules of inheritance varied significantly. They do, nevertheless, also vary from constant secular changes since that time, up to, though predominantly in, the modern era. This paper scrutinizes into the many magnitudes of growth and progress of Islamic law, the research encompasses the introduction, where it examines the historical notion of succession in the history of mankind, and then elucidated the inheritance under Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic Arabia) and after that discusses the inheritance under Jewish law, and mentioned the revelation of verses on inheritance and also explicit the inheritance during the early period of Islam, at that juncture it explicates the inheritance between the Hindus, the inheritance under the Hebrew/Christian law, the inheritance under the African customs with particular reference to Yoruba's and Igbos. Finally, the research signifies that. Under the pre-Islamic Arabian custom women were not entitled to any share in the property of their deceased relation. Inheritance was based on blood relationship (Nasab), defense pact (al-halaf), adoption (al-tabanni). Under the blood relationship right of inheritance was limited to the paternal male descendants, even among them only those who have the ability to hold arms can inherit other heirs such as minors, incompetent and old people were obstructed from inheritance.

Keywords

Kanem-Borno Empire, culture, politics, and spiritual leadership of Shehu of Borno

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Historically, the notion of succession is as old as the history of mankind. This is because from time immemorial people inherited certain things from their predecessors and this smooth the way for the steadiness of property and civilization.⁶⁹ Man by nature struggle hard to obtain wealth for his happiness and the welfare of his family and regardless of how much he was able to gather, he

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Pindiga, U.E.H. Practical Guide to the Law of Succession (*Mirath*) in the Shariah, Tamaza Pub. Co. Ltd., Kongo-Zaria, (2001), p. 4.

eventually die and leave most of it behind, hence the need for the law or custom of the deceased to control what happens to the wealth left behind by the deceased. As such, the rule of inheritance, whether religious or customary, generally came up with a view to make material provision for how the deceased estate is to be shared among his remaining relations that are tied to him by a special relationship determined by his cultural or religious factors, depending on the practice or legal system followed or agreed to be adopted by the deceased during his lifetime⁷⁰. The idea of inheritance has contained well in the history of Jews, Romans, Israelite, Egyptians, Caledonians, pre-Islamic Arabians as well as most African customs long before the Arrival of Islam. According to Prof. Sani Idris, "In all the schemes/system of inheritance that existed in the history of mankind prior to the arrival of Islam and to some extent even thereafter up to today, women have been placed in a very deprived position. In some systems they are not only deprived from inheriting any portion but they themselves are considered possessions capable of being inherited."⁷¹ The law of inheritance in Islam developed as a result of the lacks and Inequalities in the distribution of the deceased's estate between the heirs prior to Islam in different communities of the world. For instance, the rules and customs of Arabia on inheritance before the arrival of Islam, the pagan African customs, as well as, the Hebrews are to the effect that only the senior male child of the deceased person can inherit him to the exclusion of all other heirs.⁷² Before Islam, inheritance among the Arabs was confined only to able male relations. Daughter, widows, mothers, minors, and incapable persons have no share in the inheritance. The basic principle was that one must be capable of defending the honor of the family or the tribe.⁷³ In Jews law, daughters were excluded by sons also widows and other female get nothing from the inheritance. Illegitimate children had the same right as the legitimate children over the property of their deceased parents. This was the position under the Hindu.⁷⁴ In Roman, as well as, in the ancient Greek law, where the daughter was considered incapable of participating in or continuing the domestic religion, she would be deprived of the right of inheritance or she will not even inherit at all, neither before nor after marriage⁷⁵. The eldest son inherited the property of the deceased father to the exclusion of all heirs, including the co-wives of his mother.⁷⁶ In the Mosaic Law, there is no room or rule for the several heirs to inherit at the same time. It was in the changing times of Moses that daughters were even recognized to inherit but in evasion of sons and in preference to the agnates.⁷⁷ The modern practice in Europe was motivated towards giving an individual broader option to decide what should happen to his property after death, the option permits him to strip property even to animal, such as cats, dogs, etc. if he so wished.⁷⁸ Succession as practiced among many of those ancient customs and religions is discussed below. Then it would be against that background we will discuss the chronological development of Islamic law of succession.

Inheritance Under Jahiliyyah (Pre-Islamic Arabia)

The rules of inheritance in pre-Islamic Arabia are said to have been basically determined by the war-like mode of life.⁷⁹ Their rules and customs of inheritance were similar to the pagan African customs

(70) Idris, s. op cit p.8

(71) Idris, S. An Appraisal of Women's Right of Inheritance under Islamic Law; in A. B. U. J. I. L., vol. iv-v, Faith Printers International, R/Tsiwa Estate, Kongo, Zaria, (2007); p. 8.

(72) Qadri, A. A; Islamic Jurisprudence In The Modern World, Taj Company, Delhi, (1986); p.424

(73) Aliyu, I. A. Legal Basis and Principles of Marriage under Islamic Law, PHD Dissertation (unpublished) Faculty of Law, A. B. U. Zaria, (1990) P. vii.

(74) Ibid p. viii

(75) Ibid p. viii

(76) Ati, H.A. Family Structure In Islam, Academy Press Ltd, Lagos, (1982); P. 250; case of Dawood Vs. Danmole (1962) 1 ALL NLR, 702

(77) Ibid P. 251

(78) Idris, S. "Some Aspects Of Islamic Law Of Inheritance And The Principles Of Ta'asib"; In Journal Of Islamic And Comparative Law, Vol. 28, A. B. U., Zaria, Nigeria, (2007) P. 48.

(79) Ati H.A. op cit, P. 251

predominant even at the contemporary level in countries south of the Sahara.⁸⁰ Therefore, inheritance among the Arabs during that period of Dark Age was limited only to able male relations. Daughters, Widows, Mothers, Minors and incapable persons had no share in the inheritance of their deceased relations. Women were regarded as among the chattels capable of being inherited. As such the basic principle of inheritance among the pre-Islamic Arabians was that one must be capable of defending the honor and integrity of the family and the entire tribe.⁸¹ In an unqualified patriarchal despotism, there was no distinction between ancestral and self-acquired property and the females were used as property to be bought and sold, mortgaged, owned or inherited or allocated as payment of debts. Inheritance at that time descended completely on males outlining kindred entirely through males and the women and young ones could not inherit because they could not wield swords to protect the family or the tribes. During that time also, untrue relationship by adoption, oath of brotherhood and patronage for the protection of family or the tribes were common. Under the pre-Islamic Arabian custom women were not entitled to any share in the property of their deceased relation. Inheritance was based on blood relationship (Nasab), defense pact (al-halaf), adoption (al-tabanni). Under the blood relationship right of inheritance was confined to the paternal male descendants, even among them only those who have the ability to hold arms can inherit other heirs such as minors, incompetent and old people were obstructed from inheritance.⁸² It has been submitted that among the pre-Islamic Arabian custom, inheritance was exclusively based on patriarchal descent among blood relations. A person is however, free to make personal arrangement to confer right of inheritance on some other persons outside the family cycle.⁸³ Therefore the grounds of inheritance known among the pre-Islamic Arabs ranges as follows:-

a) Blood relationship – Nasab: - This is a form of inheritance on account of blood relationship. It was only limited to the paternal male relations and even among them, only those who had the ability to hold arms and had really fought along with the deceased were competent to inherit out of the estate left behind by the deceased. Hence, female and those male descendants that lack the ability to hold arms, such as minors, incapable and old people were obstructed from sharing in the estate on account of their incapability to wage war and bear arms in defense of the family or tribe.⁸⁴ Under this ground of inheritance it is clear that there is no share for wife(s), mothers, daughters, sisters etc. and beside the female category even among the male, the weaker ones such as the aged and minors are also deprived of a share. It is well-intentioned to note that it was against the background of this unfairness that the verses relating to inheritance were revealed directing plainly how the estate of a deceased is to be shared among his relations.⁸⁵

b) Adoption- Al-tabanni: - Another ground of inheritance known to pre – Islamic Arabian custom was by way of adoption. This is a method by which a person adopts another as his biological descendant and by so doing the paternity of the adopted son would be linked to the person that adopted him rather than his real biological parents and such action confer on the adopted him. This adopted son will inherit the whole property of the person that adopted him should such a person die without a son and if such a person is survived with a son then the adopted son as a matter of right was allowed to claim his share from the estate of the deceased like any of his biological sons.⁸⁶ Here again the right of women to inherit has been neglected since the Concept of adoption is that of a male child not female. In fact during the period under consideration the birth of a baby girl was seen as a

(⁸⁰)Qadri, A. A. op cit P. 424

(⁸¹)Ibrahim A. A. op cit P. p. vii

(⁸²)Lakhvi S.B.H. op cit at ,p.7

(⁸³)Idris S. op cit ,p.14

(⁸⁴) Muhammad A. S. Mawarith Fish Shariatil Islamiyyati ala Dhau'il Kitab was Sunnah, Mecca, (1979) PP. 17-18

(⁸⁵)Idris S. op cit ,p. 114

(⁸⁶) Keffi, S. U. D. Some aspect of Islamic Law of Succession, Rukhsah Publications, Kano, Nigeria, (1989), P. ix

disgrace and a lot prefer to bury their female babies alive than to leave with the disgrace of keeping them. In such circumstances the issue of adopting a baby girl does arise.⁸⁷

c) Military Compact- Al-halaf: - Another important ground of inheritance during this period was the military compact between members of different families. It is a defense pact by which parties, strange to each other by blood relationship, enter into an agreement that they should in return for a consideration of defending each other in cases of war be entitled to a share in each other's estate. By this agreement whoever among them pre-deceased the other is entitled to inherit 1/6 of the estate of the other. The pact is made in the following terms: "My blood is your blood and my retaliate murder is you're retaliating murder. You will have the right to inherit me and I shall have the right to inherit you. You shall owe for my blood". If this was accepted by the other party the pact was deemed completed.⁸⁸ It is observed here again the women are excluded since the issue of defense pact simply has to do with war for which women are not involved hence they cannot inherit under this ground.⁸⁹

d) Marriage – Nikah: – Another important means and ground of inheritance that obviously depicts unfairness and discrimination against women is inheritance on the basis of marital relationship. It only favors the husband; he has the sole right to take the whole estate of his deceased wife to the exclusion of her blood relations. On the other hand, the wife has no reciprocal right to inherit her husband, to say the least the wife was considered as part of the deceased estate capable of being inherited. In the absence of any arrangement by the deceased, the estate is shared among the able male relations of the deceased per capita where they were of equal strength in relationship with the deceased.⁹⁰ Females were further disentitled out of the Arabs desire to limit the circulation of estate within the family cycle, to which women were not believed to belong. More so they were in their own right considered as heritable property forming part of the estate.⁹¹ Therefore, Islamic law of inheritance developed to make a reform of those ancient rules and customs by cancelling and altering them to reflect the quality among the heirs in accordance with their natural positions as specified in the Holy Qur'an. The pre-Islamic system of inheritance continued at the beginning of Islam for some time, until when a major reform took place.

Inheritance Under the Jewish Law

The inheritance is patrimonial. The father—that is, the owner of the land—bequeaths only to his male descendants, so the Promised Land passes from one Jewish father to his sons. According to the Law of Moses, the firstborn son was entitled to receive twice as much of his father's inheritance as the other sons (Deuteronomy 21:15–17). But to make it very clear we say that As far as the Jewish law of inheritance is concerned therefore, there are four

Grounds of inheritance, viz;

a. Male descendant: He is son of the deceased and the son of his son,

How low so ever;

b. Male ascendant: he is the deceased father and his father's father, how

High so ever.

c. Male descendant of the deceased's father: He is full brother and his Half-brother from father's side.

(87)Idris S. op cit at ,p.15

(88)Ibid P. ix

(89)Idris S. op cit ,p.16

(90) Gibb H. A. R. et al Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, (1953), p.

(91)Idris S. op cit ,p.16; Qadri A. A. Islamic Jurisprudence in the Modern World, Taj Company, Delhi, (1986), p. 8

d. Male descendant of deceased's grand-father: He is full uncle and half Uncle of the Deceased.⁹² Therefore, as stated above, there is only one reason of inheritance under the Jewish law that is blood relationship which is also limited within the males only. The Females whether daughter, mother, sister or wife are completely Neglected from the deceased's property.⁹³ The Jewish law of inheritance also provides that;

i. If a father died and is survived by his sons and other relatives, it is only the sons who will inherit him, also among them, the first born son is entitled to double share of others, according to the rule of Primogeniture. But if the first born son agreed with his junior brothers upon equal distribution, he is allowed to do so. And there is no difference either first born son is a legal child or an illegitimate one.⁹⁴

ii. If any person died and is survived by his male and female children, only the male issue is entitled to inherit him, the female children are only entitled to maintenance up to the time when they are married or reached the adulthood period.⁹⁵

iii. If a Jewess wife died all her property is for her husband and no one can also inherit along with him whether she has issues from him or from previous husband. Equally, if her husband died before her, she will not inherit him at all.⁹⁶

iv. If a widow died, her property is for her sons; in their absence it will go to her daughters (in fact the only place where females are allowed to inherit); and if she died barren her father will inherit her; in his absence to the grandfather. On the other hand, if her son or daughter died she will not inherit him or her.⁹⁷

v. If a person died and did not leave behind any successor or ascendant then his collaterals kinship will inherit him. Up to their fifth issues, they will inherit according to the principle that the closest will exclude the remoter but after their fifth issue they will all share.

vi. In the absence of deceased's ascendants, descendants or collaterals, a member of the outside family will inherit the deceased's property, i.e. any person who puts his hands first will take the deceased's property for the period of five years, if any legal heir appears within the period, he will take the property, otherwise the first possessor will enjoy with the property.⁹⁸ These are some important rules of inheritance among the Jews, the followers of Musa (A.S). However, in the changing times of Prophet Musa (A.S.), daughters were permitted, with certain conditions, to inherit in default of sons and in preference to the agnates. It was stated under the Mosaic Law thus,

*“And thou shall speak unto the children of Israel saying
If a man dies and have no son, then ye shall cause his
Inheritance to pass unto his daughter, and if he has no
Daughter, and if he has no brethren, then and if his
Father has no brethren, and then ye shall give his
Inheritance to his father's brethren, and if his father
Has no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto
His kinsmen that is next to him of his family and he shall
Possess it”.*⁹⁹

(92) Lakhvi, S.B.H. AL Mirath: Justice Of Islam In The Rules Of Inheritance, Gullah Mahdi, Remala Khurd-okara, Pakistan, (2003); p. 2.

(93) Idris S, op cit p. 9.

(94) Ibid

(95) Al-ahkam Al-shar'iyyah, v. 2, Pp. 171-172.

(96) ibid

(97) ibid

(98) Al-Muqaranah wal-muqabalat P. 253; as quoted in Lakhvi op cit P. 4

(99) Mosaic Law, as quoted in Macnaughten, W. H. Principles and Precedents on the Moohoomnedan law, law Pub. Co., Katcheri Road, Lahore, (1978), P. 1

From the above discussion, we can conclude that there is no impartial and just distribution of the deceased estate under the Jews law of inheritance when a husband is allowed to inherit his deceased wife's estate and not vice versa. Also, where a son inherits his deceased mother but the mother does not or where male children inherit their father but the father is excluded to inherit them in the presence of their children. The role of the eldest son and the influence of the levirate are seen in various guidelines of inheritance among the Jews. The Jewish laws are believed to have been patterned to suit agricultural sedentary society, more significant, perhaps, is the notion of the relationship between the doctrines of God's chosen people and the inheritance rights. As stated above, under the Jews law daughters were excluded by sons and also widows and other females would have nothing from the property left by their deceased relation. It also gives the right of inheritance to an illegitimate child the same way it gives to a legitimate child.¹⁰⁰

The Revelation of Verses on Inheritance

The Islamic reforms repealed or rather amended the rules of inheritance and introduced the principles of equality among the sexes in accordance with their natural position. The rules which regulated the law of inheritance in relation to the estate of the deceased should devolved on those who, by reason of consanguinity or affinity, have the strongest claim to be benefited by it and in proportion to the strength of such claim, with harmonious distribution of estate among the dominants, in natural strengths of their claim. The elaborate provision under Islamic law, were made, where relations entitled to inherit and the shares they are inheriting have been categorically specified in the holy Qur'an. These provisions are contained in three verses of the Holy Qur'an viz; 4:11, 12 and 176. The right to inherit the deceased property have been recognized and guaranteed by the provision of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (S. A. W.), therefore adding a great deal of information and knowledge to the Qur'anic verses, dealing with principles of inheritance by his explanations and interpretations. The rotating point in the history of women's right of inheritance begins with the revelation of the Holy Qur'an chapter 4:7 which provides:

"From what is left by parents and those nearest

Related there is a share for men and a share for

Women whether, the property be small or large – a

Determinate share¹⁰¹.

The reason for the revelation of the above verse was complaint lodged with the Holy Prophet after the death of Aus Bin Thabit Al-Ansari who left behind his wife and two daughters. The two sons of his paternal uncle named Suwaid and Arfaja and in another report Qatadah and Arfaja took all his property leaving nothing to his widow and daughters. The widow complained to the Holy Prophet, who called them and enquire about the matter. They replied how we can give them when they do not fight against the enemies and defend our family. The Holy Prophet said to them go and wait I hope Allah will send a revelation about them, thereafter the verse was revealed. The Holy Prophet sent to them not to distribute the estate of Aus because Allah had given his daughters a part from his property. Later on the verses on inheritance were revealed. The Holy Prophet asked them to give the widow 1/8 and the daughters 2/3 and the remaining for them.¹⁰² It was also narrated that at this point in the history of the development of Islam and particularly after the battle of Uhud a lady who was the widow of one of the companions of the Holy Prophet by name Sa'ad bin Rabia who was killed at the battle of Uhud came to the Holy Prophet with her two daughters born to Sa'ad and said to him:

"Oh Allah's messenger these are daughters of Sa'ad

(¹⁰⁰) Ibid, P. 1

(101) Idris S. op cit, at p.19

(102) Lakhvi S.B.H. op. cit. PP. 8-9 As quoted from Tafsir al-Qurtabi vol. 5 p. 57 and AL Bukhârî, Muslim, Abu Dawood and Al Tirmidhi

*Bin Rabia their father Sa'ad Martyred with you in one
Of the battles, but their uncle seized their wealth and
Left nothing with them and there was no way they could
Be married without wealth. The Holy Prophet said to
Her 'Allah shall pass verdict on this' thereafter Allah
Revealed chapter 4 verse 11, the Holy Prophet sent to
Their uncle and ordered him to give two third to the
Daughters and one eighth to the mother and retain the
Residue".¹⁰³*

According to another report the Verses were said to have been revealed in respect of the case of Abdurrahman bin Thabit whose brother Hassan Sha'ir died and was survived by a wife called Ummu Kahhata and his five other sisters. His surviving male relations seized the entire estate. His wife complained to the Holy Prophet and the three verses on inheritance were revealed. The fundamental reforms were, as a result introduced in the Islamic law of inheritance¹⁰⁴. It presented fundamental reforms to the existing

Practices of inheritance. Marriage and patronage were introduced as additional grounds of inheritance in addition to blood relationship. Spouses, female, cognates, ancestors, master of manumitted slave etc. were all conferred with the right to inherit the deceased. Ability to bear arms was no longer a basis of inheritance. Females were no longer considered as forming part of the heritable estate, rather they were as well considered part of the family, and not alien element that should be denied inheritance out of the desire to limit the estate within the family circle. Presence of able male beneficiary was no longer an impediment that deprived other female, weak children and elderly male members from inheritance. No preference is accorded on account of seniority. Right of the deceased to make personal arrangement to incorporate or expand the beneficiaries is abrogated. Save for bequest which is now limited to the maximum of 1/3 of the net estate¹⁰⁵. The Hadith of the Holy Prophet being the next primary source after the Holy Qur'an further shed more light on these injunctions relating to the sharing of the estate among legal heirs. After the death of the Holy Prophet, many difficult problems related to inheritance of the father's father in inheritance of parents along with a spouse relict all of which meaningfully touches the shares of women. Consequently, the companions resort to the use of ijtiḥad.¹⁰⁶ Sociologically; Islamic law of inheritance reflects the structure of the family ties and the accepted social values and responsibilities within the Islamic community. Islamic law regards the right of inheritance as the consideration for duties of protection and support owed to the deceased during his lifetime, so that the Great the bond, the greater the right of inheritance. There is also a rule that the duty of a person to maintain his needy collaterals depends upon his right to inherit from them. Furthermore, under the religious perspective, Islamic law of inheritance enjoys the highest stage of inheritance between the Muslim Ummah from its enjoys the highest stage of inheritance between the Muslim Ummah from its strong religious significance. This is where the Prophet (SAW) says; the law of inheritance establishes half sum of knowledge, thereby, placing the principles of Islamic law of inheritance firmly as the divine guidance of Allah (SWT). Therefore, the principle if Islamic law of inheritance as a whole is more comprehensive, fearful and just and it is more consistent with time and Reason and good sense when compared with other ideologies. This is so because it gives right to those one that are excluded in other customs and ideologies to inherit from their deceased relatives' property and not only that it has given them priority over other ones that are recognized more before by fixing specific share for them. As we have seen in various customs and ideologies, the nearest agnate male inherits the deceased's property

(103) Idris S. op cit, at p.19

(104) Muhammad A. S. Op. Cit. PP. 14-15

(105) Idris S. op cit, p.19.

(106) Ibid, p. 20

to the exclusion of others including wives(s), daughter, younger male children, parents etc. but Islam transformed it to such an extent that it now mirrors and emphasized more on the immediate family of the deceased. The Holy Qur'an establishes mutual right of inheritance between a husband and his wife, his parents, his children whether male or females and whether matured or young even if they survived few minutes after the deceased death to the extent that when they were born, they just breath and cried and then died. Each of these heirs was prescribed fixed fractional shares.¹⁰⁷ The relations mentioned by the Holy Qur'an and the male agnates are the Ordinary legal heirs recognized under Islamic law of inheritance. Because, in Coulson, case the deceased may usually be survived by member of the above-mentioned group to whom his property may devolved. These heirs are, as well categorized by Islamic law of inheritance into inner and outer family.¹⁰⁸ The inner family constitutes all male agnates from the deceased person, whatever their degree of removal along with those particular relatives mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. Apart from these ones, all other ones that can inherit the deceased constitute the outside family and they can only inherit in the absence of the blood relations of the inner family.¹⁰⁹

Inheritance During the Early Period of Islam

It was in the middle of the above indeterminate and biased system of inheritance that Islam came. Islam felt and realized the need for radical changes in the affairs of mankind, which inter alia includes the law of inheritance.¹¹⁰ The pre-Islamic system of inheritance of facilitations, relationship, adoption and oath of brotherhood and patron continued even at the beginning of Islam until when a major reform took place by the Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SWA) initiated a temporary system of inheritance based on Islamic fraternity called, "mu' akhah". Mu'akhah is inheritance based on brotherhood and, in effect, means that when a Makkah immigrant died having no blood relatives in Madinah to inherit him, his Madinise brother in faith will inherit him. However, the military compact was allowed to continue as a ground of inheritance but was later eliminated by the provision of the Holy Qur'an relating to inheritance. After the verses of inheritance were revealed the prophet (SAW) added a great deal of information and knowledge by his explanations and interpretations of those verses, which leads to the development of Islamic law of inheritance. During the arrival of Islam, the Islamic rules of inheritance were introduced through a divine revelation to remedy the apparently unjust and unequal treatments of the entitled heirs are supposed to be accorded with the right to inherit from the deceased. By virtue of their relationship have been removed and in some areas have been modified by Islamic law of inheritance.¹¹¹ The main object of Islamic law of inheritance is therefore the material provided for surviving dependents and deceased relatives for the family group bound to the deceased by mutual ties and responsibilities stalks from blood relationship, marriage and clientage. And a more equitable and fair principles of inheritance have been introduced and adopted by Islamic law, thereby safeguarding the absolute right of women in diverse dimensions as mothers, sisters, daughters and wives(s) and all those categories of persons that were excepted by the pre-Islamic rules of inheritance, to inherit and benefit from the property of their deceased relatives. Initially all the above stated grounds of inheritance continue to apply in the distribution of the estate of a deceased person. Islam however introduced reform in a transitory manner. The first phase of the transition was introduced after hijrah (migration of the Holy Prophet from Mecca to Medina); this period witnessed introduction of inheritance on the basis of religious brotherhood referred to as Mu'akhah. Muslims that emigrated from Mecca to Medina in other words known as Muhajirun established a link of brotherhood with the people of Medina who are referred to as the helpers in other words known as Ansar to the extent that they became like blood brothers and they started to

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Coulson, N. J op cit P. 31

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Ibid P. 31

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Coulson N. J op cit P. 31-2

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Qadri A.A. op cit at p. 424

⁽¹¹¹⁾ Coulson, N. J; op cit pp. 31-32

inherit each other's property if one of the two died.¹¹² In fact, this period was a period when the emigrants were indeed cut off and stopped from dealing with their blood relations that believed but did not emigrate.¹¹³ To this end the holy Qur'an provides thus

*"Those who believed and adopted exile, and fought for
The faith, with their property and their persons, in the
Cause of God as well as those who gave (them) asylum
And aid, these are (all) friend and protectors one of
Exile, ye owe no duty of protection to them until they
Come into exile"*¹¹⁴

Therefore by virtue of the above verse, Abdallah Y. A. in his commentary indicated that the Emigrants and the helpers became like blood brothers and were so treated in matters of inheritance during the period when they were cut from their kith and kin.¹¹⁵ It has been submitted that the wisdom of this legislation was to encourage Muslims to migrate with a view to foster and inject in them a sense of unity, love, sympathy and to alter them into one solid force.¹¹⁶ Here again one can hardly see where the women right to inherit is recognized or become relevant.¹¹⁷ The second phase of the transition witnessed the abrogation of inheritance on the basis of Islam brotherhood. This was perhaps on account of the cessation of the circumstances of predominant kindnesses meted on Muslims which subsided on account of Islam gaining more ground and recognition as a force reckoned with leading to mutual pacts entered into with the Mecca's rulers, the effect of which was to allow Muslims resident in Mecca that did not migrate to Medina to deal with their Muslims brethren that migrated to Medina. This stage crystallized with the liberation of Mecca.¹¹⁸ The first revelation in this regard upholds the strength and priority of blood relationship without making reference to the relationship established between the Muhajirun and the Ansar.¹¹⁹ The Holy Qur'an provides thus: "Kindred by blood have prior rights against each other in the book of Allah."¹²⁰ Thereafter, inheritance on the basis of Islamic brotherhood among the Muhajirun and the Ansar was abrogated.¹²¹ In its abrogation the Holy Qur'an provides;

*"Blood relations among each other have closer
Personal ties in the Decree of Allah (regarding
Inheritance) than (the brotherhood of the believers
And Muhajirun)"*¹²².

The abrogation of the Islamic fraternity as a basic of inheritance was followed by the abrogation of adoption and defense pact as ground of inheritance and in their place definite rules were ordained to govern inheritance and, in their place, definite rules were ordained to govern inheritance.¹²³

*Blood relations among each other have closer
Personal ties in the Decree of Allah (regarding*

(112) Ibid P. 11 As quoted from Tafsir al-Tabri vol. 8 PP.277-288

(113) Idris S. op cit at ,p.17

(114) Abdallah Y. A. The Holy Qur'an Text, Translation and Commentary, Dar-al Arabia, Beirut Lebanon, chapter 8 verse 72, (1968), PP. 433 – 434

(115) Ibid P. 434

(116) Keffi S. U. D. op. cit. P. x.

(117) Idris S. op cit ,p.17

(118) Ibid at p.17

(119) ibid

(120) Qur'an ch.8 : 75

(121) Qur'an ch.8 : 75; as quoted by Idris S. op cit p.17

(122) Ibid as quoted by Idris S. op cit ,p.17

(123) Idris S. op cit p. 18

*Inheritance) than (the brotherhood of the believers
And Muhajirun).⁶⁸*

The abrogation of the Islamic fraternity as a basic of inheritance was followed by the abrogation of adoption and defense pact as ground of inheritance and in their place definite rules were ordained to govern inheritance.¹²⁴

Inheritance Between the Hindus

Under the Hindu laws/customs, only sons have the right of inheritance excluding daughters.¹²⁵ Even among the sons the rule of primogeniture is applied, meaning where the deceased have many sons, the eldest son have referential claim over the estate of their deceased father, excluding the younger sons.¹²⁶

Inheritance Under the Hebrew/Christian Law

At first, Christianity did not have its own inheritance traditions distinct from Judaism. With the accession of Emperor Constantine in 306, Christians both began to distance themselves from Judaism and to have influence on the law and practices of secular institutions. From the beginning, this included inheritance. The Roman practice of adoption was a specific target, because it was perceived to be in conflict with the Judeo-Christian doctrine of primogeniture. As Stephanie Coontz documents in *Marriage, a History* (Penguin, 2006), not only succession but the whole constellation of rights and practices that included marriage, adoption, legitimacy, consanguinity, and inheritance changed in Western Europe from a Greco-Roman model to a Judeo-Christian pattern, based on Biblical and traditional Judeo-Christian principles. The transformation was essentially complete in the middle ages, although in English-speaking countries there was additional development under the influence of Protestantism. Even when Europe became secularized and Christianity faded into the background, the legal foundation Christendom had laid remained. Only in the era of modern jurisprudence have there been significant changes. When it comes to the issue of inheritance, the Hebrews and the Christians shares the same system because Prophet Jesus (A. S.) was given both the Old Testament (Torah) which was the nine parables of prophet Moses (A.S) and the New Testament which together constitute the Bible and Biblical laws of prophet (Jesus). As such, the present writer will refer to the Old Testament of prophet Moses (A.S) in respect of the system of inheritance among the Hebrews and Christians. Inheritance among the Hebrews mainly follows the lines of ancestry inside the family, from the rule, it follows that males are favored to females as heirs since the line of ancestry is patrilineal. On the other hand, it may also index the inter-family relations and the direction of social change. As stated above, the role of the oldest son under the Hebrews law of inheritance and the effect of the levirate are seen in various rules of inheritance. In the beginning the eldest son almost inherited the entire property of his deceased father. But at a later stage, he was given only a double share and sons living within the father's house hold were allowed to inherit from him, while those who had moved out of the house would not be allowed to inherit. While husbands preserved the right to inherit their deceased wives are not allowed to inherit from their deceased husbands. It seems, therefore, possibly that wives did not inherit because it was needless, they were cared for by their children or through the levirate rules. Moreover, it was in the changing times of Moses (A.S) that daughters were permitted, with certain conditions, to inherit in default of sons and in preference to the agnates. It was stated under the Mosaic Law thus;

*“And thou shall speak unto the children of Israel saying
if a man dies and have no son, then ye shall cause his
Inheritance to pass unto his daughter, and if he has no
Daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance to his
Brethren. And if he has no brethren, then ye shall give*

(124) Qur'an Chap. 4 : 7

(¹²⁵) Idris S. op cit, p.10

(¹²⁶) Primitive laws, pp. 88-89; as quoted in Lakhvi op cit at p.5.

*his inheritance to his father's brethren, and if his father
Has no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto
His kinsmen that is next to him of this family and he
Shall possess it".*¹²⁷

After the death of Prophet Musa (A.S), prophet Isah (A. S) was sent to the
Children of Israel with the Holy Bible which essentially contains only moral

And spiritual guidelines and does not contain any rule concerning legal issues of Inheritance.¹²⁸ This
is mentioned in the Holy Bible,

*"Do not mis-understand why I have come, it is not to
Cancel the Law of Moses and the warning of the
Prophet. Now I come to fulfill them, and to make every
Law in the Book will continue until its purposed is
Achieved."*¹²⁹ Dr. Suleiman Marqus also states,
*"That a man came to prophet Isah (A.S) and requested
To him that he (the prophet) should order to his brother
To give him half of the estate of their deceased father.
The prophet (A.S) replied, "No body sent me as a Judge
To distribute your estate among you".*¹³⁰

On the other hand, by the provisions of the Holy Bible, Numbers 27:8-11, if there are Sons, they
should inherit everything and the daughters get nothing. The daughters only have the opportunity of
inheriting their deceased parents in the absence of son and, even then, she is required to marry into a
family or her father's tribe.¹³¹ Hence, under the Christian law, it is clear that there is no express
provision of just and equitable rule of inheritance because they have to rely on the Mosaic Law,
which law appears to be inadequate and unjust for its discriminatory nature.¹³²

Inheritance under the African Customs with Particular Reference to Yorubas and Igbos

With reference to Nigerian Customary Laws, there is still a full of hullabaloo of shortfalls and
injustice with respect to inheritance.¹³³ Particularly, the out dated norms of discrimination against
women in their scheme of inheritance. It is beyond dispute that in Nigeria save for the Muslim
women, there is no any religion or custom that gives women a definite share of inheritance in her
deceased father's, husband or even child's estate talk less of treating them on equal footing with their
male counterpart. At best under some customs they are given the right to care, maintenance and
accommodation in their deceased relation's estate. Where their right to inherit is recognized, they are
subjected to discrimination and inequality in favor of their male counterpart.¹³⁴ For example, under
the Benin customary law the eldest Idris surviving male child is given the exclusive right to inherit
his father's Igiogbe-the house in which he lived, died and was buried.¹³⁵ Whereas in most part of
the Northern Nigeria the traditional position in most of the non- Muslim customary rules of
inheritance upon the demise of her husband, the wife(s) may be allowed to use the portion of land
which she had been cultivating and is only entitled to continue to live in the room or hut which she

(¹²⁷) Mosaic law as quoted in Macnaughten, W. H. op cit p.1

(¹²⁸) Lakhvi op cit, p.4.

(¹²⁹) Matthew 5 v 17-18.

(¹³⁰) Marqus, S. "Al-Mudkhallil Al-qanoniyyah", Jordan, p. 238; as quoted in Lakhvi op
cit, p.5.

(¹³¹) In Idris S. op cit at p. 10.

(¹³²) Pindiga op cit p. 4.

(¹³³) Idris S. op cit at p. 10

(¹³⁴) ibid

(¹³⁵) Uwaifo v. Uwaifo (2004) all FWRL pt. 229, at p. 808-813; as quoted in Idris S. op cit

was living at the lifetime of her husband, of course, with a condition that she must remain there as a member of the family, she may re-wed a member of the family where she is still young or she may just stay to look after her children. Whichever, is the case once she decides to stick to the family of the husband, she retains the right to continue to stay in matrimonial home and also continue to cultivate the portion allotted to her.¹³⁶ However, she is not allowed to sell or transfer it to strangers and, where she decides not to remain in the husband's family, she loses all her rights of inheritance.¹³⁷ On the other hand, in all circumstances, the husband who survives his wife is entitled to inherit whatever his wife acquired through her efforts¹³⁸ when she was alive, to some extent and in some customs, to the barring of her family or even her children. Uwaifo-by most African customary rules of inheritance, the tribal feeling provided an individual member of the family to accumulate wealth and form united family with the exclusion of females in inheritance and power of nature of the deceased's estate. For instance, under the old Yoruba rules of inheritance, the elder son inherits the whole estate of the deceased father to the exclusion of others; and he inherits including all wives of his father but excluding his own mother. This is called the ancient Yoruba rule of inheritance of "Idi-Igi".¹³⁹ Under the Yoruba customs, the two recognized types of inheritance i.e. Idi-igi and Ori Ojori are the distinct traditional rules of inheritance. The former is to the effect that the estate of the deceased is shared equally per the number of the wives he possessed, while under the later rule the deceased's estate is shared equally per the number of children. In fact, this is the refined and reformed customary rule of inheritance among the Yoruba's because the ancient rule is that the eldest son inherits the property including his late father's wives, but excluding only his own biological mother, to the exclusion of all the remaining heirs. In respect of therefore the Supreme Court held in the case of *Akinnubi vs. Akinnubi* thus,

"It is a well settled rule of native law and customs of The Yoruba that a wife could not inherit her husband's Property. Indeed, under Yoruba customary law, a Widow under intestacy is regarded as part of the estate of her deceased husband to be administered or Inherited by the deceased's family".¹⁴⁰

And under the ancient Igbo rules of inheritance, females neither inherit from their parent's side nor from their husband's side. Under the Igbo customary Rule of inheritance (Oli-ekpe) the male child inherits the deceased's property to the exclusion of females, whether wives or daughters. Moreover, Igbo Women were not allowed to inherit from their deceased father's estate, according to their ancient custom.¹⁴¹ It has been observed that in the Hausa customs of Northern Nigeria, females were allowed to inherit but are restricted not to inherit any landed property because they were deemed not to belong to the families of the father's side. They are deemed as the property of another family, i.e. they more belong to the husband's side than of their parent's family side.¹⁴² We however submit that with growing enlightenment in Islamic legal provisions with regard to inheritance this is no more the practice. For women married under the Matrimonial Causes Act, it has been submitted that either of the spouse can inherit from each other even where no will is made. The author was however, quick

(136) Idris S. op cit at p. 11.

Uwaifo v. Uwaifo (2004) all FWRL pt. 229, at p. 808-813; as quoted in Idris S. op cit

(137) Ibid p.11.

(138) Ibid p.11.

(¹³⁹) Ibid

(140) (1997) 2 NWLR p.144

(141) Akinrimisi B. Women's Inheritance Rights, the Nigerian Situation and Options available at all levels,

Shelter Rights Initiative, 2001; as quoted in Idris S. op cit at p.11

(142) Pindiga op cit at p. ix

to point out that it is better for the couples to write their will in order to avoid a situation where the law has to interfere with their affairs. He further pointed out that a testator can disinherit his/her spouse depending on how he or she feels at the time of preparing his/her will.¹⁴³ This still left the position of women highly fluid and uncertain since her husband has the discretion of bequeathing something or not bequeathing anything in her favor; moreover it is clear that the matrimonial causes act does not contain any specific provision on the inheritance right of the spouse. Such right is derived under the respective administration of estate laws of the states.¹⁴⁴ However for women married under the Act whose husband did not make a will; their position has been described as complex and indefinite as the position varies from state to state. Issues such as the customary law of the husband, area where the property is situated and whether there are other relations such as children, parents and siblings are taken into consideration. In deciding what happens to the property of the deceased and ultimately what the wife gets.¹⁴⁵ In such circumstances the laws on administration of estate for each state applies.¹⁴⁶ For example the Administration and Succession (Estate of Deceased Persons) Law, 1987 for Enugu, Ebonyi and Anambra states provides thus: -

(i) If a man dies leaving a wife without children, parents, brothers or sisters, such a wife inherits his estate after all debts, funeral expenses as well as all other charges have been settled. Where the deceased person leaves brothers and sisters of the half blood, the wife interest in the estate only last until her death or when she re-weds, whichever comes first? Thereafter the half brothers and sisters take over the estate.

(ii) Where wife and children are left, the wives take 1/3 and the children take 2/3 of the estate, however, the wife's interest in the estate only last until her death or when she re-weds, whichever comes first. Thereafter the children take over the wife's share.

(iii) Where the deceased left a wife and parents, brother and sisters, the wife takes 2/3 and the other defendants take 1/3. The wife's interest in the estate only last until her death or when she re-weds, whichever comes first. Thereafter the other defendants take over the wife's share. Under the administration of estate law 1959 applicable to Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and the old Bendel states the position is almost the same replicated under different phrases. It provides thus: -

(i) Where a man dies leaving a wife without children, parents, brothers or sisters, his property will be inherited by the wife absolutely. The same is the situation where a woman dies leaving a husband without an issue and other blood relations.

(ii) Where a man dies leaving a wife and children (without parents, brothers or sisters) the wife will take all his personal belongings unconditionally. The remaining assets will be shared between the wife and the children. The wife will take 1/3 and the children will take 2/3. The wife's 1/3 share only last until her death. Thereafter the children take over the wife's share.

(iii.) Where a man dies leaving a wife, parents, brothers, sisters but no children, the wife inherit ½ of the man's estate absolutely. The other half is for the parents or brothers and sisters.

(iv) If a man dies leaving children but no wife, the children take everything absolutely (but after all charges, debts and expenses must have been settled). With all due respect these laws are far from perfect and do not resolutely solve the problems of women's right of inheritance. It seems more focused towards ensuring the right of a wife while neglecting the rights of other categories of female relations. Even where provision is stated, it is done in a general way, specific shares were not provided neither does the laws provision regarding the specific shares for mother and father, brother and sisters (both of full and half-blood). Likewise, there is no clear rule on priority where so many

(143)Akinrimisi B. at p.2

(¹⁴⁴)Idris S. op cit at p.12

(¹⁴⁵)ibid

(¹⁴⁶) Ibid p. 12

relations survived the deceased. More prominently even the effort to guarantee to the wife is not absolute, her power to own and dispose the property is restricted and whatever happens at the end of the day the property returns back to the family of her deceased husband. Such is the disgraceful condition the non-Muslim woman finds herself regarding inheritance. With all the criticism put forward against the Islamic law of inheritance provision for women we are yet to see any system or plan that comes close to Islam in defining a clear-cut position for women's right of inheritance.¹⁴⁷

Summary & Conclusion

1. Before Islam, inheritance among the Arabs was confined only to able male relations. Daughter, widows, mothers, minors, and incapable persons have no share in the inheritance.
2. The modern practice in Europe was motivated towards giving an individual broader option to decide what should happen to his property after death, the option permits him to strip property even to animal, such as cats, dogs, etc. if he so wished.
3. Inheritance among the Arabs during that period of Dark Age was limited only to able male relations. Daughters, Widows, Mothers, Minors and incapable persons had no share in the inheritance of their deceased relations. Women were regarded as among the chattels capable of being inherited.
4. The right to inherit the deceased property have been recognized and guaranteed by the provision of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (S. A. W.), therefore adding a great deal of information and knowledge to the Qur'anic verses, dealing with principles of inheritance by his elucidations and interpretations.
5. Under the Hindu laws/customs, only sons have the right of inheritance excluding daughters
6. When it comes to the issue of inheritance, the Hebrews and the Christians shares the same system because Prophet Jesus (A. S.) was given both the Old Testament (Torah) which was the nine parables of prophet Moses (A.S) and the New Testament which together constitute the Bible and Biblical laws of Prophet (Jesus).

References

- Abdallah, Y. A. **The Glorious Qur'an Translation and Commentary**, Darul Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, 1938.
- Abdallah, Y. A. **The Holy Qur'an Text, Translation and Commentary**, Darul Arabia, Beirut, Lebanon, 1968.
- Abdul, H. A. **Al-Muqaddimaful Izziyyah (Arabia Text)**, at-Taucheed Publishing Company, Akoka Lagos.
- Abu, M. **Al-Risalah (Arabic Version)**, Kano, Nigeria.
- Akinrimisi, B. **Women's Inheritance Rights, the Nigerian Situation and Opinion** available at all levels, Shelter rights initiative.
- Coulson, N. J. **Succession in the Muslim Family**, Cambridge University Press, Great Britain, 1971.
- Gibb, H. A. R. **Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam**, 1953.
- Gurin, M. A. **An Introduction to Islamic Law of Succession**, A. B. U. Press Limited, Zaria, Nigeria, 1982.
- Hamidullahi, A. A. **Family Structure in Islam**, Academy Press Limited, Lagos, 1982.
- Imam Malik. **Al-Muwatta**, Diwan Press, London, 1972.
- Imam Muslim, **Kitab al-Fara'id**.
- Khalif, S. H. & Najah, A. **al-Mawarith**, 2nd Edition Dar Cebaau, Beirut, 1980.
- Khan, S. A. **How to Calculate Inheritance**, Good Woods, Books, New Delhi, 2005. Macnaughten, W. H. **Principles and Precedents on the Moohoomnedan Law**, Law Publishers Company, Ketchey Road, Lahore, 1978.
- Muhammad, A. S. **Mawarith Fish Shari'atul Islamiyyah ala Dhaul Kitab was Sunnah**, Mecca, 1979.
- Muhammad, O. A. **Encyclopedia for Seerah**, Vol. 2, London, 1970.

(147)Idris S. op cit, pp.13-14

- Pindiga, U. E. **Practice Guide to the Law of Succession (Mirath) in the Shariah**, Tamaza Publishing Company Limited, Kongo-Zaria, 2001.
- Qadri, A. A. **Islamic Jurisprudence in the Modern World Taji Company**, Delhi, 1982.
- Salah-Uddin, B. H. **Justice of Islamic Rules of Inheritance**, Gullah Mahdi, Remala Khurd-Okara, Pakistan, 2003.
- Sayyid S. **Fiqhus-Sunnah**, Vol. 2.
- Sheikh K. U. D. **The Holy Qur'an Text, Translation and Commentary**, Darul Arabia, Beirut, Lebanon, 1968.
- Umar, A. **Ahkamul Mawarith Fi Shari'atul Islamiyyah**, 3rd Edition, Lexandria, 1960.
- Verma, B. R. **Mohammedan Law**, 5th Edition, Delhi Law House, Alkahabad, New Delhi, 1978.
- Yusuf, Z. K. **Impediment to Inheritance under Islamic Law**, Ataturk University, Turkey.



The Relevancy and Admissibility of Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* Crimes in Islamic Law

Dr. Usman Abubakar Mustapha¹, Dr. Muhammed Alamin Deribe² & Safiya Shettima³,

¹, NEDC North East Development Commission Head Quarters, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.

²Department of Private Law

³Department of Public Law

Faculty of law, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper attempts to seek answer to whether Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) evidence is relevant and admissible to *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes in this contemporary world where criminals are more advanced and sophisticated in their activities. The paper which appraises DNA evidence as corroborating evidence and as a tool for exonerating innocent suspect in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, compares the concept of reasonable doubt in sharia and statistical certainty in relation to DNA evidence. As in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, before a punishment is inflicted, the crime must be established by either testimony or confession. The DNA evidence, when it is properly collected with all the necessary conditions and precautions observed is not prone to those factors. Therefore, it can be said that DNA evidence places a suspect in a crime scene more accurately than testimonies and confessions. The study concludes that contemporary Muslims jurist are unanimous as to the admissibility of DNA evidence to corroborate another independent evidence. Therefore, DNA evidence plays a vital role in Islamic criminal justice system. Hence, it is submitted that DNA evidence is relevant and admissible to both *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes.

Keywords

Hudud, *Qisas*, evidence, Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and shari'a

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

In Islamic criminal law, before a piece of evidence is accepted in *Hudud* or *Qisas* crimes, that evidence must be relevant and admissible. *Hudud* which is plural of *hadd* means fixed or prescribed punishment, they are the type of crimes mentioned either in the Holy Qur'an or the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and their means of proof and punishments are clearly spelled out in sharia. Example of *Hudud* crimes are *Zina* (adultery and fornication), *Qadhf* (deformation of character), *Sariqah* (theft), *Shurub Al- Khamr* (intoxication), *Hirabah* (highway robbery), *Riddah* (apostasy) and *Baghye* (rebellion or treason). While *Qisas* means retaliation or legal vengeance as described in the Holy Qur'an. They include, murder, manslaughter and grievous bodily injuries. The standard of proof in both *Hudud* and *Qisas* are made very high and difficult. High demands are made in respect of testimony, confession, expert opinion and circumstantial evidence (as the case may be) in the proof of guilt or innocence of an accused person.

Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) on the other hand is a scientific method of identification based on persons' unique genetic make-up, it has all the necessary genetic information needed to identify a person with absolute certainty. DNA evidence is a process of scientific comparison of biological materials (such as blood, sweat, semen, saliva or hair tissue) found in the crime scene with that of the

suspect or victim. This process of comparison always provides clue to determine fact in issue with absolute certainty. DNA evidence is used in criminal cases to identify suspect with incredible accuracy when biological materials exist either at the crime scene, body of the victim or suspect. It is also used to exonerate an innocent suspect mistakenly accused of or convicted of crime; it can equally be used to identify victims' remains. DNA evidence can also be used to corroborate another independent evidence to either convict or acquit a suspect. Therefore, DNA evidence will play a significant role in Islamic criminal law since it can identify a suspect with incredible accuracy and places him at the crime scene accurately without doubt. This poses a question as to whether DNA evidence is relevant and admissible to *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes in this contemporary world where criminals are more advanced and sophisticated in their activities.

It is against this background that this paper examines the and admissibility of DNA evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. The paper appraises DNA evidence as corroborating evidence and as a tool for exonerating innocent suspect in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. The paper also compares the concept of reasonable doubt in sharia and statistical certainty in relation to DNA evidence. Argument is equally made that DNA evidence have a vital role to play in proving or disproving *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. However, despite its significance to Islamic criminal law, DNA evidence is not a conclusive proof, it is subject to statistical analysis to issues such as identical DNA profile, fake DNA profile, contamination of evidence, laboratory personnel and equipment amongst others. The paper concludes that DNA evidence if properly identified, collected, analyzed, documented and preserved and strictly adhere to its conditions, can be relied upon to inflict both *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments. It further concluded that DNA evidence also have the strength to exonerate with certainty an innocent suspect mistakenly accused of or convicted of a crime.

Nature of DNA Evidence under Islamic Law

DNA is a double helix structure in cell nuclei that carries the genetic information of all living organisms; it is a method of scientific identification based on persons' unique genetic makeup.¹⁴⁸ It also means a patterned chemical structure of genetic information with the DNA in a biological specimen (such as blood, semen, sweat, saliva or hair tissue) to determine whether the person is the source of the specimen.¹⁴⁹ It equally means a type of acid that is the main constituent of the chromosomes in all living organisms, DNA is responsible for passing on hereditary characteristics, it also have all the necessary genetic information needed to identify a person.¹⁵⁰ DNA also means deoxyribonucleic acid that carries genetic information in the cell and which is capable of self-replication and synthesis of ribonucleic acid RNA. It consists of two long chains of nucleotides twisted into a double helix and joined by hydrogen bonds between the complementary bases adenine and thymine or cytosine and guanine. The sequence of nucleotides determines individual hereditary characteristics.¹⁵¹ DNA is the fundamental fabric of life that carries the genetic instruction for making living organisms. The main role of DNA is the long-term storage of information and it is often compared to a set of blueprints, since DNA contains the instructions needed to construct other components of cells, such as proteins and RNA molecules. The DNA segments that carry this genetic information are called genes, but other DNA sequences have structural purposes, or are involved in regulating the use of this genetic information.¹⁵² Chemically, DNA is a long polymer of simple units called nucleotides, which are held together by a backbone made of alternating sugars and phosphate

¹⁴⁸ National Research Council, *The Evolution of Forensic DNA Evidence*, (National Academy Press, Washington DC, 1996) P. 12.

¹⁴⁹ Garner B A, *Black's Law Dictionary*, (7th edition, West Group Publishing Co. USA, 1999) Pp. 551-552.

¹⁵⁰ Sindair J, *BBC English Dictionary*, (Harper Collins Publishers) P.332.

¹⁵¹ Ash-Sharif A H et-al, DNA: Can it be a Sole Proof to Establish Paternity and the Crime of Zina? World Fatawa Management and Research Institute, Islamic Science University of Malaysia, 2005, Available at

<<[<<http://www.islam_online.net/servlet/satellite?pagename=islamonline_english_ask_scholar/fatwa=1119503545892>>](http://www.islam_online.net/servlet/satellite?pagename=islamonline_english_ask_scholar/fatwa=1119503545892)>>

¹⁵² Shaheed F M, et-al, 'DNA Sequence Reconstruction Based on Genetic Algorithm' *Malaysian Journal of Computer Science*, Vol. 21 (1) 2008, P.13.

groups. Attached to each sugar is one of four types of molecules called bases. The bases are adenine (A), thymine (T), cytosine (C) and guanine (G). It is the sequence of these four bases along the backbone that encodes information.¹⁵³ This information is read using the genetic code, which specifies the sequence of the amino acids within proteins. Within cells, DNA is organized into structures called chromosomes and the set of chromosomes within a cell make up a genome. These chromosomes are duplicated before the cells divide, in a process called DNA replication.¹⁵⁴

DNA typing or DNA profiling as it is now known, was first described in 1985 by an English geneticist named Alec Jeffreys. Dr. Jeffreys found that certain regions of DNA contained DNA sequences that were repeated over and over again next to each other. He also discovered that the number of repeated sections present in a sample could differ from individual to individual. By developing a technique to examine the length variation of these DNA repeat sequences, Dr. Jeffreys created the ability to perform human identity tests.¹⁵⁵ These DNA repeat regions became known as VNTRs, which stands for variable number of tandem repeats. The technique used by Dr. Jeffreys to examine the VNTRs was called restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) because it involved the use of a restriction enzyme to cut the regions of DNA surrounding the VNTRs. This RFLP method was first used to help in an English immigration case and shortly thereafter to solve a double homicide case. Since that time, human identity testing using DNA typing methods has been widespread. The past 20 years have seen tremendous growth in the use of DNA evidence in crime scene investigations as well as paternity testing.¹⁵⁶ DNA evidence is used in criminal cases for purposes such as linking a suspect to a crime, exonerating an innocent suspect, identifying victims remains and corroborating less reliable evidence.

Under Islamic law, DNA profiling is a process of identification of the Divine Code that Almighty Allah had hidden in the form of genes in human cells. Like all other inventions, DNA invention also raised many questions about its implementation, validity, reliability and objectivity.¹⁵⁷ Synonyms of DNA evidence are DNA profiling, DNA testing, DNA typing and Genetic Fingerprinting. In Arabic it is known as *Al-Başmah Al-Wirathiyah*. It is used in the identification of parentage, forensic sciences, treatment and diagnosis of diseases. In criminal cases, it is used to link a suspect to a crime, exonerate innocent suspect and corroborate another evidence.¹⁵⁸ The sequence of base pairs varies from person to person and the relatives of person is known by identifying the matching of base pairs. The loci of variable number tandem repeats (VNTRs) are closer to near relatives.¹⁵⁹

In the term DNA fingerprinting, the relation of finger did not specifically mean finger in its direct translation, but it is as common as other body parts and is used only to describe the uniqueness of a person's identity as was done in the past by the fingerprints. Sample for DNA test can be taken from any body part. The Arabic word *Al-Başmah Al-Wirathiyah* is a word to word translation of Genetic Fingerprinting.¹⁶⁰ Dr Aḥmad Mukhtar describes *Al-Başmah Al-Wirathiyah* as:

*Analysis of DNA from body tissues or body fluids so that a person can be identified*¹⁶¹

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Yashpal Singh and Mohammad Zaidi, "DNA Test in Criminal Investigation, Trial and Paternity Disputes", (Alia Law Agency, Allahabad, 2006) P. 101.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Mohsen El-Hazmi A F, 'Genetical Aspects of Research and Medical Services in Islamic Countries' *Saudi Medical Journal*, 2004, Vol. 2 Issue 23, P.239.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Adrian Linacre William et-al, *An Introduction to Forensic Genetics* (Chichester West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2007) P. 12.

¹⁶⁰ Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, *Takmilah Al-Ma'ajim Al-Arabiyyah* (Baghdad: Wazarah Al-Thaqafah wa Al-Alam, Democratic Republic of Iraq, 1979-2000) P.361.

¹⁶¹ Aḥmad Mukhtar Abd Al-Ḥamid Umar, *Mu'jam Al-Lughat'l Arabiyyah Al-Asirah*, (Alim Al-Kutub, Cairo, 2008) P. 214.

Medically, it is defined as a technique used especially for identification (for forensic purposes) by extracting and identifying the base-pair pattern of an individual's DNA.¹⁶² DNA evidence under Islamic law is classified as expert evidence by some contemporary Muslim scholars.¹⁶³ While others classified it as circumstantial evidence.¹⁶⁴ DNA evidence is the process of scientific comparison of tissues (blood, sweat, saliva, semen or hair) found in the crime scene and that of the suspect to see whether it could provide possible clue to determine the fact in issue. Expert evidence is the testimony which is given in relation to some scientific (including DNA), technical or professional by persons qualified to speak with authority as a result of his special knowledge or experience in the subject. This ultimately assist the Court to determine a fact in issue.¹⁶⁵ While circumstantial evidence is evidence based on inference and not on personal knowledge or observation.¹⁶⁶ It is one or more incidents which has or has not taken place in a way that makes it possible to determine with certainty that an event or events have or have not occurred, it is an impact or sign which create the status of certitude that certain incidents did or did not occur.¹⁶⁷ When *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes are not adequately and substantially evidenced but indication exist as to the probability of the commission of the offence is most likely through the use of science and technology, resort is made to DNA evidence to see if this method would provide possible clues to determine the matter.

DNA evidence is not a direct evidence from a witness who sees or hears something, it is a process of scientific comparison of tissue found in the crime scene and that of the suspect with a view of placing the suspect to the crime scene. DNA evidence is significantly valuable for investigating crimes such as homicides, sexual offences, robbery, theft etc. this is because blood, saliva, sweat or hair tissue may be inadvertently left behind by either the perpetrator or the victim, and in sexual offences seminal fluid, hair or sweat tissue may be left behind. Experts can use these bits of evidences inadvertently left behind to reconstruct what happen and who did it.¹⁶⁸ For instance, if the blood found in the suspects' car contains the victim's DNA, it is a strong piece of physical evidence linking the victim to the car. Likewise, if the suspect leaves behind a mask, empty water bottle, cigarette filter etc. at the crime scene, samples of sweat or saliva tissue can be collected and the resulting DNA profile compared to samples from the parties in question.¹⁶⁹

After DNA collected from the crime scene is analyzed and preserved, a DNA molecule from the suspect is disassembled and selected segments are isolated and measured.¹⁷⁰ Then the suspects' DNA profile is compared with the one derived from the crime scene to see whether the two match. If a conclusive non-match occurs, the suspect will automatically be discharged. But if a conclusive match occurs, a statistical analysis is performed to determine the probability that the sample of the crime scene came from another person with the same DNA profile as the suspect. Judges use these statistical results in determining whether a suspect is guilty or innocent.¹⁷¹ A match resulting from DNA evidence represent only a statistical likelihood. Thus, the result of DNA evidence is not considered

¹⁶² Hussain A L and Muhammad M, 'Importance of DNA Evidence in Perspective of Islamic Jurisprudence' *Research Journal, Al-Basirah*, Vol. 5, Issue 1, 2005 P. 20.

¹⁶³ Shaham R, *The Expert Witness in Islamic Courts: Medicine and Craft in the Service of Law*, (University of Chicago Press, 2000) P.173.

¹⁶⁴ Nwai N F, 'The Admissibility of DNA Profiling Under Islamic Law of Evidence' *Wahana Akademik Jurnal*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2002) Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sungai Petani. P. 126

¹⁶⁵ Anwarullah, *The Islamic Law of Evidence*, (second edition, Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, 2006) P. 79.

¹⁶⁶ Garner B A, *Black's Law Dictionary*, (8th Edition, West Group Publication, 2004) P. 576.

¹⁶⁷ Ambali M A, *Practice of Muslim Family Law in Nigeria*, (Tamaza Publishing Company, Zaria, Kaduna, 1997) P.128.

¹⁶⁸ NFSTC, *A Simplified Guide to DNA Evidence*, (National Forensic Science Technology Center (NFSTC) Largo Florida, 2013) P.2.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ National Research Council, *DNA Technology in Forensic Science*, (Washington DC, National Academy Press, 1992) P. 70.

¹⁷¹ Robertson B and Vignaux G A, *Interpreting Evidence: Evaluating Forensic Science in the Courtroom*, (Wiley Press, New York, 1995) P. 34.

absolute proof of identity. However, a DNA non-match is considered conclusive because any variation in DNA structure means that the DNA sample have been drawn from different source.¹⁷²

To further substantiate the strength of DNA evidence, an example is hereby illustrated. The process of identification and collection of such evidence starts at the investigation stage. Each time when a crime occurs and direct evidence is absent, investigation will be centered on whether or not there is a presence of any kind of forensic evidence at the crime scene. This is because such presence would definitely indicate probability of whether or not a crime has occurred. It would also indicate the extent of a suspect's involvement and guilt. In investigations of illicit intercourse cases, the investigation officer will collect evidence at the crime scene and send suspects (and victims) to approved hospitals for medical examination as soon as possible. This would allow related and unaltered samples to be discovered and obtained at the earliest possibility. At the hospital, the doctor will, first of all, collect relevant samples from the suspect. These samples will then be put in a sealed and labeled container to avoid any tampering of proof. Based on his expertise and professional findings, the examining doctor will then write a report. The investigation officer will next send these samples to the chemist at the chemist department. Upon receiving these samples, the chemist will then open the seal of each container and conduct related tests on the samples. After completion of each test, he will place each sample into the original container. Each original container will then be placed in a new container and sealed as proof that specific tests have been conducted on these samples. Thereafter, the chemist himself will write his own report containing his findings based on all conducted tests. Lastly, these samples will be placed back in the evidence room awaiting trial day. As a whole each time when an investigation is completed and the DNA evidence gathered and perceived to be credible, the investigation team would then decide on whether or not there is a strong case to proceed. In weighing this possibility, the investigation team would have to decide on whether or not all evidence gathered, including that of DNA evidence, are corroborative enough so as to indicate a very high degree of probability of the suspect's deliberate involvement in the crime. If so, the case will then be forwarded to the prosecution team for prosecution purpose.¹⁷³

During prosecution, any DNA evidence will be adduced in court through oral testimonies of the investigation officer, the medical officer and the chemist. Documentary evidence in forms of reports on findings by the experts will also be adduced. The prosecution would have to prove two things. Firstly, the prosecution would have to establish that the chain of evidence remains firmly intact throughout and that the credibility and integrity of the DNA evidence is not compromised. Secondly, it must also be proven that the DNA samples carry high corroborative values in proving the accused's guilt.¹⁷⁴

In proving the existence of chain of evidence, the prosecution must prove, through the oral testimony of the investigation officer, that the said sample has been properly gathered, deposited in container and sealed at the crime scene. If the nature of the case involves recovery of sample through medical examination (such as in illicit intercourse and sodomy cases), the prosecution must simultaneously prove through the oral testimony of the medical officer that the sample has been properly recovered from the body of the victim and that it has been properly deposited in container and

sealed during the medical examination.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, it must be proved that the sealed sample is brought back to the investigation office and kept safe in the evidence room. It must be further established that the sealed sample is later brought to the chemist at the chemist department. The prosecution must also prove through the oral testimony of the chemist that the sealed container containing the said sample has been received and opened and that the sample is brought out to be tested. Once the sample has been tested and its findings recorded, it must be proven that the said

¹⁷² National Research Council, Op-Cit footnote 23

¹⁷³ Bin-Muhamad M M, et-al, 'Qarinah: Admissibility of Circumstantial Evidence in *Hudud* and *Qisas* Cases' *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, MCSER Publishing, Rome Italy. Vol. 6 No. 2, 2015, Pp. 147-148.

¹⁷⁴ Robertson B et-al, Op-Cit footnote 24

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

sample is placed back into the original container and thereafter the container containing the tested sample is placed into yet another container and resealed by the chemist.¹⁷⁶ Last but not least, the prosecution must also prove that the new sealed container containing the said sample later finds its way to the Court to be presented as an exhibit on trial day with the seal of the new container still intact and un-breached.¹⁷⁷ In addition to proving the above chain of evidence, the prosecution is also under the responsibility of proving, through oral testimonies and the experts' reports, that all DNA samples tendered during prosecution carry high corroborative values which collectively points to the accused's guilt.¹⁷⁸

Generally speaking, every stage of movement of the said sample together with their respective dates and times must be carefully and accurately recorded and established during trial. Only then would such forensic evidence be successfully adduced and its integrity established in Court. And at the end of the trial, an accused will only be convicted upon proof of a firm corroboration between the forensic evidence and other available evidence, thus proving beyond reasonable doubt that the accused has deliberately committed the crime as charged.¹⁷⁹

This clearly shows the long process of how DNA evidence are collected at the crime scene, analyzed by experts and finally presented in Court as evidence. The manner in which every detail, accuracy and credibility would have to be established. This is the tedious process that every DNA evidence has to go through before such evidence can be adduced and later becomes relevant and admissible during criminal trial.

DNA as Circumstantial Evidence under Islamic Law

Under Islamic Law of evidence, evidence derived from DNA profiling techniques would also fall under the subject of circumstantial evidence (*Qarinah*) according to the majority of Muslim scholars.¹⁸⁰ This is because the judge can only infer the existence of a fact in issue. For instance, linking a suspect to a crime, but this would not prove the existence of the fact directly. However, this does not mean that DNA profiling is not admissible under Islamic law of Evidence.¹⁸¹ In fact, the Prophet (PBUH) and the companions had practiced and used some forms of scientific techniques in their judgment. These techniques are comparable with DNA profiling of today.¹⁸²

Therefore, it can be said that, there was actually an acknowledgement of scientific application and experiment during the time of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). If we are to compare it to the present time, we may conclude that DNA evidence is admissible under Islamic Law. Denying the use of such a powerful forensic tool in investigations and criminal trials seems to close the door for the enforcement of Almighty Allah's commands and doing justice in general, especially in this era when offenders are more advanced in their criminal tactics and techniques. This type of evidence though circumstantial, could also corroborate other evidence as suggested by some contemporary Muslim jurists, and this could also definitely strengthen any case.¹⁸³ The most important condition in relying on *Qarinah* such as DNA profiling is that it must at least attain the

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Bin-Muhamad M M, et-al, Op-Cit footnote 26.

¹⁷⁸ Muḥammad Anid Al-Arwadi, *Al-Baṣmah Al-Warasiyah* (Beirut: Dar Al-Fatwa fi Al-Jamhuriyah Al-Lebononiyah, Beirut University, 2002). P.4.

¹⁷⁹ Bin-Muhamad M M, et-al, Op-Cit footnote 26.

¹⁸⁰ Muḥammad Anid Al-Arwadi, Op-Cit footnote 31.

¹⁸¹ Nwai N F, Op-Cit footnote 17.

¹⁸² For instance, Caliph Ali (RA) had used the experimental techniques to prove an alleged semen stain was not a real semen stain in rebutting the claim of a woman that she had been raped. It was reported that during the time when Caliph Umar Al-Khattab (RA) was the Caliph, a woman who was frustrated by one Ansar man, had stained a portion of raw egg on some parts of her dress and on her legs and then went to see the Caliph. The Caliph then asked a few women for their opinion and they seemed to agree on the finding that they were stains of semen on her body and dress. The man was arrested but he denied the allegation. Caliph Umar then consulted Caliph Ali. He then asked someone to bring hot boiling water and pitched her stained dress with the hot water and they all realized that it was an egg rather than semen.

¹⁸³ Nwai N F, Op-Cit footnote 17.

level of statistical certainty or beyond reasonable doubt. The inference that could be derived from the results of DNA profiling indeed, could achieve that level of standard of proof.¹⁸⁴

It is important to note that, DNA is a powerful investigative tool because, with the exception of identical twins, no two people have the same DNA. In other words, the sequence or order of the DNA building blocks is different in particular regions of the cell, making each person's DNA unique. Therefore, DNA evidence collected from a crime scene can link a suspect to a crime or exonerate one from suspicion. DNA can also identify a victim through the DNA of relatives if a victim's body cannot be found. For example, if experts have a biological sample from the victim, such as a bloodstain left at a crime scene, the DNA taken from that evidence can be compared with DNA from the victim's biological relatives to determine if the bloodstain belongs to the victim.¹⁸⁵ DNA evidence in the form of blood, sweat, saliva, hair, and semen are often recovered from crime scenes and can be crucial to the investigation of sexual assaults and other violent crimes. For example, during a sexual assault, biological evidence such as hair, sweat, semen, blood, or saliva can be left on the victim's body or at the crime scene. In addition, hair and fiber from clothing, carpet, bedding, or furniture could be transferred to the victim's body during an assault. This evidence is helpful in proving that there was physical contact between an assailant and a victim.¹⁸⁶ DNA properly collected from the victim, crime scene, or suspect can be compared with known samples to place the suspect at the scene of the crime. If there is no suspect, however, a DNA profile of the crime scene can be entered into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), which allows agencies to match DNA profiles with other profiles entered into local, state, and national databases to identify a suspect or link serial crimes. When investigating sexual assault or rape cases, it may be necessary to obtain an elimination sample, such as a blood or saliva sample, from the victim's partner to account for all of the DNA found on the victim or at the crime scene.¹⁸⁷

Obviously, DNA profiling is a complicated process. Each sequential step involved in generating a DNA profile can be carried out in a variety of ways. Although they are all straightforward, and factors affecting them have been documented, each step is performed differently in different laboratories.¹⁸⁸

Relevancy of DNA Evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* Crimes

Under Islamic law, before a piece of evidence is accepted in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, that piece of evidence must be relevant to the fact in issue. In regards to the relevancy of DNA evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, the Islamic *Fiqh* Council in its 16th session in 2002, issued the following guidance:

1. It is religiously allowed to use DNA fingerprinting in forensic interrogations to prove crime which has no definite penalty in Islamic law (Sharia) (Avoid punishment if there is any doubt, as doubt should always be used for the sake of the accused), this will lead to justice and to safety of the community, as the criminal will be punished and the innocent will be freed from guilt, which is one of the most important goals of Sharia.¹⁸⁹
2. There is no legal objection in using DNA evidence in criminal investigations/trials and in considering it as evidence in the crimes that do not obligate the Court to carry out the prescribed punishment...¹⁹⁰

This guidance issued by Islamic *Fiqh* Council shows that DNA evidence is absolutely regarded as relevant in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes as long as the *Khadi* will only inflict *Ta'azir* punishment on the offender instead. In other words, a *Khadi* in cases of *Hudud* and *Qisas* can admit DNA as evidence

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Turman K M, *Understanding DNA evidence: A Guide for Victim Service Providers*, (National Institute of Justice NIJ Washington DC, US Department of Justice, 2001) Pp. 1-2.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Nawi F N, Op-Cit footnote 17.

¹⁸⁹ Decree No. 7 of the Sixteenth Session of the Islamic Fiqh Council. Quoted in Al-Subail U, Al-Basmatul Wirathiyah, (Available at Maktabatul Shamila CD) Version 3.5, 2002, P. 28

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

to inflict *Ta'azir* punishment where he deems it fit. Therefore, going by the above, it can be submitted that DNA evidence is relevant to *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes if all the necessary precautions and conditions of DNA evidence are fulfilled.

Furthermore, the relevancy of DNA evidence could also be argued on the ground of its corroborative value. It is well known that *Qarinah* can only be ruled as relevant if the evidence is adduced in its strongest form, i.e. strong circumstantial evidence.¹⁹¹ The strength of *Qarinah* is determined not only by looking at every piece of evidence individually, but also by weighting its corroborative value collectively. Likewise, it is argued that DNA evidence will only become relevant in court once its corroboration is established. As it is uncorroborated DNA evidence would have less evidential value in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. This is clearly in line with the relevancy of strong circumstantial evidence as emphasized and agreed upon by Ibn Qayyim¹⁹² and other scholars.

Admissibility of DNA Evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* Crimes

All the contemporary Muslim jurists are unanimous as to the relevancy of DNA evidence to both *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, they are also unanimous as to the use of DNA evidence in exonerating innocent suspect. However, they differ as to the admissibility of DNA evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. The first view which is held by the majority of the contemporary Muslim scholars are of the opinion that DNA evidence alone cannot be relied upon to inflict *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishment. They argued that; In order to properly discuss the question of using DNA as evidence in Islamic criminal trials, it must first be understood that there are three types of punishments in Islamic law i.e. prescribed punishment (*Hudud*), retaliatory punishment (*Qisas*) and discretionary punishment (*Ta'azir*). Prescribed and retaliatory punishments such as death sentence, stoning married adulterer, flogging the unmarried fornicator, amputation etc. these punishments are explicitly stated in either the Holy *Qur'an* or the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), a judge cannot modify these punishments, reduce them or increase them, whenever a person is found guilty of a crime that has a prescribed punishment in Islamic law, the prescribed punishment must be carried out. This type of punishments can only be carried out on the basis of confession or testimony of witnesses, these punishments cannot be applied on the basis of DNA evidence, because these punishments are Almighty Allah's right on people.¹⁹³ Likewise, the means of proving these crimes have already been prescribed by sharia (i.e. testimony and confession). With DNA evidence, there is always a chance for a mistake in the collection of the sample or in the analysis, therefore it is better to rely on credible witnesses or voluntary confession than on DNA evidence, it is worth noting that, even when a person clearly confesses to committing a crime, then retracts his confession, his retraction will be accepted. He will not be subjected to the prescribed punishment for the crime he originally confessed to have committed. Since the prescribed punishment cannot be applied to him, his punishment will either be modified to a lesser one at the judge's discretion (*Ta'azir*) or he may be released without punishment.¹⁹⁴ They also argued that, *Hudud* are the crimes on which Almighty Allah has declared legal punishment as The boundaries of Allah *Hududu'llah*,. Islam has defined specific legal evidences to prove such crimes, and once a crime is proved by the predefined standard of evidences, a *khadi* or Muslim subjects cannot forgive the proved crime and the divine punishment becomes compulsory to be implemented.¹⁹⁵ Although such crimes can be proved by DNA test or other ordinary forensic or laboratory methods, however, the divine penalty cannot be sentenced, but the nature of crime should be descended to the supplementary rebuke-able (*Ta'azir*) crime. For example, if four eyewitnesses did not observe the penetration during fornication, the divine penalty could not be sentenced. However, if DNA proves that the fornication occurred between the said two persons, the

¹⁹¹ Bin-Muhamad M M, et-al, Op-Cit footnote 26.

¹⁹² Ibn Qayyim. *Turuq Al Hukmiyyah fi Al Siyasah Al Syar'iyah*, (Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1995) P. 23

¹⁹³ Al-Shuaybi S N, *DNA Analysis as Court Evidence in Criminal Cases*, (2003) Available at <<http://www.islamiclaw_criminallaw_andjudicialmatters5598.com>> accessed on 2018.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Bambale Y Y, *Crimes and Punishments Under Islamic Law*, (Malthouse Press LTD, Ikeja Lagos, 2003) P.26.

judge may sentence supplementary rebuke to save the society from such destructive actions.¹⁹⁶ It is also possible that this rebuking punishment (*Ta'azir*) may be equal to or near equal to the divine penalty, as it happened in the decision made by Caliph Umar, who sentenced the rebuking punishment equal to the divine penalty to a woman, who came with the pregnancy, while she was unmarried. This was not a divine penalty, because the Islamic principle is that the divine penalties are repulsed by the doubt.¹⁹⁷

They equally argued that in *Qisas*, the position of DNA evidence in crimes involving retaliatory punishment or Divine legal vengeance belongs to the rights of human beings and they are allowed to forgive their rights. In such cases, DNA and other forensic evidences are accepted to ensure the sacredness and to preserve the lives of people. But in the absence of divine legal evidences, supplementary rebuking punishment should be sentenced.¹⁹⁸ All other crimes that are not discussed in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* are left to the opinion of the judge and ruler and such crimes are liable to supplementary rebuke. DNA test and all other evidences are used in such cases not only to prove the crime but also to sentence *Ta'azir* punishment. Therefore, in all types of crimes, DNA test is used as legal evidence, however, the nature of every crime makes its importance more or less i.e. the weight to be attached depends on the crime and the penalty becomes different because of the nature of crime.¹⁹⁹ However, DNA test when used with the combination of other evidences gathers more strength.²⁰⁰

Similarly, the Islamic *Fiqh* Council in its sixteenth session held at the headquarters of Muslim World League in *Makkah* examined the remarks submitted by some of its members concerning the issue of DNA as evidence in *Hudud* crimes, the council decreed that:

“... *There is no legal objection in using DNA evidence in criminal investigations/trials and in considering it as evidence in the crimes that do not obligate the Court to carry out the prescribed punishment...*”²⁰¹

Going by the above Decree issued by Islamic *Fiqh* Council, DNA evidence cannot be solely relied upon to establish offences involving prescribed punishments i.e. *Hudud* crimes. But there is no legal objection in using DNA evidence in *Hudud* crimes to inflict *Ta'azir* punishment where the judge deems it fit.

The Islamic *Fiqh* Council in its 15th summit held on 11-13 March 2006 passed a resolution concerning the admissibility of DNA evidence to *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, the council decreed that:

“*The crimes liable to divine Legal vengeance (Qisas) and divine legal penalties (Hudud) should not be decided only on the basis of DNA evidence. However, while deciding crimes other than Hudud and Qisas, the judge can get help from the DNA evidence and if necessary, can impose penalties*”²⁰²

Going by the above fatwa, it can be asserted that DNA evidence is recognized as relevant and admissible in Islamic law. However, a judge is not allowed to use it as sole and only evidence to inflict *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishment. This is because there is always chance for a mistake either in the identification, collection, analysis, or preservation of sample which may create doubt in the minds of the Court. Furthermore, DNA evidence even if properly identified, collected, analyzed and preserved cannot tell the Court whether a suspect committed a crime intentionally or not. Therefore, according to Islamic *Fiqh* Council, it cannot be relied upon to inflict *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments.

¹⁹⁶ Shaima A A, Dawr Al-Başmah Al-Warasiyyah fi Al-Ithbat Al-Nasab, (2012), Available at <<<http://www.shaimaatalla.com/vb/showthread.php?t=14012>>> Accessed on 18/12/ 2018

¹⁹⁷ Akbar Junaid, ‘Islamic Legal Position on the Use of DNA in Hudud and Qisas Penalties’ *Peshawar Islamicus Bi-Annual Research Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2010, P. 8.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Hussain A L et-al, Op-Cit footnote 15.

²⁰¹ Decree No. 7 of the Sixteenth Session of the Islamic *Fiqh* Council. Quoted in Al-Subail U, *Al-Basmatul Wirathiyyah*, (Available at Maktabatul Shamila CD) Version 3.5, 2002, P. 28

²⁰² Islamic *Fiqh* Academy, *Fiqh Academy kay Faysalay* (IFA Publications, New Delhi, 2013) P. 216.

Furthermore, *Al-Majm Al- Fiqhi Al-Islami Makkah*, in its 16th conference, held from 5-10 January 2002, passed resolutions about the use of DNA evidence and relating to its importance to criminal cases. This institute resolved that:

*“There is no legal prohibition, from an Islamic perspective, for the use of DNA evidence in deciding the criminal cases. It can be used in the crimes other than Hudud or Qisas, as Sharia forbids sentencing divine legal penalties because of doubts. The use of DNA evidence will assure justice in the society, crime ratio will decrease, criminals will be punished and those who are not guilty will be exculpated and this is one of the main objectives of Islamic Law”.*²⁰³

From the above resolution, it is clear that this college of collective jurisprudence believes in the issuance of divine legal penalties based on eyewitness testimony and confession, however, supplementary rebukes (*Ta'azir*) may be sentenced depending upon the strength of the DNA evidence. The group of scholars also acknowledged the importance of DNA evidence in this present time, they asserted that; with the use of DNA evidence, justice will be achieved, crime ratio will reduce, the guilty will be punished and the innocent will be exonerated. These are all in line with the objectives of Islamic criminal law. The Islamic *Fiqh* Council while allowing the use of DNA as evidence in sharia further recommends that:

- i. State should forbid DNA testing except on judge's orders and performed in a state laboratory; private laboratories are forbidden from conducting such tests because of the great danger and harm.
- ii. each state should have a committee on DNA tests which should include legal scholars, physicians and administrators to supervise and approve the result of such tests.
- iii. there should be a precise mechanism to prevent deceit, cheating, contamination or human error in such laboratories, so that results are compatible with reality. The accuracy of these laboratories needs to be confirmed.
- iv. the number of genes used for a test should be sufficient, in the opinion of specialists, to overcome any doubts about the accuracy of the results.²⁰⁴

The second view which is held by the minority of contemporary Muslim scholars are of the opinion that DNA evidence if properly collected and strictly adhere to its precautions and conditions can be relied upon to inflict both *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments. They argued that, based on the views of some scholars, circumstantial evidence is used to establish offences that fall within the prescribed and retaliatory punishments (i.e. *Hudud* and *Qisas*) for instance, they have relied on the following circumstantial evidences in establishing prescribed punishment:

- i. Punishing the unmarried woman who became pregnant without husband for the offence of *Zina* without evidence.
- ii. In *Li'an* cases, punishing the woman who refuse to take the multiple oath of imprecation for the offence of *Zina* without evidence.
- iii. Punishing the person whom the smell of alcohol is perceived from his mouth or vomits it for the offence of intoxication without evidence.

In analogy to the above mentioned issues, in which some scholars applied prescribed punishment based on circumstantial evidence without testimony of witnesses or confession, it would be said that DNA evidence as strong circumstantial evidence can also be relied upon in establishing *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes provided the necessary conditions and requirements of DNA test are met.²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, in order to ensure the validity of DNA evidence in Islamic law, some scholars and

²⁰³ A Committee of Scholars, *Qararah Al-Majma' Al-Fiqhi Al-Islami*, Mecca, from 1st to 17th Conference (Mecca: Majma' Fiqhi Al-Islami, 2004) Pp. 343-345.

²⁰⁴ Mohsen A.F. El-Hazmi, *Genethical Aspects of Research and Medical Services in Islamic Countries*, Human Genetic Diseases, Dr. Dijana Plaseska-Karanfilska (Ed.), King Saud University, Riyadh Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2011). P.282. Available at: <<<http://www.intechopen.com/books/human-genetic-diseases/genethical-aspects-of-research-and-medicalservices-in-islamic-countries>>>. see also Islamic Fiqh Academy, Op-Cit footnote 55.

²⁰⁵ Al-Subail Umar, *Al-Basmatul Wirathyyah*, (Available at Maktabatul Shamila CD Version 3.5) Pp. 45-46.

medical specialist on DNA provide some conditions that must be achieved before introducing DNA results in criminal trials, the most important of these conditions are as follows:

- 1) That the DNA testing laboratory must be owned by the state or must be under direct control and supervision of the state. With all available scientific and laboratory equipment recognized both locally and internationally in the field.
- 2) That all those who work in the laboratory for DNA analysis must be qualified and be certified by relevant authorities. In addition to that, they must be knowledgeable and experienced in that field.
- 3) That each and every step of the DNA analysis should be documented from the collection of specimens to the transfer of results to ensure the safety and integrity of the sample and be sure of the validity of the results.
- 4) That the DNA analysis should be done in different laboratories and in multiple ways with a greater number of amino acids in order to be certain and ensure the validity of the results.²⁰⁶

Accordingly, if all these conditions are satisfied, *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishment can be inflicted on the bases of DNA evidence alone.²⁰⁷ Furthermore, according to some scholars, DNA evidence alone cannot be relied upon to inflict *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments except in cases of rape. These scholars argued that, in cases of rape DNA evidence alone can be relied upon to inflict punishment on the accused person. They relied on the views of the majority of Muslim scholars in respect of *Hudud* and *Qisas* but differ in cases of rape. This is because, according to them, the act of forcing itself is criminal in nature and it requires no particular method of proof. Therefore, the khadi in this case is free to rely on DNA or any kind of evidence to establish guilt of an accused person. They also argue that rape is a crime falling under the category of *Hirabah*, which includes offences of robbery, harassment, terrorism or use of force. *Hirabah* does not require four witnesses to prove the offence, circumstantial evidence of DNA and other relevant tests may be sufficient to prosecute the accused person.²⁰⁸ Sharia also provides another way of dealing with rape cases which falls under the law of wounds (i.e. grievous bodily injuries) and this does not require the testimony of four witnesses. In fact, according to Maliki school, in cases of wounds, evidence of a single woman accompanied by the oath of the victim is sufficient to convict a suspect in cases of *Qisas* for bodily injuries.²⁰⁹ therefore, according to them, in cases of rape DNA evidence alone accompanied by the victim's oath suffice.

The first view which is held by the majority are of the opinion that DNA evidence alone cannot be solely relied upon in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes to inflict punishment. The second view which is held by the minority are of the opinion that DNA evidence alone can solely be relied upon in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes to inflict punishment as long as certain conditions are fulfilled. Other scholars are of the opinion that DNA evidence cannot be relied upon in *Hudud* and *Qisas* but can be relied upon in cases of rape to inflict punishment.

Going by the above arguments, it is therefore submitted that in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, DNA evidence that is properly identified, collected, analyzed, documented and preserved with all the precautions and conditions observed can have the strength of strong Circumstantial evidence. Strong circumstantial evidence according to Maliki school of thought can be relied upon to inflict *hadd* punishment.²¹⁰ Therefore, if DNA evidence attains the level of statistical certainty, it becomes strong Circumstantial evidence, and *hadd* punishment can be inflicted on that basis. This is because, in

²⁰⁶ Ibid. Pp. 45-46.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. P. 28.

²⁰⁸ Naik Zakir, Can we Consider DNA Test in Cases of Adultery, Fornication and Rape Instead of Four Witnesses? 2012, Available at <<<https://www.youtube.be/1qQrj4SFXU>>> accessed on 27/11/2020.

²⁰⁹ Audah 'Abd Al-Qadir, *Criminal Law of Islam*, Vol. I, 1st Edition, (S Zakir Aijaz Translation, Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, 2005) P. 157.

²¹⁰ Punishing the unmarried woman who became pregnant without husband for the offence of *Zina* without direct evidence. In *Li'an* cases, punishing the woman who refuse to take the multiple oath of imprecation for the offence of *Zina* without direct evidence. Punishing the person whom the smell of alcohol is perceived from his mouth or vomits it for the offence of intoxication without evidence. Ibn Qayyim. *Turuq al Hukmiyyah*, Dar Al-Fikr, Beirut, 1995,

addition to the argument of the contemporary minority Muslim scholars. Testimonies and confession are the major means of proving and disproving facts in *Hudud*, *Qisas* and offences involving *Ta'azir* punishment. Testimony and confession are made by human beings, which is prone to forgetfulness, falseness, biasness, and other human shortcomings. DNA evidence that is properly collected with all its conditions and precautions observed is not prone to forgetfulness, falseness, biasness, and other human shortcomings. It is for these reason therefore, DNA evidence can be said to be admissible in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes as long as the said evidence reaches the level of statistical certainty.

The Concepts of Reasonable Doubt and Statistical Certainty in DNA Evidence

Reasonable doubt is a term frequently used and understood, but cannot be easily defined. It is not a mere possible doubt; because everything relating to human affairs are prone to some possible imaginary doubt.²¹¹ It is that state of a case, which, after the entire comparison and consideration of all the evidence, leaves the minds of judges in that condition that they cannot say they feel an abiding conviction to a moral certainty of the truth of the matter.²¹² Reasonable doubt means the doubt that prevents one from being firmly convinced of an accused persons' guilt. Or the belief that there is a real possibility that the accused person is not guilty. Beyond reasonable doubt is the standard used by a judge to determine whether a suspect is guilty or not. In deciding whether guilt has been proved beyond reasonable doubt, the judge must begin with the presumption that the accused person is innocent.²¹³

Statistical certainty on the other hand, is the type of statistics usually done by the Court when appraising DNA evidence to determine its relevancy and admissibility or otherwise. It is a situation where after a conclusive match occurs between a crime sample and a suspect's sample, a statistical analysis is performed by the judge to determine whether the crime sample came from another person other than the suspect. This means that one can have identical DNA profile with another person, this usually happens in cases of identical twins. Thus in the case of *Donald Smith Vs The United States*²¹⁴ Donald Smith was arrested for murder of a school teacher, a DNA saliva test using a cigarette filter that was found in the car used during the attack was used to carry out forensic testing, forensic DNA evidence showed that the DNA found at the crime scene belonged to Donald Smith: relying on the incriminating evidence, he was arrested, throughout the legal accusation, Donald constantly declared his innocence. However, there was also some CCTV footage which showed he was at the crime scene, and this also weakens his plea of innocence in the eyes of the Court. Donald Smith informed the Court that it was his twin brother Ronald Smith that was guilty of the crime. This made all the DNA forensic investigations somewhat redundant as Donald did have an identical twin Ronald, who shared his exact genetic makeup. Relying simply on DNA evidence would have proved inconclusive, it could have been either of the twins as their DNA profile was indistinguishable. It is only when the judge is statistically certain that the DNA profile found in the crime scene came from the suspect that conviction will be secured in criminal trials. Therefore, a match resulting from DNA is only a statistical likelihood and punishment is not inflicted unless the said DNA evidence reaches the level of statistical certainty. Furthermore, other issues such as contamination of evidence, fake DNA profile, laboratory personnel and equipments etc. are equally considered by the judge before admitting DNA evidence.

Generally, before *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments are inflicted, the evidence adduced in Court must be beyond reasonable doubt, otherwise punishment is suspended because of doubt.²¹⁵ Also, before DNA evidence is admissible in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, the evidence must be subjected to statistical analysis to issues such as identical DNA profile, fake DNA profile, contamination of evidence etc. It is when the Court is satisfied that the DNA evidence reaches the level of statistical certainty before

²¹¹ Schumm D A. *Evidential Foundations of Probabilistic Reasoning*, (Wiley, New York, 1994) P. 16

²¹² *Commonwealth Vs Webster*, 59 Mass. (5 Cush.) 295, 320 (1950) (Per Lemuel Shaw, J.)

²¹³ Garner B A, Op-Cit footnote 2. P. 1272.

²¹⁴ 884 F. 2d 209 (9th Cir. 2008)

²¹⁵ Naseef A O, *Encyclopedia of Seerah*, (Vol. II, The American School Trust, London, 1982) P. 776.

it will be considered as evidence in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. A question now arises as to whether statistical certainty in relation to DNA evidence reaches the level of reasonable doubt in criminal cases to secure conviction? When DNA evidence is properly identified, collected, analyzed, documented and preserved, with all its conditions adhered to and reaches the level of statistical certainty, it can be said that, that DNA evidence reaches the level of reasonable doubt in order to prove guilt or innocence of an accused person. This is because, subjecting DNA evidence to statistical analysis in the first place is a step to eliminate doubt before tagging the piece of evidence as admissible or otherwise.

The Role of DNA as Corroborating Evidence in *Hudud* and *Qisas* Crimes

Corroboration means a confirmation or support by additional evidence or authority; it equally means formal confirmation or rectification.²¹⁶ Corroboration in criminal trials means the supporting of evidence by another independent evidence to give it a strength of conviction. The textual foundation of corroboration in sharia can be traced to the hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) where He said:

*If I wish to stone somebody for the offence of Zina without being proved, then I would stone a woman who arouse suspicion from the way she speaks, her appearance, and because of the person who enter her house.*²¹⁷

This hadith is used by the scholars who do not accept *Qarinah* to suggest that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Himself had discouraged the use of *Qarinah*. However, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stressed that in the absence of proof, the availability of such circumstantial facts should not be used as a proof in the case of *Zina*. But if the case has been proved by independent evidence such as testimony, confession or pregnancy, then such circumstantial evidence can be used to corroborate the evidence of either the testimony, confession or pregnancy as the case may be.²¹⁸

It is therefore submitted that, DNA evidence that has withstood the stringent processes of identification, collection, transfer, analysis, documentation and preservation of sample, with all the conditions adhered to is indeed corroborative and strong in the eyes of sharia. Hence, such evidence may indeed become relevant and admissible under the principle of strong circumstantial evidence as approved by the contemporary scholars.

It is important to note the dual roles played by DNA evidence in Islamic criminal law. First of all, the corroborative strength of such evidence would enable Sharia Courts to convict the accused for offences involving *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments. This is in line with arguments of the Muslim scholars which approve convictions of *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments based on strong *Qarinah*.²¹⁹ If the evidence corroboratively and cumulatively proves the accused person's guilt beyond reasonable doubt. Alternatively, if the Court, based on such corroborative evidence, senses a slight doubt in the case of the prosecution, the Court may still convict the accused person to a lesser degree offence which carries *Ta'azir*. These are the important roles played by DNA evidence and strong *Qarinah* in different degrees of convictions which may carry different punishments i.e. from *Hudud* and *Qisas* punishments to lesser ones such as *Ta'azir*.²²⁰

In cases of *Hudud*, DNA evidence can be used in Islamic Courts as supporting evidence in the absence of witnesses or confession, however, it cannot be the sole and only evidence to prove a huge crime like *Zina* according to majority of scholars which entails inflicting severe punishment on the criminal. The reason for not accepting DNA as sole and only evidence is that it cannot tell the Court

²¹⁶ Ganer B A, Op-Cit footnote 2. P. 348

²¹⁷ Khan M M, *Sahih Al Bukhari, English Translation*, (5th Edition, Kazi Publications, New Delhi, 1984, Vol. VIII, Kitab Al Muharibin), Pp. 558-559.

²¹⁸ Ramlee Z, *The Role of Al-Qarinah (Circumstantial Evidence) in Islamic Law of Evidence: A Study of the Law in Malaysia, With Reference to the Rules and Principles of English Law*, Ph.D. Thesis, 1997, P. 93.

²¹⁹ Zaidan A K, *Nizamul Qada'I*, (Al-Aany Printing Press, Baghdad, 1984)

²²⁰ Bin-Muhamad M M, et-al, Op-Cit footnote 26.

whether the one who committed the offence did it willingly or unwillingly be it the man or the woman.²²¹ Therefore, DNA evidence according to them is not a sufficient proof to establish the crime of *Zina*; it must be corroborated by other proofs, because the significance of DNA evidence depended crucially upon what else is known about the suspect. Had there been other evidence (for example to show that there is confession by the offender or that reliable witnesses testified to that effect) then the case might have been compelling. In the light of this, a suspect should not be charged solely on the basis of a match between his DNA profile and the DNA found at the scene of a crime, unless the judge may use the DNA evidence to inflict *Ta'azir* punishment instead. This is because Sharia principles are based on certainty and nothing should be left to risk or doubtfulness when it comes to establishing an important issue such as crimes involving prescribed punishment.²²² Similar view was taken by a Court of law in the case of *Mst Siani Vs The State*²²³ where the court held that where no direct positive evidence was laid by the prosecution to substantiate a charge of *Zina*, the expert evidence of a doctor alone (i.e. DNA evidence) was not sufficient to base such a conviction, at best the said medical evidence could only serve as a piece of corroborative testimony, but the same by itself could not be made the foundation of conviction.

Similarly, In a recent ruling, the Council for Islamic Ideology (CII) of Pakistan, a country whose justice system is influenced by Islamic Law, declared that:

*“DNA evidence could be used as primary evidence in a rape case, but that it could not stand alone as proof of guilt and must be accompanied by additional forms of evidence (such as the need for a confession or eyewitness testimony from four male witnesses)”*²²⁴

Sheik Salih Al-Sheik the President of the Courts of Summary Justice in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia stated that

*The probative value of DNA testing in Saudi Courts is that of strong circumstantial evidence rather than the decisive proof. However, where strong circumstantial evidence supports the results of DNA testing, then the probative value of the combined evidence is even stronger than that of oral evidence.*²²⁵

Therefore, DNA evidence as well as hereditary evidences cannot be considered as independent legal evidence on their own, thus if DNA is to be considered as evidence that is supposed to establish a crime, then it must be supported by a clear legal proofs such as witnesses or confession.²²⁶ Going by the above fatwa, it can be submitted that DNA evidence if properly identified, collected, analyzed, documented, preserved and corroborated by another independent evidence, can have the strength of conviction in both *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. But alone by itself cannot have the strength of conviction according to majority of contemporary Muslim scholars. This is because there may be a chance for a mistake either in the collection, analysis or preservation of sample which creates doubt in the mind of the judge.

²²¹ Ash-Sharif A H, Op-Cit footnote 4.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ PLD (1994) FSC at 212

²²⁴ Council for Islamic Ideology, *DNA Test Can't Be Primary Evidence in Rape Cases*, The Nation, Pakistan, 2013. Available at

<<[<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/24_sep_2013/dna_test_can't_be_primary_evidence_in_rape_cases_cii/](http://www.nation.com.pk/national/24_sep_2013/dna_test_can't_be_primary_evidence_in_rape_cases_cii/)>>

²²⁵ Sheik Salih Al-Sheik, quoted in Mahmud M D et-al, *Islamic Law in Modern World: Using Technology in Islamic Criminal Justice System*, in a Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science, Vol. 3, Issue 8, (2015) Pp. 2-4

²²⁶ Sheikh Nizar Al-Shuaybi, *DNA Analysis as Court Evidence in Criminal Cases*, 2003, Available at <<http://www.islamiclaw_criminallawandjudicialmatters 584>>

The Role of DNA Evidence in Exonerating Innocent Suspect

In *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, every person is presumed to be originally innocent from any liability, and an accused person is presumed innocent until there is sufficient evidence available to prove him guilty. In sharia, it is important for a judge to try his best to save an innocent person from false accusation. DNA evidence may be helpful in proving that a person was not there at the place of crime, even if other biological evidences were available in a sufficient amount to solve the case or to prove another person as an offender.²²⁷

Sometimes DNA evidence identifies a person which in turn results in exonerating innocent suspect from accusation. Criminal records have several examples that a person is proved innocent after imprisonment for several years. For example, a person in Idaho, USA, was sentenced to death in the case of killing a young girl after rape. After spending several years in jail, when DNA test revolutionized the forensic science, he requested the Court to conduct the DNA test, and match with the samples of semen taken from the corpse of the deceased girl. Moreover, while resisting the murderer, the samples of the hair of the culprit was also found in the nails of the girl. After analysis, it was found that both the semen and the hair samples did not belong to the suspected person, this proves him innocent of the said crime and eventually exonerated from the crime. In the absence of DNA test, the said person has to wait for several years in jail for his exoneration.²²⁸

In the case of *The State V. Mark Diaz Bravo*²²⁹ the defendant was convicted by Los Angeles County Court for raping a patient at psychiatric hospital where he worked. The conviction was based, inter alia, on the evidence of blood and semen tests done on a blanket and a bed sheet found at the scene of the crime. The test showed a blood type consistent with the convict's blood. The convict later filed a post- conviction motion in the Supreme Court of Los Angeles County. The Court ordered the blanket and the sheet to be released for DNA test. The report of the DNA test stated that none of the tested semen had DNA that matches that of the convict. He was therefore released having been exonerated.

In sharia, the criminal justice system is not infallible and sometimes a search for truth may take a tortuous path. Thus, technology greatly helps in exonerating the innocent and ensuring that the guilty were brought to justice. For instance, DNA can be used to identify criminals with incredible accuracy. By the same token, it can be used to clear suspects and exonerate persons mistakenly accused.²³⁰ The issue of using strong circumstantial evidence (such as DNA evidence) in exonerating innocent suspects can be traced to the Holy Qur'an where the Almighty Allah said:

*So, they raced with one another to the door, and she tore his shirt from the back. They both found her lord. (i.e. her husband) at the door, she said: what is the recompense (punishment) for him who intended an evil design against your wife, except that he be put in prison or a painful torment? He (Yusuf) said: it was she that sought to seduce me, and a witness of her household bore witness saying: if it be that his shirt is torn from the front, then her tale is true and he is a liar! But if it be that his shirt is torn from the back, then she has told a lie and he is speaking the truth! So, when he (her husband) saw Yusuf's shirt torn at the back, her husband said: surely, it is a plot of you women! Certainly, mighty is your plot! O Yusuf turn away from this! O woman ask forgiveness for your sin. Verily, you were of the sinful.*²³¹

²²⁷ Hussain A L, et-al, Op-Cit footnote 15.

²²⁸ Allison Jackson, "Mint Press News," (2014) <<<http://www.mintpressnews.com/people-spent-decades-jail-crimes-didnt-commit/190555/>>> accessed on 18-12-2019

²²⁹ Connor E et al, *Convicted by Juries, Exonerated by Science: Case Study in the use of DNA Evidence to Establish Innocence After Trial*, Available at <<<http://www.webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?rlz=icl>>> Accessed on 23/1/18.

²³⁰ Mahmud M D et-al, 'Islamic Law in Modern World: Using Technology in Islamic Criminal Justice System' in a *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 3, Issue 8, (2015) Pp. 2-4

²³¹ Holy Qur'an 12:25-29

Here, strong circumstantial evidence is used to establish the innocence of an accused person (Yusuf AS) and eventually exonerated from criminal allegation of *Zina* which falls within the *Hudud* crimes. Therefore, in Sharia a suspect can be freed from the strength of strong circumstantial evidence. Furthermore, it can be said that, DNA evidence if properly collected, and strictly adhere to its conditions and precautions can have the strength of strong circumstantial evidence, and can be used to exonerate innocent suspect mistakenly accused of in both *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. This is because, any variation in the DNA sample means that the sample is driven from another source other than the suspect. This in turn automatically exonerates the suspect.²³² Furthermore, one of the main objectives of Islamic criminal law is that, it is better to free ten guilty persons by mistake than to convict one innocent person by mistake.

Generally, in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, before a punishment is inflicted, the crime must be established by either testimony or confession.²³³ Testimony and confession are made by human beings which is prone to falseness, forgetfulness, biasness and other human shortcomings. While DNA evidence that is properly collected with all the necessary conditions and precautions observed is not prone to those factors. Therefore, it can be said that DNA evidence places a suspect in a crime scene more accurately than testimonies and confessions. It can equally be said that DNA evidence plays a vital role in identifying a culprit with absolute certainty, it also helps in exonerating an innocent suspect mistakenly accused of or convicted of, and it equally helps in corroborating less reliable evidence and give it a strength of conviction in both *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes.

Conclusion

DNA evidence as a scientific method of identification based on persons' unique genetic make-up has all the necessary genetic information needed to identify a person. It is classified as circumstantial evidence by majority of Muslim scholars. DNA evidence is used in criminal cases for purposes such as linking a suspect to a crime, exonerating an innocent suspect, corroborating another independent evidence and identifying victims' remains. For DNA evidence to become relevant and admissible in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes, it must reach the level of statistical certainty. There are divergent opinions as to the admissibility of DNA evidence in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. However, contemporary Muslim jurists are unanimous as to the admissibility of DNA evidence in exonerating innocent suspect mistakenly accused. They are also unanimous as to the admissibility of DNA evidence to corroborate another independent evidence. Therefore, DNA evidence plays a vital role in Islamic criminal justice system. Hence, it is submitted that DNA evidence is relevant and admissible to both *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes. This is because, DNA evidence places a suspect to a crime scene more accurately than testimony of witnesses and confession. In the same vain, DNA evidence is not prone to falseness, forgetfulness, biasness and other human shortcomings as it is in testimony and confession. Thus, DNA evidence if properly collected, and strictly observe the conditions and precautions, can be relied upon in *Hudud* and *Qisas* crimes to inflict punishment.

Bibliography

- A Committee of Scholars, *Qarah Al-Majma' Al-Fiqhi Al-Islami*, Mecca, from 1st to 17th Conference (Mecca: Majma' Fiqhi Al-Islami, 2004).
- Al-Ka'bi K A, *Al-Basmah Al-Wirathiyyah wa-Atharuha ala Al-Ahkam Al-Fiqhiyyah* (Amman: Dar Al-Nafa'is, 2006).
- Anwarullah, *The Islamic Law of Evidence*, (second edition, Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, 2006)
- Al-Subail Umar, *Al-Basmatul Wirathyyah*, (Available at Maktabatul Shamila CD Version 3.5)
- Audah 'Abd Al-Qadir, *Criminal Law of Islam*, Vol. I, 1st Edition, (S Zakir Aijaz Translation, Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, 2005)

Al-Ka'bi K A, *Al-Basmah Al-Wirathiyyah wa-Atharuha ala Al-Ahkam Al-Fiqhiyyah* (Amman: Dar Al-Nafa'is, 2006), ²³² P.448

Bambale Y Y, *Crimes and Punishments Under Islamic Law*, (Malthouse Press LTD, Ikeja Lagos, 2003) P.26.²³³

- Akbar Junaid, 'Islamic Legal Position on the Use of DNA in Hudud and Qisas Penalties' *Peshawar Islamicus Bi-Annual Research Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2010,
- Al-Shuaybi S N, *DNA Analysis as Court Evidence in Criminal Cases*, (2003) Available at <<http://www.islamiclaw_criminallaw_andjudicialmatters5598.com>> accessed on 2018.
- Allison Jackson, "Mint Press News," (2014) <<<http://www.mintpressnews.com/people-spent-decades-jail-crimes-didnt-commit/190555/>>> accessed on 18-12-2019
- Ambali M A, *Practice of Muslim Family Law in Nigeria*, (Tamaza Publishing Company, Zaria, Kaduna, 1997).
- Bin-Muhamad M M, et-al, 'Qarinah: Admissibility of Circumstantial Evidence in *Hudud* and *Qisas* Cases' *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, MCSER Publishing, Rome Italy. Vol. 6 No. 2, 2015.
- Bambale Y Y, *Crimes and Punishments Under Islamic Law*, (Malthouse Press LTD, Ikeja Lagos, 2003)
- Connor E et al, *Convicted by Juries, Exonerated by Science: Case Study in the use of DNA Evidence to Establish Innocence After Trial*, Available at <<<http://www.webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?rlz=icl>>> Accessed on 23/1/18.
- Decree No. 7 of the Sixteenth Session of the Islamic Fiqh Council. Quoted in Al-Subail U, Al-Basmatul Wirathiyyah, (Available at Maktabatul Shamila CD) Version 3.5, 2002, Ibn Qayyim. *Turuq Al Hukmiyyah fi Al Siyasah Al Syar'iyah*, (Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1995)
- Hussain A L and Muhammad M, 'Importance of DNA Evidence in Perspective of Islamic Jurisprudence' *Research Journal, Al-Basirah*, Vol. 5, Issue 1, 2005
- Ka'bi K A, *Al-Basimah Al-Wirathiyyah wa-Atharuha ala Al-Ahkam Al-Fiqhiyyah* (Amman: Dar Al-Nafa'is, 2006).
- Mahmud M D et-al, 'Islamic Law in Modern World: Using Technology in Islamic Criminal Justice System' in a *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 3, Issue 8, (2015)
- Naik Zakir, Can we Consider DNA Test in Cases of Adultery, Fornication and Rape Instead of Four Witnesses? 2012, Available at <<<https://www.youtu.be/1qQrj4SFXU>>> accessed on 27/11/2020.
- Ramlee Z, *The Role of Al-Qarinah (Circumstantial Evidence) in Islamic Law of Evidence: A Study of the Law in Malaysia, With Reference to the Rules and Principles of English Law*, Ph.D. Thesis, 1997,
- Robertson B and Vignaux G A, *Interpreting Evidence: Evaluating Forensic Science in the Courtroom*, (Wiley Press, New York, 1995)
- Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, *Takmilah Al-Ma'ajim Al-Arabiyyah* (Baghdad: Wazarah Al-Thaqafah wa Al-Alam, Democratic Republic of Iraq, 1979-2000).
- Schumm D A. *Evidential Foundations of Probabilistic Reasoning*, (Wiley, New York, 1994)
- Sheik Salih Al-Sheik, quoted in Mahmud M D et-al, *Islamic Law in Modern World: Using Technology in Islamic Criminal Justice System*, in a *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 3, Issue 8, (2015)
- Sindair J, *BBC English Dictionary*, (Harper Collins Publishers)
- Sheikh Nizar Al-Shuaybi, *DNA Analysis as Court Evidence in Criminal Cases*, 2003, Available at <<http://www.islamiclaw_criminallawandjudicialmatters_584>>
- Turman K M, *Understanding DNA evidence: A Guide for Victim Service Providers*, (National Institute of Justice NIJ Washington DC, US Department of Justice, 2001)



أحكام الطلاق وأحواله في الشريعة الإسلامية

Dr. Musa Shuaibu Gadaka¹, & Ismail Ilyasu Danladi²

¹, Department of Islamic Studies, Yobe State University, Damaturu, Nigeria.

²Department of Religious Studies, Federal University, Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Islam is a religious as well as a complete way of life no aspect of human endeavor is left without being thoroughly dealt with. It is a religion in which whoever acknowledges and accepts it must run his life in accordance with its divine guidance irrespective of his differences. Thus, the paper intends to shed more light on the Islamic perspectives regarding divorce, its types and when and how it will be applied as well as its wisdom. The characteristics of divorce are also discussed.

ملخص

الإسلام دينٌ ومنهج حياة متكامل، لا يُغفل أي جانب من جوانب الحياة البشرية. وهو دينٌ يُلزم كل من يعتنقه ويقبله بتسيير حياته وفقاً، لهدايته الإلهية، بغض النظر عن اختلافاته. لذا، تهدف هذه الورقة إلى تسليط الضوء على المنظور الإسلامي للطلاق، وأنواعه، وتوقيتته، وكيفية تطبيقه، فضلاً عن حكمته. كما تتناول الورقة خصائص الطلاق.

الكلمات المفتاحية/Keywords

Shari'ah, Islam, Divorce, rule, Characteristic

الشريعة، الإسلام، الطلاق، الحكم، الخصائص

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

المقدمة

الحمد لله الذي جعل لأئمة الشريعة المستقيمة وما فيها من الأحكام ومن أهمها الأحوال الشخصية، بدءاً من أسس بناء الأسرة من الخطبة وعقد الزواج والآثار المترتبة عليها، وانتهاء بالفرقة والموت وآثار ذلك على الحياة الزوجية والأسرية، وصلى الله وسلم على المبعوث رحمة للعالمين سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه الذين انعكست فيهم صورة بناء الأسرة الناجحة في أجل معانيها ومن تبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين:

فالإسلام جاء بمنهج قويم في تربية الأجيال وتكوين الأمم وبناء الحضارات التي لا تأتي إلا من النواة الصغيرة للمجتمع وهي الحياة الزوجية، فإذا صلحت صلح المجتمع والعكس صحيح، ذلك لأن فيها يتعلم الإنسان أفضل أخلاقه الاجتماعية فلا أمة بدون الأسرة لأنها أساس المجتمع الإسلامي، بناءً على أن الزواج

هو الوسيلة الشرعية لتحقيق مقصد من مقاصد الشارع المتمثلة في حفظ النسل وبناء الأسرة والمجتمع على أسس متينة وثابتة ومتوازنة وعادلة، فقد استفرغ الفقهاء رحمهم الله جهدهم في تقرير الأحكام المنظمة لهذا المشروع ضمن مسائل تفصيلية متدرجة بدءاً من إثارة الفكرة وتصورها والترغيب فيها، ورسم طريق الوصول إليها وتشريع الأحكام اللازمة ووصولاً إلى إنجاحها على الوجه الأكمل بأقل التكاليف وأيسرها.

وقد تناولت في هذه المقالة هذه النقاط التالية:

المبحث الأول: معنى الطلاق لغة واصطلاحاً

المبحث الثاني: حكم الطلاق في الإسلام

المبحث الثالث: الفرق بين الطلاق السني والطلاق البدعي

والله أسأل أن يجعله نافعا للأمة، ءامين.

المبحث أول: تعريف الطلاق لغة واصطلاحاً

الطلاق لغة: وهو الإرسال من قولك طلقت الناقة.

واصطلاحاً: حل العصمة المنعقدة بين الزوجين وله أربعة أركان: الزوج، والزوجة، والقصد. فمن سبق لسانه إلى الطلاق لم يقع عليه طلاق، يعني من أراد أن يتكلم بغير الطلاق فالتورى لسانه فتكلم بالطلاق فلا شيء عليه وكذلك من أكره على الطلاق إلا أن يترك التورية مع العلم بها. والتورية لفظ له معنيان: قريب وبعيد، ويريد البعيد كقوله هي طالق، ويريد من وثاق، ومعناه القريب إبانة العصمة. والرابع الصيغة، وتنقسم إلى صريح وهو ما فيه لفظ الطلاق ولا يحتاج إلى نية وإلى كناية وهي صريحة وستأتي ومحملة فتقبل دعواه في نيته وعدده، فإذا قال إذهبي أو انصربي مثلاً، وقال لم أرد بذلك طلاقاً فإنه يحلف على ذلك ولا شيء عليه وإن قال نويت بذلك الطلاق فإنه يلزمه فإن كانت له نية بطلقة أو أكثر عمل بها، وإن لم تكن له نية في عدد لزمه الثلاث²³⁴.

ومن طلق امرأته ثلاثاً لم تحل له بملك ولا نكاح حتى تنكح زوجاً غيره، وطلاق الثلاث في كلمة واحدة بدعة ويلزمه إن وقع وطلاق السنة مباح وهو أن يطلقها في طهر لم يقربها فيه طلقة ثم لا يتبعها طلاقاً حتى تنقضي العدة وله الرجعة في التي تحيض ما لم تدخل في الحيضة الثالثة في الحرة أو الثانية في الأمة فإن كانت ممن لم تحض أو ممن قد يئست من المحيض طلقها متى شاء وكذلك الحامل وترجع الحامل ما لم تضع والمعتدة بالشهور ما لم تنقض العدة والأقراء هي الأطهار، وينهى أن يطلق في الحيض فإن طلق لزمه ويجبر على الرجعة ما لم

234 الثمر الداني. ابن أبي زيد القيرواني. الطبعة الأولى. 1419 هـ - 1998 م. ص 305.

تنقض العدة والتي لم يدخل بها يطلقها متى شاء، والواحدة تبينها والثلاث تحرمها إلا بعد زواج. ومن قال لزوجته أنت طالق فهي واحدة حتى ينوي أكثر من ذلك.

والخلع طلاق لا رجعة فيها وإن لم يسم طلاقا إذا أعطته شيئا فخلعها به من نفسه. ومن قال لزوجته أنت طالق البتة فهي ثلاث دخل بها أو لم يدخل،، وإن قال برية أو خلية أو حرام أو حبلك على غاربك فهي ثلاث في التي دخل بها وينوي في التي لم يدخل بها، والمطلقة قبل البناء لها نصف الصداق إلا أن تغفو عنه هي إن كانت ثيبا وإن كانت بكرا فذلك إلى أبيها، وكذلك السيد في أمته ومن طلق فينبغي له أن يتمتع ولا يجبر والتي لم يدخل بها وقد فرض لها فلا متعة لها ولا للمختلعة²³⁵.

المبحث الثاني: حكم الطلاق

حكمه: الطلاق مباح لرفع الضرر عن أحد الزوجين ، بقوله "الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانِ فَإِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ بِإِحْسَانٍ"²³⁶. وقوله "يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ"²³⁷. وقد يجب الطلاق إذا كان ما لحق أحد الزوجين من الضرر لا يرفع إلا به ، كما أنه قد يحرم إذا كان يلحق بأحد الزوجين ضررا ولم يحقق منفعة تفوق ذلك الضرر أو تساويه، ويشهد للأول قوله للذي شكاه إليه بداء امراته : "طلقها" ويشهد للثاني قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أما امرأة سألت زوجها الطلاق في غير ما بأس فحرام عليها رائحة الجنة " 3 -أركانه: للطلاق ثلاثة أركان وهي 1 -: الزوج المكلف ، فليس لغير الزوج أن يوقع طلاقا ؛ لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم " إنما الطلاق لمن أخذ بالساق " كما أن الزوج اذا لم يكن عاقلا بالغاً مختاراً غير مكره لا يقع منه طلاق ؛ لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم " : رفع القلم عن ثلاثة : عن النائم حتى يستيقظ ، وعن الصبي حتى يحتلم ، وعن المجنون حتى يعقل " ولقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم : " رفع عن امتي الخطأ والنسيان، وما استكرهوا عليه"

2- الزوجة التي تربطها بالزوج المطلق رابطة الزواج حقيقة بان تكون في عصمته لمتخرفي عنه بفسخ أرن طلاق ، أرن حكفا كالمعتدة من طلاق رجعي إؤ بائن بينونة صغرى فلا يقع الطلاق على امرأة ليست للمطلق ، ولا على امرأة بانته منه بالطلاق الثلاث ، او بالقسخ او بطلاقها قيل الدخول بها إذا لم لصادف الطلاق هفه فهو لاغ ؛ لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: " لا نذر لابن آدم فيما لا يملك ، ولا عتق له فيما لا يملك ولا طلاق له فيما لا يملك "

²³⁵ متن الرسالة لابن أبي زيد القيرواني. الطبعة الأولى. ص 84-85.

²³⁶ البقرة: 229.

²³⁷ الطلاق: 1.

3 - اللفظ الدال على الطلاق صريحا كان أو كناية ، فالتية وحدها بدون تلفظ بالطلاق لا تكفي ولا تطلق بها الزوجة ؛ لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم : " إن الله تجاوز لأمتي عما حدثت به انفسها ما لم يتكلموا او يعملوا به " .

وحكم الطلاق أيد والمتأمل في أحكام الطلاق يتأكد له مدى حرص الإسلام على مؤسسة البيت، ورغبته فيبقاء الشركة بين الزوجين، ذلك أن الإسلام حين أباح الطلاق لم يجعله مرة واحدة بحيث تنقطع هذه العلاقة بين الزوجين فلا تنتهك أبدا إذا طلق الرجل المرأة وإنما أباح الطلاق وأمر أن يكون على مرات "الطلاق مرتان فإمسك بمعروف أو تسريح بإحسان".

وإذا طلق الرجل المرة الأولى أو الثانية فليس من حقه إخراج مطلقته من بيته حتى تنقضى عدتها، بل وليس لها الخروج والعلة في ذلك لاطمع في ذهاب الغصن الذي أوجد الطلاق، ثم الحث على عودة الأمور إلى ماكانت عليه هذا ما ذكره في قول²³⁸هـ:

" يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنْ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ لَا تَدْرِي لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ أَمْرًا "²³⁹. أي؛ لعل الزوج يندم على طلاقها ، ويخلق الله تعالى في قلبه ... فيكون ذلك أيسر وأسهل.

أنواع الطلاق

1- الطلاق السني : وهو أن يطق المرأة في طهر لم يمسه فيها ، فإذا أراد المسلم أن يطلق امرأته لضرر لحق بأحدهما ، وكان لا يدفع إلا بالطلاق ، انتظرها حتى تحيض وتظهر ، فإذا طهرت لم يمسه ثم يطلقها طلقة واحدة كأن يقول مثلا : إنك طالق ؛ وذلك لقوله تعالى: " يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ " .

2- الطلاق البدعي: وهو أن يطلق الرجل امرأته وهي حائض أو نفساء أو في طهر قد مسها فيه ، أو يطلقها ثلاثا في كلمة واحدة ، أو ثلاث كلمابط في الحال كأن يقول: هي طالق ، ثم طالق ، ثم طالق وذلك لأمر رسول الله عبد الله بن عمر، وقد طلق امرأته وهي حائض ، أن يراجعها ثم ينتظرها حتى تطهر ثم تحيض ثم تطهر ثم إن شاء أمسك بعد ذلك ، وإن شاء طلق قيل أن يمسه ، ثم قال رسول الله: " فتلك العدة التي أمر الله سبحانه أن تطلق لها النساء ؟ ولقوله عليه السلام، وقد اخبر أن رجلا طلق امرأته ثلاثا في كلمة واحدة " :أيلعب بكتاب الله وأنا بين أظهركم ؟ " وبدا عليه غضب شديد. والطلاق البدعي ، كالسني ، عند

²³⁸ الوجيز. لدكتور عبد العظيم. ص 321.

²³⁹ سورة الطلاق: 1.

جمهور العلماء في وقوعه وانحلال رابطة الزواج به³ - .الطلاق البائن :وهو الذي لا يملك المطلق معه حق الرجعة ، فبمجرد وقوعه يصبح المطلق كخاطب من سائر الخطاب ، وإن شاءت المطلقة قبلته بمهر وعقد ، وإن شاءت رفضته . ويقع الطلاق بائنا في خصور وهي:أ- أن يطلقها طلاقا رجعيًا ، ثم يتركها فلا يراجعها حتى تنقضي عدتها فتببت عنه بمجرد انقضاء عدتها.ب - أن يطلقها على مال تدفعه مخالعة.ح - أو يطلقها الحكمان عندما يريان أن الطلاق أصلح من الإبقاء على الزواج. د - أن يطقها المدخول بها ؛ إذ المطلقة قبل الدخول لا عدة عليها ، فتبين إذن لمجرد وقوع الطلاق عليها.هـ- أن يبت طلاقها إن طلقها ثلاثا في كلمة واحدة أو متفرقات في المجلس أو يطلقها ثلاثة أو اثنتين⁴ - .الطلاق الرجعي: وهو ما يملك معه الزوج حق مراجعة مطلقته ، ولو بدون رضاها؛ لقوله “وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا”²⁴⁰. ولقوله لابن عمر عندما طلق زوجه "... راجعها". والطلاق الرجعي ما كان دون ثلاث في المدخول بها وبدون عوض . والمطلقة طلاقا رجعيًا حكمها كحكم الزوجة في النفقة والسكنى وغيرها ، حتى تنقضي عدتها ، فإذا انقضت عدتها بانتهت من زوجها ، وإن أراد الرجوع مراجعتها يكفيه أن يقول لها: لقد راجعتك ، ويسرب أن يشهد على مراجعتها شاهدي عدلي⁵ - ..الطلاق الصريح: وهو ما لا يحتاج المطلق معه إلى نية الطلاق ، بل يكفي فيه لفظ الطلاق الصريح ، وذلك كان يقول " :أنت طالق "أو " مطلقة "أو " طلقتك "أو نحو ذلك .6- الطلاق الكتابية : وهو ما يحتاج فيه إلى نية الطلاق ؛ إذ اللفظ مخير صريح في الدلالة عليه ، وذلك كأن يقول " :إلحقي بأهلك "أو "إخرجي من الدار " ، أو "لا تكلمي " وما أشبه ذلك مما لم يذكر فيه الطلاق ولا معناه ، مثل هذا لا يكون طلاقا إلا إذا نوى به الطلاق ، وقد طلق رسول الله إحدى نسائه بلفظ " : إلحقي بأهلك " . فلا شك أنه نوى الطلاق وإلا فإن كعب بن مالك لما قيل له: إن الرسول الله يأمرك أن تعتزل امرأتك ، فقال :أطلقها أم ماذا أفعل ؟ قال : اعتزلها فلا تقربها . فقال لامرأته : إلحقي بأهلك ، فالتحقت بهم ولا عد عليه هذا طلاقا.هذا في الكناية الخفية ، أما الكناية الظاهرة كقوله : أنت خلعة أو بائن تحلين للوجال ، فهذه الكناية لا تحتاج إلى نية بل يقع الطلاق بمجرد التلفظ بها .-7- الطلاق المنجز والمعلق: الطلاق المنجز هو ما تطلق به الروجة في الحال ، كقوله: أنت طالق مثلا فتطلق في الحال ، وأما المعلق فهو ما علقه على فعل شيء أو تركه ، فلا يقع إلا بعد وقوع ما علقه عليه مثل أن يقول: إن خرجت من المنزل فانت طالق ، أو إن ولدت بنتا فانت طالق ، فلا تطلق إلا إذا خرجت من المنزل أو ولدت بنتا⁸ - .طلاق ق التخيير والتعليك: وهو أن يقول الرجل لامرأته ، اختاري أو خيرتك في مفارقتي أو البقاء، فإن اختارت الطلاق طلقت ، وقد خير رسول الله نساءه فاخترن عدم فراقه فلم يطلقن. قال تعالى "يأيها النبي قل

لأزواجك إن كنتن تردن...."²⁴¹. وأما التمليك فهو أن يقول : لقد ملكتك أمرك ، وأمرك بيدك ، فإذا قال لها ذلك فقالت: إذا أنا طالق ، طلقت طلقة واحدة رجعية

9-الطلاق بالوكالة أو الكتابة: إذا وكل الرجل من يطلق امرأته ، أو كتب إليها كتابا يعلن لها فيه طلاقها ، ثم أنفذه إليها تطلعت . ولا خلاف بين أهل العلم في ذلك ؛ إذ الوكالة جائزة في القول ، والكتابة تقوم مقام النطق عند تعذره لغيبه أو خرس مثلاً. 10 - الطلاق بالتحريم : وهو أن يقول الرجل لزوجته : أنت علي حرام أو تحريهن أو بالحرام ، فإن نوى الطلاق كان طلاقاً ، وإن نوى به ظهاراً فهو ظهار ، تجب فيه كفارة الظهار، وإن لم يرد به طلاقاً ولا ظهاراً أو أراد به الحلف ، كأن يقول : أنت حرام إن فعلت كذا ففعلت ففيه كفارة يمين لا غير ، قال ابن عباسي (هـ) : "إذا حرم الرجل امرأته فهي يمين يكفرها ، ثم قال : لقد كان لكم في رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أسوة

11- الطلاق الحرام : وهو أن يطلق الرجل امرأته ثلاثاً في كلمة واحدة ، أو في ثلاث كلمات في المجلس ، كأن يقول عبارة : "أنت طالق ثلاثاً" أو يقول : أنت طالق ، طالق ، طالق ، فهذا الطلاق محرم بالإجماع ؛ لقوله ابر! روقد اخبر ان رجلا طلق امرأته ثلاثاً جمعا ، فقام غضبان وقال : "ايلعب بكتاب الله وانا بين اظهركم ؟ "حتى قام رجل فقال : يا رسول الله الا اقتله ؟

وحكم هذا الطلاق عند جمهور العلماء - الأئمة الاربعة وغيرهم - أنه ينقذ ثلاثاً ، وأن المطلقة به لا تحل لزوجها حتى تنكح زوجاً غيره ، وأما غير الجمهور من العلماء فإنهم يرونه طلقة واحدة بائنة أو رجعية على خلاف بينهم ، واختلفت آراء العلماء لاختلاف الأدلة ، ولما فهمه كل فريق من النصوص. وبناء على خلاف أهل العلم في هذا فإنه -والله تعالى أعلم - يحسن أن ينظر فيه إلى حال المطلق ، فإن كان لا يريد من قوله : أنت طالق بالثلاث إلا مجزئ تخويف الزوجة أو كان يريد الحلف عليها كأن علقه على فعل شيء بأن قال : أنت طالق بالثلاث ، إن فعلت كذا ، ففعلت ، أو كان في حالة غضب حاد ، أو قال ذلك وهو لا يريد طلاقها البتة ، فيمضي عليه طلقة واحدة بائنة ، وإن كان يريد من قوله : أنت طالق ثلاثاً حقيقة فراقها وإبانتها منه حتى لا تعود إليه بحال فيمضي عليه ثلاثاً ، ولا تحل له حتى تنكح زوجاً غيره ، جمعا بين الأدلة، ورحمة بالأمة²⁴².

المبحث الثالث الفرق بين الطلاق السني والطلاق البدعي

الطلاق السني هو الذي يقع في حال الحمل أو في حال تكون المرأة طاهراً لم يجامعها زوجها، هذا هو الطلاق السني، ويكون طلقة واحدة فقط، هي طالق أو مطلقة طلقة واحدة ويكون ذلك في حال كونها حاملاً أو

²⁴¹ الأحزاب. 28.

²⁴² منهاج المسلم. أبو بكر جابر الجزائري. ص 366 - 368.

حال كونها طاهرا طهرا لم يجامعها فيه، لقول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لابن عمر²⁴³ لما طلق امرأته وهي حائض راجعها، ثم أمسكها حتى تطهر، ثم تحيض م تطهر، إن شئت طلقها طاهرا أو حاملا قبل أن يمسه، وفي لفظ: ثم تطلقها قبل أن يمسه، وفي لفظ آخر: طلقها طاهر أو حاملا فالمقصود أنه - صلى الله عليه وسلم - أمره أن يطلقها في طهر لم يمسه فيه، أو حال كونها حاملا وهذا هو معنى قوله جلا وعلا: "يأبها النبي إذا طلقتم النساء فطلقوهن لعدتهن وأحصوا العدة"²⁴⁴. قال العلماء: معنى ذلك أنهن طاهرات بغير جماع، وفي حال هذا الطلاق في العدة، ويكون طلبة واحدة، لاثنتين ولا ثلاث، أن يطلق ثنتين بلا سبب مكروه، وإن طلق ثلاث لا يجوز²⁴⁵.

أما الطلاق البدعي فهو القول أن تطلقها ثلاثا، هذا البدعي لا يجوز أن يطلقها بالثلاث، أما في حيضها فلا يطلقها إذا كانت حائضا أو نفساء، أو في طهر جامعها فيه، هذا بدعي، إذا كانت حائضا أو في النفاس أو في طهر جامعها فيه وليست آيسة ولا حامل، بل تحمل شابة فإن هذا يكون بدعي. أما إذا كانت حاملا أو آيسة كبيرة السن فإنه يطلقها في أي وقت. لأنه ليس لديها حيض ولا نفاس ولا خشية الحمل، فإذا طلق الحامل في أي وقت طلبة واحدة أو الآيسة كبيرة لاسن التي لا يأتيها الحيض طلبة واحدة كله موافق للسنة لا حرج في ذلك. أما إذا كانت تحيض فإنه لا يطلقها في حال الحيض ولا في حال طهر جامعها فيه، ولا في حال النفاس.

والطلاق السنة: أن يطلق الرجل امرأته التي دخل بها طلبة واحدة، في طهر لم يجامعها فيه. قال تعالى: "الطلاق مرتان فإمساك بمعروف أو تسريح بإحسان"²⁴⁶. وقال تعالى: "يأبها النبي إذا طلقتم النساء فطلقوهن لعدتهن"²⁴⁷. وقد فسر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم الآية حين طلق ابن عمر امرأته وهي حائض، فسأل عمر ابن الخطاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم "مره فليراجعها، ثم ليمسكها حتى تطهر، ثم تحيض، م تطهر ثم إن شاء أمسك بعد ذلك، وإن شاء طلق قبل أن يمسه، فتلك العدة التي أمر الله سبحانه أن تطلق لها النساء"²⁴⁸. وأما الطلاق البدعي: فهو الطلاق المخالف للمشروع، كأن يطلقها وهي حائض، أو في طهر جامعها فيه، أو أن يجمع الطلقات الثلاث بلفظ واحد أو في مجلس واحد، كأن يقول: أنت طالق ثلاثا، وأنت طالق، أنت طالق، أنت طالق، وهذا الطلاق حرام، وفاعله آثم.

²⁴³ بلوغ المرام. أبي الفضل أحمد بن علي بن حجر العسقلاني. طبعة 1422هـ - 2001م. ص 190.

²⁴⁴ سورة الطلاق. الآية: 1.

²⁴⁵ موقع الشيخ عبد العزيز بن باز. / نور على الدرب.

²⁴⁶ البقرة. آية 229.

²⁴⁷ الطلاق. آية: 1.

²⁴⁸ الوجيز. الدكتور عبد العظيم بروي. طبعة جديدة منقحة ومزودة. ص 323 - 324.

فإن كانت طلقها وهي حائض، فقد وقعت طلقة، وإن كانت رجعية أمر بمراجعتها، ثم يمسكها حتى تطهر، ثم تحيض، ثم تطهر، ثم إن شاء أمسك بعد ذلك وإن شاء طلق قبل أن يمسكها كما أمر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ابن عمر²⁴⁹.

وأما الدليل على وقوعها؛ فما رواه البخاري عن سعيد بن جبير عن ابن عمر قال: حسبت على بتطليقة. قال الحافظ في الفتح:

إن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم هو الأمر بالمراجعة وهو المرشد لابن عمر فيما يفعل إذا أراد طلاقها بعد ذلك، وإذا أخبر ابن عمر أن الذي وقع منه حسبت عليه بتطليقة كان أحمال أن يكون الذي حسبها عليه غير النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بعيدا جدا. مع احتفاف القرائن في هذه القصة بذلك، وكيف يتخيل أن ابن عمر يفعل في القصة شيئا برأيه وهو ينقل أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يغيظ من صنيعه؟ كيف لم يشاوره فيما يفعل في القصة المذكورة.

قال الحافظ: وقد أخرج ابن وهب في مسنده عن ابن أبي ذئب أن نافع أخبره "أن ابن عمر طلق امرأته وهي حائض، فسأل عمر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن ذلك؟ فقال: "مره فليراجعه ثم يمسكها حتى تطهر قال ابن أبي ذئب في الحديث عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "وهي واحدة" قال ابن أبي ذئب: وحدثني حنظلة بن أبي سفيان أنه سمع سالم يحدث عن أبيه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ذلك.

قال الحافظ: وأخرجه الدارقطني من طريق يزيد بن هارون عن أبي ذئب وابن إسحاق جميعا عن نافع عن ابن عمر عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "هي واحدة". وهذا نص في موضع الخلاف يجب المصير إليه. الطلاق السني منه طلقة في طهر لم يمسه فيه، ولا تاليا لحيض طلق فيه، ثم لا يتبعها حتى تنقضي عدتها، والبدعي إرسال الثلاث دفعة والطلاق في طهر المسيس أو في الحيض، فيجبر على ارتجاعها وإمسакها حتى تطهر من الثانية ولا إجبار في الطهر بينهما كطهر المسيس، وعار عنهما كالصغيرة واليائسة وظاهرة الحمل وغير المدخول بها،²⁵⁰

الخاتمة

في الختام فقد اقتضت حكمة الله تعالى ألا يستقيم للإنسان شأن، ولا تنهياً له الحياة الآمنة السعيدة، والنهوض بأعباء خلافته سبحانه في الأرض وأداء الأمانة، إلا بالعيش في الإطار الاجتماعي الذي نواته وركيزته هي حياة الزوجية، وتعرض النظام الاجتماعي في الأسرة للخلل أو التشويه تتأثر بذلك كل النظم الاجتماعية داخل المجتمع، ويصبح من الصعب إعادة بناء الأسرة التي بها تنبني المجتمع وفق هويته لفقدته للحاضنة السليمة

²⁴⁹ الوجيز. عبد العظيم بن بروي الخلفي ... ص 324.

²⁵⁰ إرشاد السالك إلى أشرف المسالك. شهاب الدين عبد الرحمن بن عسكر. صفحة 120.

القادرة على القيام بواجبها تجاه الثقافة، فالأسرة تُعدّ نواة المجتمع البشري، والحاضن الرئيسي لأفرادها ومصدراً أساسياً للسعادة والطمأنينة والاستقرار لهم، لكن لا تكاد تخلو أسرة من وجود الخلافات أو المشكلات بين الحين والآخر، فالاختلاف في الآراء من سنن الله تعالى في الخلق، فلقد خلق الله تعالى البشر مختلفين، لكل فرد شخصيته المستقلة سماته وميوله الذي يختلف به عن الآخر، فتري الزوج يحب شيئاً لا تحبه الزوجة وتري الأولاد يرغبون بممارسة أعمال لا يرغبها الأبوان فيورد ذلك إلى الطلاق إذا تعذر الصلح بين الزوجين.

المراجع والمصادر

- القرآن الكريم
- إرشاد السالك إلى أشرف المسالك. شهاب الدين عبد الرحمن بن عسكر. (د. ت)
- بلوغ المرام. أبي الفضل أحمد بن علي بن حجر العسقلاني. طبعة 1422هـ - 2001م.
- الثمر الداني. ابن أبي زيد القيرواني. الطبعة الأولى. 1419هـ - 1998م.
- متن الرسالة لابن أبي زيد القيرواني. الطبعة الأولى. (د. ت)
- منهاج المسلم. تأليف أبوبكر جابر الجزائري. (د. ت)
- الوجيز. الدكتور عبد العظيم بروي. طبعة جديدة منقحة ومزودة. الطبعة الأولى. دار الكتب العلمية 2002م.
- موقع الشيخ عبد العزيز بن باز. / نور على الدرب.

SECTION FOUR:

Library and Information Technology



Perception of Librarians towards Knowledge Sharing in University Libraries in Delta State, Nigeria

Godwin Ototakovie¹, Dr. Efe Francis Ejedafiru², & Prof. Esoswo Francisca Ogbomo³,

^{1,2}Department of Library and Information

Science,

Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State,

Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

The study investigated librarians' perception towards knowledge sharing in university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive research design. A total of 86 respondents were selected from the library community. Mean and statistical mean were selected, and a descriptive statistics tool was utilized to examine the data obtained from the questionnaire. The instrument was considered to have a sufficient Pearson coefficient of $r = 0.858$ for the analysis of the data generated. The results showed, among other things, that librarians' attitudes about sharing are positive. They also discussed how much knowledge is shared in university libraries. The study also showed a strong link between perception and sharing of knowledge. The study found that librarians have positive perception toward knowledge sharing and suggested other techniques, including storytelling and knowledge fairs, information delivery through literacy programs, and use of social media for creative information services. It also suggested that knowledge sharing become a routine that library management should enforce in the studied institution, as well as a means of guiding staff members to learn new skills and share their experiences with one another.

Keywords

perception, librarians, knowledge, sharing, university and libraries

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

With advances in information management, shifting user needs, and expanding roles for librarians, the profession is facing a time of significant upheaval. (Islam et al, 2014). Due to this, librarians must develop into not only information suppliers but also knowledge seekers for both their clients and their fellow librarians. Similar to other companies, sharing knowledge can help with these needs by generating fresh information and communicating it to both staff members and libraries to enhance services. Knowledge is a "vital and intangible asset that needs to be shared in order to tap into individual's wealth of untapped experience and knowledge (tacit knowledge), thereby building and sustaining competitive advantage," (Awodoyin et al 2016). According to Ogbomo and Odede (2022), knowledge sharing is simply referred to as chatting with coworkers to help one get something done more effectively, quickly, or individually. It has been established that librarians' perceptions of information sharing are significantly impacted by perception, which is relative in nature. Due to a variety of problems that have been discovered, some people are reluctant to share their expertise. Five factors were listed by Michailova and Husted (2003) as to why employees are reticent to share their knowledge. They include the concern that sharing knowledge with subordinates will actually have detrimental effects, as well as the cost involved, the uncertainty of how the recipient will use the information, acceptance of and deference to a powerful formal hierarchy, and so on.

According to Hislop (2003), the willingness of the employees to share their unique information and knowledge is essential to the success of any knowledge management program. Hence, in order to succeed, it is necessary for the staff to share their experiences and unique interpretations of the data. Sharing knowledge promotes organizational learning. Lack of knowledge exchange raises the knowledge gap between individuals and organizations (Mohammed, 2003). The transformation of individual information into organizational knowledge, which can only occur when individuals share their expertise with other members of the organization, is at the core of organizational learning. Also, by engaging in information sharing, employees can avoid duplication in knowledge production and spread best practices across the entire organization (Ogunshola, 2004). The ability of organizations to solve problems through systematic knowledge sharing among members depends on the availability of appropriate personal knowledge during the problem-solving process, regardless of where the knowledge was acquired.

By the advancement of knowledge sharing, knowledge can be shared, developed, and integrated. Practices for sharing knowledge can encourage people to think more critically and creatively, which will ultimately lead to the creation of new knowledge. Sharing information as a strategic resource, according to Omotayo (2015), is one of the fundamental strategies that enables businesses to exponentially raise their competitive advantage and chances of survival through innovation. A comparative study by Adduulsalam et al, (2016) confirmed the strong positive association between the information sharing dimensions and creativity. Any company needs to engage in these knowledge sharing techniques since they serve as the foundation for developing and putting into implementation ideas. Organizations may utilize knowledge, increase their capacity for creativity, and profit on knowledge by having a complete awareness of various knowledge-sharing strategies (Olaifa, et al, 2014). Employees' willingness to gather and share knowledge, according to Nwabueze and Ozioko (2010), significantly enhances an organization's capacity for innovation. In fact, it may be argued that the link between the information-sharing process and innovation capacity may offer a hint as to how businesses should foster a culture of knowledge sharing to maintain their innovation performance (Najla et al, 2017).

Knowledge sharing encourages the free flow of ideas and knowledge that fosters insight, improves customer service satisfaction, and increases revenues, according to a study by Semertzaki (2012). It also makes better use of available resources and computer systems. By eliminating redundant processes, it also increases the value of already-existing products, clarifies operations, reduces labor costs and labor hours, helps employers make the best use of employees' time, and improves collective memory and knowledge sharing by capturing the tacit knowledge of employees who leave or retire. Onifade (2015) discovered that although Nigerian federal university libraries' librarians viewed information sharing favorably, they did so fairly. This is good news because the environment in which librarians work is always changing. In order to avoid being found wanting in their ability to meet the needs of their clients, they must continue to collaborate and update their knowledge. Anna and Puspitasari (2013) made the argument that libraries need to improve their offerings, public perception, and brand. Librarians need to be very resourceful and knowledgeable in order to accomplish this. According to Ogunshola (2004), if library and information science professionals shared their perspectives on the work that needs to be done and how it should be done, it might help new hires succeed in their positions and help the company. So, it is crucial for librarians to view knowledge sharing favorably in order to improve their attitude toward it, which will help them perform their jobs more effectively.

Despite the fact that librarian and other information professionals see knowledge sharing favorably, it is astounding how little knowledge they actually share. The lack of incentives provided to encourage knowledge sharers may be related to this. It is claimed that if information sharers in libraries were provided incentives, their level of knowledge sharing would increase (Onifade, 2015). This is said to be related to the fact that oral tradition is at the core of African culture. The librarians and information specialists should, however, have been able to use the new technologies that were available to them to share knowledge. The use of mentorship and communities of practice for

knowledge sharing, according to Onifade (2015), is not encouraging because a strategy like mentoring would have ensured that older employees' expertise and knowledge would be available in the event that any of the employees left. Younger employees will be able to benefit from this wealth of information and expand on it in the future thanks to this. Since it can improve decision-making skills, create learning organizations (through a learning routine), and ultimately inspire cultural change and creativity, knowledge sharing is crucial for a firm to succeed (Postolache, 2017).

Objectives of the Study

The primary goal of the study is to examine librarians' perception regarding information sharing in Delta State university libraries. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. Investigate perception of librarians towards knowledge sharing in the Delta University; and
- ii Determine the extent of knowledge sharing among librarians in the Delta University.

Research Questions

The following research questions would guide the study:

- i. What is the perception of librarians towards knowledge sharing in University libraries in Delta state?
- ii. What is the extent to which knowledge is shared among librarians in University libraries in Delta State?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis would be tested at 0.05 level of significance

- i. There is no significant relationship between perception and knowledge sharing among librarians in university libraries in Delta State.

Methodology

The researchers used descriptive survey research to objectively explain how librarians and information science professionals felt about sharing knowledge at public and private colleges in Delta State. 86 librarians from the six universities in Delta State, Nigeria, make up the study's population. The study's sample size is all 86 librarians from Delta State's six universities. Total enumeration sampling is the method that was employed for this study. This study's research tool was created by the authors themselves. Thirty copies of the questionnaire were sent to librarians and information specialists at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Kaduna State—outside the study's sample—to assess the reliability of the instrument. This was completed in a two-week period. The Statistical Package for Social Science's Cronbach Alpha technique was used to analyze the test's paired scores (SPSS). The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient for the correlation index was 0.86, indicating strong instrument reliability, and was therefore deemed appropriate. The data derived from the survey given to the respondents was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. This is as a result of the data's descriptive nature. The frequency and statistical mean would be used to analyze research questions 1 and 2. The research questions' criterion mean would be set at 2.50. Thus, any mean below 2.50 would be considered low, and any mean above 2.50 would be considered high. At a significance level of 0.05, the hypothesis would be tested using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Answering of the Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the perception of librarians towards knowledge sharing?

Table 1: Perception of Librarians towards Knowledge Sharing

Perception	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN
I think knowledge possessed by an individual is shared with another individual through knowledge sharing	64	18	0	0	3.78

I think knowledge sharing can bring innovation and creativity to library services	70	8	3	1	3.79
I know I will gain a lot by sharing knowledge with my colleagues	70	11	1	0	3.84
By sharing knowledge, I can use the experience of others in finding solutions to problems I encounter on the job.	69	12	1	0	3.83
I feel knowledge sharing will enhance my skills in this library	64	16	2	0	3.76
Knowledge sharing facilitates decision-making capabilities	62	13	7	0	3.67
Through knowledge sharing, learning organizations can be built	60	20	20	0	3.71
Knowledge sharing stimulate cultural change	55	23	4	0	3.62
Knowledge sharing increases personal innovation capacities	54	17	8	3	3.49
I think knowledge sharing leads to knowledge production	61	12	7	2	3.61
Aggregate Mean					3.71
Criterion Mean					2.50

According to Table 1, the computed mean of 3.71 is higher than the required mean of 2.50. This indicates that librarians in Delta State's university libraries have a positive attitude toward knowledge sharing. This study supports Onifade's (2015) findings, which showed that although Nigerian federal university libraries' librarians had a favorable opinion on knowledge sharing, they did so fairly.

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which knowledge is shared among librarians?

Table 2. Knowledge Sharing among Librarians

Knowledge Sharing	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	MEAN
I share knowledge about library users with colleagues	35	43	4	0	3.38
I share knowledge about readers services with colleagues	18	58	6	0	3.15
I share knowledge about reference services with colleagues	12	65	5	0	3.09
I share knowledge about serials usage with colleagues	10	66	6	0	3.05
I share knowledge on library automation with colleagues	50	22	9	1	3.48
I share knowledge about classification and cataloguing of library materials with colleagues	42	32	8	0	3.41
I share knowledge about librarianship with my colleagues	57	24	1	0	3.68
I share only important knowledge on library matters with colleagues	47	21	6	8	3.30
My colleagues share new library practice with me	39	29	14	0	3.30
I share new working skill I learn with my colleagues	29	26	17	10	2.90
My colleagues share with me new working skills they learn.	33	30	18	1	3.16

I share new library practice with my colleagues.	51	28	3	0	3.59
Knowledge sharing is something normal in this library.	69	11	1	1	3.80
I share only important knowledge on library matters with colleagues	27	44	7	4	3.15
I share knowledge about new trend in librarianship with my colleagues	51	28	2	1	3.57
I find it difficult to share from my colleagues experience	8	52	14	8	2.73
Aggregate Mean	3.37				
Criterion Mean	2.50				

With an aggregate mean of 3.37, higher than the criterion mean of 2.50, Table 2 demonstrated that there is a high degree of information sharing among librarians in Delta State universities. Similar to this study, Awodoyin, Osisanwo, Adetoro, and Adeyemo (2016) discovered that there was substantial knowledge exchange among librarians. According to the survey, librarians discussed staffing, serials usage concerns, data production and digital preservation issues, library user issues, categorization and cataloguing of library materials issues, and technology use in libraries among other topics.

Testing of the Hypothesis

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between perception and knowledge sharing among librarians in universities

Table 3: Relationship between Perception of Librarians and Knowledge Sharing

		Perception of Librarians students towards knowledge sharing	Extent to which knowledge is shared
Perception of Library students towards knowledge sharing	Pearson Correlation	1	.789
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	82	82
Extent to which knowledge is shared	Pearson Correlation	.789	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	82	82

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) for Table 3 is ($=0.789$). Given that the significant value (Sig.2-tailed) is 0.000 (less than 0.05), it can be said that there is a significant correlation between perception and the sharing of digital knowledge among librarians in Delta State colleges. As a result, the null

hypothesis is disproved, suggesting that an improvement in how librarians are perceived may result in an expansion of the amount of digital knowledge they share.

Discussion of Findings

Results also showed that librarians in Delta State colleges have a positive attitude toward knowledge sharing. This finding confirms that of Onifade (2015), who discovered that librarians in federal university libraries in Nigeria have a favorable and fair perception of knowledge sharing. Hence, librarians should express their thoughts on the job that has to be done and how it should be done. This will significantly help new hires succeed in their positions and benefit the company.

It was discovered that librarians at universities in Delta State frequently share their information. This finding confirms that high levels of knowledge exchange among librarians were discovered by Awodoyin, Osisanwo, Adetoro, and Adeyemo in 2016. Since knowledge sharing may improve decision-making abilities, create learning organizations, and foster cultural change and creativity, it is crucial for a firm to succeed.

In universities in Delta State, there is a considerable correlation between perception and knowledge sharing among librarians and information science workers. This finding is consistent with that of Onifade (2015), who found that professionals in the fields of libraries and information have a favorable perception of knowledge sharing.

Conclusion

The study looked at librarians' attitudes on knowledge sharing in university libraries in Delta state. The survey found that Delta State university libraries' librarians have a favorable opinion of knowledge sharing. This suggests that the librarians share their information widely.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Via information literacy programs, librarians should be encouraged to pick up new skills and share their expertise with less experienced colleagues.
2. The management of the researched university libraries should make knowledge sharing a routine practice.
3. University libraries should actively embrace social media for cutting-edge information services. This will further enhance the already positive perception of librarians regarding knowledge sharing at Delta State University Libraries.

REFERENCE

- Abdulsalam, A. Olaifa, T. P. & Alu, F. (2016). The complimentary role of information communication Technology (ICT) in agricultural knowledge management in Nigeria. *Greener Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, 6(5),173-179. Retrieved from <http://doi.org/10.5580/GJAS.2016.5.012716023>
- Awodoyin, A. Osisanwo, T., Adetoro, N. & Adeyemo, I. (2016). Knowledge sharing behavior pattern analysis of academic libraries in Nigeria. *Journal of Balkan Libraries Union*, 4(1): 12-19.
- Anna, N. E., & Puspitasari, D. (2013). *Knowledge Sharing In Libraries: A Case Study of Knowledge Sharing Strategies in Indonesian University Libraries*. Proceedings of IFLA WLIC 2013 (pp. 1-11). Singapore: IFLA
- Awodoyin, A., T., Osisanwo, T., Adetoro, N., & Adeyemo, I. (2016). *Knowledge sharing behaviour pattern analysis of academic librarians in Nigeria*. *Journal of Balkan library Union*, 4(1), 12-19. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/jblu/issue/27675/291693>
- Chen, L. Y. (2006). Effect of knowledge sharing to organizational marketing effectiveness education conference hall, A. B. U. Zaria on 2nd February, 2001.
- Hong, P. ,Doll, W. J., Nahm, A. , Y., & Li, X, (2004). Knowledge sharing in integrated in large accounting firms that are strategically aligned. *The Journal of American Academic Intensions among managers: Am empirical study*. *International Journal of Management*.

- Islam, M. A., Agarwal, N. K. , & Ikeda, M. (2017). Effect of knowledge management
- Jones, M. C., & Price, R. L., (2004). Organizational knowledge sharing in ERP implementation: Lessons from industry. *Journal of Organizational and End User Computing* , 16, 21-40. *Management Review*, 45(3): 59-77.
- Michailova, S., & Husted, K. (2003). Knowledge-sharing hostility in Russian firms. California
- Mohammend, Z. (2003). Information systems and services delivery in digital age. A National Association of Library and Information Science Educators NALISE.
- Nonaka, I. (1994). The knowledge creating company. *Harvard Business Review*, 69(6), 96-104.
- Nwabueze, A. U., & Ozioko, R. E. (2010). *Information and communication technology For sustainable development in Nigeria*. Library Philosophy and Practice. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu.libphilprac> of Business, 9, 176-182.
- Ogbomo, M.& Odede, I. (2022). Relationship between attitude and knowledge sharing among librarians I universities in South-South, Nigeria. *ABSU Journal of Educational Studies*, 9(3): 139-147.
- Ogunshola, L. A. (2004). *Nigerian university libraries and the challenges of globalization: The ways forward*. *Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship*, 5(23).
- Olaifa, T. P., Abdulsalam, A., & Alu, F. (2014). *Utilisation of ICT for information dissemination to farmers in Nigeria: A case study of Kwara State cassava Growers Association*
- Omotayo, F. O. (2015). *Knowledge management as an important tool in organisational management: A review of literature*. Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal). Paper 1238
- on service innovation in academic libraries. *IFLA Journal*, 43(3), 266-281.
- Onifade, F. & Akinola, B. (2017). *The use of ICT for information and knowledge sharing*. *Nigerian Library Link*, 16(1&2), 83-95.
- Onifade, F. N. (2015). *Knowledge sharing among librarians in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria*. *Information and Knowledge Management*, 5(3). Retrieved from www.iiste.org paper presented at the departmental staff seminar held at the faculty of
- Postolache, A. (2017). *5 benefits of knowledge sharing within an organization*. Retrieved from <https://www.quandora.com/5-benefits-knowledge-sharing-organization/> product development. *European Journal of Knowledge Management*, 7(2), 102-112.
- science education in Nigeria. Paper presented at the 10th Biennial conference of the
- Semertzaki, E. (2012). *Why special libraries are the right places to host a knowledge management center?* IFLA KM Satellite Meeting, Helsinki, Finland, 10 August 2012
- via commitment: A review and research agenda, *Employee Relations*, 25(2), 182-202.
- Wang, C. C. (2004). The influence of ethical and self-interest concerns on knowledge Sharing. 21, 370-381.



Digital Technology Documentation and Preservation of Undeveloped Languages in the North-eastern, Nigeria

Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Bedu¹,

¹, Department of Languages and Linguistics, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

As the world becomes increasingly reliant on digital technological infrastructure in all aspects of social life, the prevalence of digital media communication continues to shape the experiences of language users and influence their choice of language on internet platforms. Recent surveys indicate that among the 550 languages spoken in Nigeria, only three major Nigerian languages have a significant digital presence and resources. This trend suggests that many lesser-developed Nigerian languages, especially in the Northeast region, are under greater threat than ever, as digital advancement primarily reinforces the dominance of lingua franca languages. The present study employs a netnographic research method to investigate the growing concerns and effects of digital technology advancement on nine lesser-developed Nigerian languages in the Northeast region. The research findings highlight potential strategies for sustainable language documentation, preservation, and maintenance in the digital era. These strategies include the creation of digitally recorded and printed resources, as well as language transfer primers.

Keywords

Language endangerment, documentation, preservation, lesser-developed languages, digital media

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

The world is increasingly becoming globalized and reliant on the digital technological infrastructure that dominates both our professional and personal lives. People's interactions, communications, and expressions have increasingly migrated to the virtual realm, making their lives more intertwined with languages that have developed in line with established digital communication protocols (Shehu et al., 2024).

Nigeria, which boasts a population and number of languages that exceed those of other African countries (Emenajo, 1998), has the highest number of internet users on the continent. Many of these users leverage indigenous languages in their online interactions and communications. The ubiquity and immediacy of digital media communication are not only shaping language users' experiences but also influencing their choice of language on internet platforms. This trend promotes developed Nigerian languages over those that are underdeveloped in the digital space (Bedu, 2025). Although digital vitality reflects the extent to which a language is used on the internet, including digital devices and platforms (Bedu, 2025), recent surveys indicate that only three Nigerian languages—Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba—are regarded as having significant digital vitality due to their online presence and available resources (Shehu et al., 2024). This suggests that many undeveloped Nigerian languages, particularly in the Northeast region, are more threatened than ever, as digital development tends to reinforce the use of lingua franca.

The literature shows that Nigeria's linguistic landscape accounts for roughly one-fourth of the 2,000 languages spoken in Africa, with over 520 languages identified, the Northeast region having the highest concentration of languages (Udosen, 2018). Only a few of these languages are considered developed, possessing standard orthographies, grammar books, and dictionaries (Bamgbose, 1991, 1993; Blench, 2000; Yusuf et al., 2014). This implies that Nigeria has a significant concentration of languages that are critically endangered in the digital era. Therefore, this study employs netnography to discuss the growing concerns and impacts of digital technology advancements on the development, documentation, preservation, and revitalization of undeveloped Nigerian languages in the Northeast region. It will also highlight strategies for addressing the threats posed by these technological advancements.

Nigerian Languages and Digital Technology

Digital media and social networking platforms are becoming crucial linguistic and communication spaces that significantly influence the survival of languages in the 21st century. These digital platforms can enhance not only linguistic diversity but also the documentation and preservation of languages, regardless of their social status. Despite Nigeria's estimated 520 languages, making it the third-highest country in terms of spoken languages worldwide, there are few serious efforts to document and preserve the country's rich linguistic heritage, particularly for minority languages, in the digital space. This oversight hampers their ability to withstand the challenges posed by advancements in digital technology.

Scholars in language and media studies view digital technology as a gateway to progress and globalization (Wodak and Busch, 2004; Bedu, 2024). Regrettably, 99.99% of Nigerian languages, due to their undeveloped status, are not benefiting from the opportunities provided by advancements in digital technology. Currently, only three major Nigerian languages—Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba—along with Nigerian Pidgin English, have established their presence in the digital space. In this context, the remaining languages, especially minority and network languages like Kanuri, Fulfulde, and Shuwa-Arab spoken across international borders in the Northeast region, require better documentation, preservation, and digital inclusion.

Every language has the right to exist, regardless of the size of its speaking population. Therefore, digital technology must integrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of Nigerian languages, particularly the undeveloped ones, into Natural Language Processing (NLP) and universal AI algorithms for their documentation and preservation (Bedu, 2024). This integration will be crucial in preventing the endangerment of indigenous languages, which may disappear due to younger generations shifting toward more dominant languages in the digital space for socioeconomic reasons. For this reason, digital technology can play a vital role in mitigating linguistic decline, offering innovative methods for documenting, preserving, and revitalizing undeveloped languages for intergenerational transmission

The Linguistic Situation in the Northeast Region of Nigeria

The Northeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria is a linguistically heterogeneous region (Udosen, 2018). There are six states in the region, including Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe. The linguistic state of the region is largely multilingual (Yusuf, 2024). This is because all six states have many languages that are partially developed and others that remain underdeveloped. The unpublished 2020 report on the Development of Language Policy for Nigeria and the survey of languages in the Northeast sub-region, coordinated by Mohammed Munkaila, shows the sociolinguistic status of languages in the six states in the region as follows:

1. Adamawa state

i. Languages with standard orthography

Fulfulde, and Hausa

ii Languages with Non-Standard Orthography

Bachama, Vere, Chamba, Kilba, Yungur, Lungudà, Kanakuru, Higgi, Bachama, Mbula, Bata, Bura, Marghi and Leko

iii Languages without orthography

Fali, Gude, Njanyi, Mohina, Mafa, Gira, Godo-godo, Mboi, Mummuye, Teme, Tola, Nyadang, Lamba, Dongsa, Waka, Bwamba, Yotti, Bile, Kona, Kugama, Bengle, Sate, Lala, Ngwamba, Fwatta, Hona, Kanakuru, Pirre, Kwana, Sobo, Jego, Sayawa, Didiya, Waja, Bolari, Muzurwa, Duru, Potopo, Kuting, Panso, Gbaya, Babus, Laka, Hibo, Badama, Tandang, Lamja, Bali, Maynang, Lubamba, Wurkun, Matakam, Kirya, Malakem, Ken, Kava, Gra, Wagga, Vergo, Sukur, Wula, Ngara, Chibode, Buka, Kanakum, Barbone, Miduka, Ga'anda.

iv. Languages with available literature and dictionary

Hausa, Vachama, Vata, Mbula, Verre, Chamba, Bura, Kilba, Fulfulde, Higgi, Marghi

2. Bauchi state

i. Languages with standard orthography

Hausa, Fulfulde, Kanuri

ii. Languages with non-standard orthography

Karaikare and Za'ar

iii. Language without orthography

Geranci, Za'ar, Karaikare, Deno, Bade, Bole, Pa'an, Warji, Wukshi, Dit, Daza, Dott Durr, Polci, Bure, Mburku, Luri. Jaraanci, Gezawa, Geruna, Kojora, Polshi, Bankala, Zakshi, Zumbula, Gusawa, Limaro, Zarandawa, Sanga, Zuigami, Zaima, Ribina, Duguza, Kere, Gona, Dersha, Ngas, Bijim, Sigdee, Wurwa. Kirfanci, Denewa, Gabiranci, Karere, Geranci, Denanci, Miya, Kariya, Kabanci, Siri, Warji, Tsaganci, Burkanci, Jimbunanu, Galanci, Ajah, Fazanci, Ngamao, Gudawa. Dir, Butanci, Siri.

iv. Languages with available literature and dictionary

Hausa, Fulfulde, Kanuri, Angas, Za'ar, Jaranwa, Karaikare

3. Borno state

i. Languages with standard orthography

Kanuri, Hausa, Fulfulde, Shuwa Arab,

ii. Languages with non-standard orthography

Pabər/Babur, Marghi, Lamaang/Waha, Gulavda,

iii. Languages without orthography

Maffa, Buduma, Guduf, Kotoko, Lunguda, Kanakuru, Banana, Kablai, Gulai, Sara, Baghirimi, Meseme, Kim, Gabiri, Murum, Mundang, Tibiri, Gbaya, Mbum, Giziga, Matakam, Banda, Kabeteri,

iv. Languages with available literature and dictionary

Kanuri, Shuwa Arab, Marghi, Fulfulde, Bura/Bura, Hausa, Lamaang

4. Gombe state

i. Languages with standard orthography

Hausa, Fulfulde, Kanuri

ii. Languages with non-standard orthography

Tangle, Nyimatli, Waja

iii. Languages without orthography

Awak, Bole, Bongunji/Bangwinji, Burak, Cham, Dadiya, Jara, Kanakuru, Kamo, Kushi, Loo, Lunguda, Ngamu, Pero, Tula, Karekare, Filiya, Babir

iv. Language with available literature and dictionary

Hausa, Fulfulde, Kanuri, Tangle, Waja

5. Taraba state

i. Languages with standard orthography

Fulfulde, Hausa, Jukun, Mumuye, Tiv

ii. Languages with non-standard orthography

Wurkum, Kulung, Kuteb, Kona, Fum, Gbaya, Jibu, Tarok, Tigon, Mbembe, Dirim

iii Languages without orthography

Abon, Áncá, Auyaka, Arago, Awak, Boboli, Bandawa, Bachama, Bambuka, Bayawa, Boghom, Bile, Bitare, Batu, Buru, Chamba, Chamba-Mala, Chamba Daka, Como Karim, Dza, Dadiya, Daka, Dalon, Dimak, Etkywan, Fam, Garkayi, Giru, Gomoe, Gwamdum, Gwak, Hōne, Ichen, Idoma, Kam, Kaka, Kakanda, Karinjo, Kambu, Kamu, Karinjo, Koje, Kwakla, Kunini, Kpan, Kyak, Kwa, Lamnso, Lidzonka, Limbum, Laka, Leko, Loo, Jirim, Jiru, Jenjo, Jesi, Jole, Juken Marabi, Lo, Mambilla, Mak, Mághdi, Mbongno, Mvanip, Munga, Munga, Mwaghavul, Muryan, Molere, Mundan, Munga Doso, Munga Lelau, Ngas, Ndoola, Ndaro, Nyam, Nyong, Ndunda, Nshi, Nde-Gbite, Oturu, Panso, Panya, pang seng, Piya-kwonci, Pero, rang, Sire, Shomo, Ship, Saya, Shamo, Shoo-Minda-Nye, Shomo, Somyev, Tangale, Tera, Tita, Tula, Tal, Tango, Telh, Vera, Viti, Vute, Wujo, Waja, Wurbo, Yamba, Yendang, Zoo, Za:r, Zugur.

iv. Languages with available literature and dictionary

Fulfulde, Hausa, Jukun, Kulung, Mumuye, Tiv

6. Yobe state

i. Language with standard orthography

Hausa, Fulfulde Kanuri and Pabər,

ii. Languages with non-standard orthography

Bade, Bole, Duwai, Karekare, Maka, Ngamo, and Ngizim

iii. Languages without orthography (None)

Languages with available literature and dictionary

Bade, Bole, Duwai, Karekare, Maka, Ngamo, and Ngizim Hausa, Fulfulde Kanuri and Pabər

The survey report indicates that the northeast region has a diverse linguistic landscape, featuring 351 distinct languages. Taraba State is home to 135 languages, followed by Adamawa State with 86, Bauchi State with 66, Borno with 30, Gombe with 24, and Yobe with 10 languages. Notable languages in the region include Kanuri, Fulfulde, Chamba, and Marghi, which are spoken in more than one state. These languages exhibit varying degrees of mutual (un)intelligibility and are classified as minority languages based on their sociolinguistic status. Traditionally, minority languages have relied on informal contexts for their survival, often being spoken at home or among friends. However, speakers frequently switch to dominant languages in formal settings, such as schools, workplaces, and digital media platforms.

Given these dynamics, this study explores the role of digital technology in documenting and preserving underdeveloped languages in the region. By examining digital interventions, the research aims to assess the effectiveness of digital media platforms in sustaining endangered languages, with a view to developing sustainable approaches to linguistic diversity in an era of rapid digitalization.

Review of Literature on Language Documentation and Preservation

Many sociolinguistic studies predict that in the next 100 years, 50% to 95% of the world's languages may become extinct or face substantial decline in vitality due to threats from dominant languages and the failure of younger generations to learn them (Krauss, 1992; Wurm, 2003; Yusuf, 2024). Endangered languages are variously described as critically endangered, moribund, and extinct (Walsh, 2023; Yusuf, 2024).

Endangered languages are at risk of becoming moribund, meaning they are no longer transmitted to children by adults (Krauss, 1992; Yusuf, 2024). Language extinction is akin to linguistic genocide, involving the gradual withering away of languages (Ofudu, 2025). When speakers cease to use a language, or its use is increasingly limited to a few domains, it may transition from endangered to moribund and eventually extinct. Thus, an endangered language is highly likely to become extinct. Furthermore, UNESCO's Red Book classifies language endangerment by stating that "extinct" and "nearly extinct" languages are those that have very few or no living speakers. However, the criteria for defining "seriously endangered," "endangered," or "potentially endangered" languages in relation to "safe" or "non-endangered" languages can be quite vague (Azuonye, 2002:41).

The most effective way to prevent an endangered language from becoming moribund or extinct is through documentation. Language documentation involves collecting, processing, and archiving linguistic data, such as texts, word lists, recordings of conversations, and videos of speakers telling stories. New digital technologies have proven to be effective tools for the documentation and preservation of endangered languages.

In this twenty-first century, the increasing dominance of global languages, combined with the rapid expansion of digital communication, has placed many underdeveloped languages at risk of not just endangerment but complete extinction (Bird, 2022). UNESCO (2019) reports that nearly 40% of the world's languages are endangered, with some disappearing entirely due to a lack of active speakers or their inactivity in interpersonal communication within both public and digital media domains. This highlights the fact that digital technology is increasingly a powerful tool for linguistic documentation and preservation, especially for underdeveloped indigenous languages that need adequate representation in digital spaces. Bird (2022) argues that the lack of digital resources—such as educational tools, social media integration, and machine translation support—will further marginalize these underdeveloped languages in the face of dominant languages on digital media platforms.

Language documentation and preservation involve multi-faceted processes. Studies indicate that digital storytelling and online communities empower indigenous speakers to reclaim their linguistic identities and promote intergenerational transmission (Morris, 2020). However, scholars warn that the commercialization of digital spaces may marginalize indigenous linguistic content if platform algorithms favor only dominant languages (Kelly-Holmes & Pietikäinen, 2024).

At present, many Nigerian indigenous languages, especially in the northeast region, are at risk of disappearing as younger generations shift towards the dominant languages on digital platforms for socioeconomic mobility. This important challenge is one this paper seeks to advance for linguists to tackle, because every language, regardless of its population size, is important to human communication (Bedu, 2020).

Netnography Method and Source of Data

This research employs virtual ethnography (Hine, 2000), also referred to as netnography (Kozinets, 2010). Kozinets (2010, p. 60) defines netnography as "participant-observational research based in

online fieldwork." Similar to traditional ethnography, netnography is a research approach that utilizes various internet-focused data collection methods and techniques (Hine, 2000). Importantly, while virtual ethnography does not require a physical presence in the field, it still incorporates essential elements of traditional ethnographic fieldwork, such as interaction and involvement (Hine, 2000).

In this research context, netnography is employed to explore language use on digital platforms and to assess the sociolinguistic status of underdeveloped Nigerian languages. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, influenced by a sociolinguistic perspective, were utilized for this study. The chosen qualitative and quantitative methodologies of netnography effectively incorporate traditional ethnographic techniques to examine the sociolinguistic status of underdeveloped Nigerian languages, aiming to illustrate the impact of their inclusion in social media networks while highlighting the consequences of their limited digital presence.

For this study, nine specific languages have been selected: Bole, Ngamo, and Ngizim from Yobe State; Pabər/Bura, Kanakuru, and Waha from Borno State; as well as Chamba, Higgi, and Bachama from Adamawa State. This selection was justified based on the existence of an Emirate or Chiefdom for each language that has functional Facebook pages facilitating digital communication and interaction. To achieve the research objectives, data collection involved generating 80 online textual posts and comments in equal proportions from each of the respective Emirates/Chiefdoms' Facebook pages for analysis.

The rationale behind selecting these nine target languages is to identify strategies that can mitigate the impact of digital dominance by resource-rich languages on minority languages. The goal is to illustrate how digital technologies can be effectively utilized in language documentation and preservation efforts to support languages that are in decline.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The Northeast region of Nigeria is characterized by rich linguistic diversity, with numerous languages at risk of becoming endangered or extinct. Dominant languages, such as English and Hausa, are overshadowing many lesser-known languages in the area, leading to their gradual decline. This shift in language use is further fueled by social media and other forms of digital communication. If this trend continues unchecked, it may not only result in language extinction but also cause a loss of cultural identity, traditions, and the ecological knowledge associated with these languages.

A netnographic investigation has revealed that various traditional institutions are utilizing official Facebook pages to facilitate communication with their communities. The traditional institutions involved are summarized in the following table: Northeast region of Nigeria is home to a rich linguistic diversity, with many languages at risk of falling into the endangerment stage or extinction. Dominant languages like English and Hausa are side-lining many undeveloped languages across the region which is leading to their gradual decline. This language shift is also driven by social media and other digital and internet communication which if not check would not result in the language extinction but the loss of cultural identity, traditions, and historical ecological knowledge tied to these languages.

Netnography investigation shows that various traditional institutions are operating their official Facebook page to virtually facilitate communication among their subjects. These traditional institutions are reflected in the following table:

State	Emirates/Chiefdom	Languages	Facebook page
Yobe	Fika	Bole	https://web.facebook.com/fikaemiratenews
	Gudi	Ngamo	https://web.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100071067182033
	Pataskum	Ngizim	https://web.facebook.com/pataskamo
Borno	Shani	Kanakuru	https://web.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100040327064224
	Biu	Pabər/Bura,	https://web.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069203890166
	Gwoza	Waha	https://web.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100048490460847

Adanawa	Batta	Bachama	https://web.facebook.com/groups/3629458244008775
	Ganye	Chamba,	https://web.facebook.com/groups/75815089261
	Michika	Higgi/Kamwe	https://web.facebook.com/groups/1681095629288015/

Presentation of Yobe languages data

Bole, Ngamo and Ngizim languages are part of the 150 languages in the Chadic family extending across northern Nigeria into southern Niger, northern Cameroon, and western and central Chad. Bole, and Ngamo languages belong to a subbranch West-A of Chadic as opposed to the Ngizim which is under the West-B of the family.

With the exception of Bole, which has many speakers in Gombe State, Bole, Ngamo and Ngizim are indigenous languages that are almost entirely concentrated in Yobe State. Aside from a few scholarly articles, there is very little published documentation of any of these languages, yet they all have substantial communities of first language speakers. Although the languages are used for the broadcast of some radio programmes other than news by the Yobe Broadcasting Corporation, lack of documentation, plus minimal interest in the communities to develop their languages through publications makes the languages to be considered as potentially endangered languages.

It is worth noting that each of the three languages has a first-class traditional institution that the speakers of the language consider as the custodian of their linguistic and cultural heritages. The data generated on the digital interactions from the individual Facebook pages of the emirates that include Fika for Bole, Gudi for Ngamo and Pataskum for Ngizim show that the languages have exacerbated language shift as Hausa and English have been the languages of preference for communication in the social media platforms as seen in figure (1) below. The Bole, Ngamo, and Ngizim languages belong to the Chadic family, which includes around 150 languages spread across northern Nigeria, southern Niger, northern Cameroon, and western and central Chad. Bole and Ngamo are classified under the West-A subbranch of Chadic, while Ngizim falls under the West-B subbranch.

Except for Bole, which has a significant number of speakers in Gombe State, the Bole, Ngamo, and Ngizim languages are primarily indigenous to Yobe State. Despite having sizable communities of native speakers, there is very little published documentation on these languages, aside from a few scholarly articles. Although these languages are occasionally used in the broadcasting of non-news radio programs by the Yobe Broadcasting Corporation, the lack of documentation and the minimal interest within the communities to develop their languages through publications have led to the perception of these languages as potentially endangered.

It is important to highlight that each of these three languages has a well-established traditional institution that its speakers regard as the guardian of their linguistic and cultural heritage. Data from the digital interactions on the Facebook pages of the respective emirates—Fika for Bole, Gudi for Ngamo, and Pataskum for Ngizim—indicate a growing language shift, with Hausa and English becoming the preferred languages for communication on social media platforms:



The quantitative breakdown of the virtual interactions of the individual emirates' Facebook pages is presented in Table 1 below:

Emirates	Indigenous language	Facebook Followership	Post in Indigenous language		Post in Hausa language		Post in English language	
			N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Fika	Bole	58,000	0	0	57	71.25	23	28.75
Gudi	Ngamo	8,300	0	0	60	75	20	25
Pataskum	Ngizim	49,500	0	0	70	87.5	10	12.5

Presentation of Borno languages data

Like the Yobe languages, Kanakuru, Pabər/Bura, and Lamaang/Waha also belong to the Chadic family. With the exception of Kanakuru, which is classified as West-A within the Chadic language group, Pabər/Bura and Lamaang/Waha are considered Central Chadic languages. These languages are still vibrant in the rural areas of Borno State.

However, similar to their Yobe counterparts, all of these languages are endangered by Hausa. As both a demolect and a lingua franca, Hausa poses a significant threat to local languages like Kanakuru, Pabər/Bura, and Lamaang/Waha, which have a large population of speakers in rural areas. This sociolinguistic situation is detrimental to the vitality and preservation of these languages. In fact, language loyalty among the speakers of these relatively small language communities is quite limited in the state. The traditional institutions representing these three languages each have their own Facebook pages for the dissemination of information, as shown in Figure (2) below:

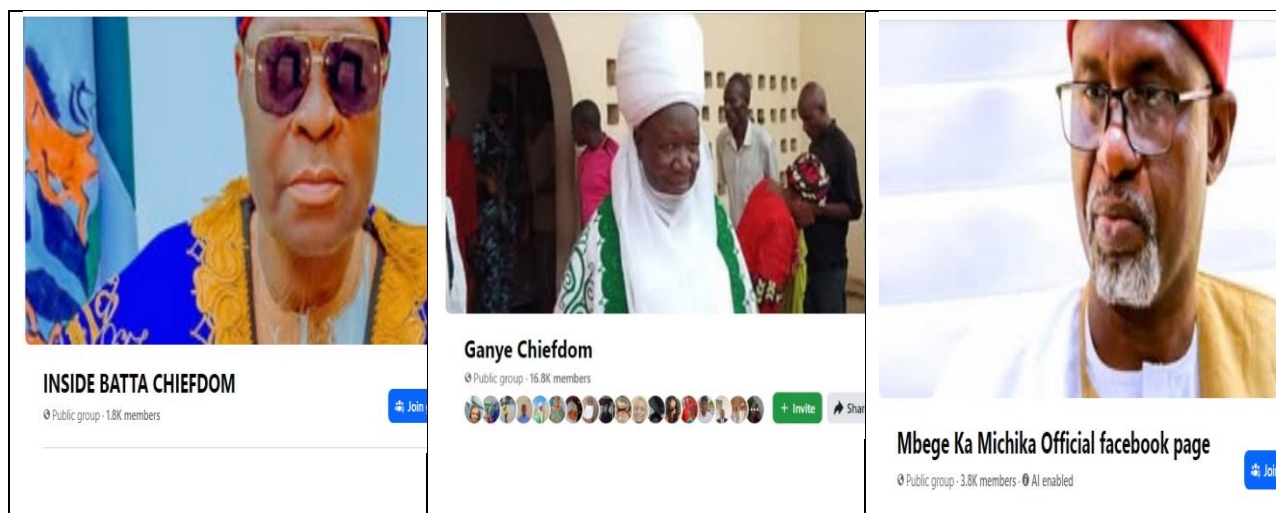


The digital interactions analyzed from individual Facebook pages of the Emirates indicate that English and Hausa have become the dominant languages for virtual communication across all social media platforms. This shift occurs because these two languages are seen as more effective means of communication, allowing messages to reach speakers from diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds more quickly than their indigenous languages. Please refer to Table 2 below for further details:

Emirates	Indigenous language	Facebook Followership	Post in Indigenous language		Post in Hausa language		Post in English language	
			N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Shani	Kanakuru	2,700	0	0	25	31.25	55	68.75
Biu	Pabər/Bura	9,300	0	0	20	25	60	75
Gwoza	Lamaang/Waha	8,600	0	0	39	48.75	41	51.25

Presentation of Adamawa languages data

Batta, Chamba, and Higgi are languages associated with traditional institutions known as Hamma Batta, Gangwari of Ganye, and Mbege ka Michika in Adamawa State. Batta and Chamba are part of the Adamawa-eastern languages within the Niger-Congo language family, while Higgi belongs to the Chadi Central languages. Like other traditional institutions, all three chiefdoms maintain Facebook pages to communicate virtually, both within their communities and beyond, as shown in Figure 3 below:



The quantitative analysis of the virtual interactions and engagements on the individual Chiefdoms' Facebook pages is detailed in the following table 3:

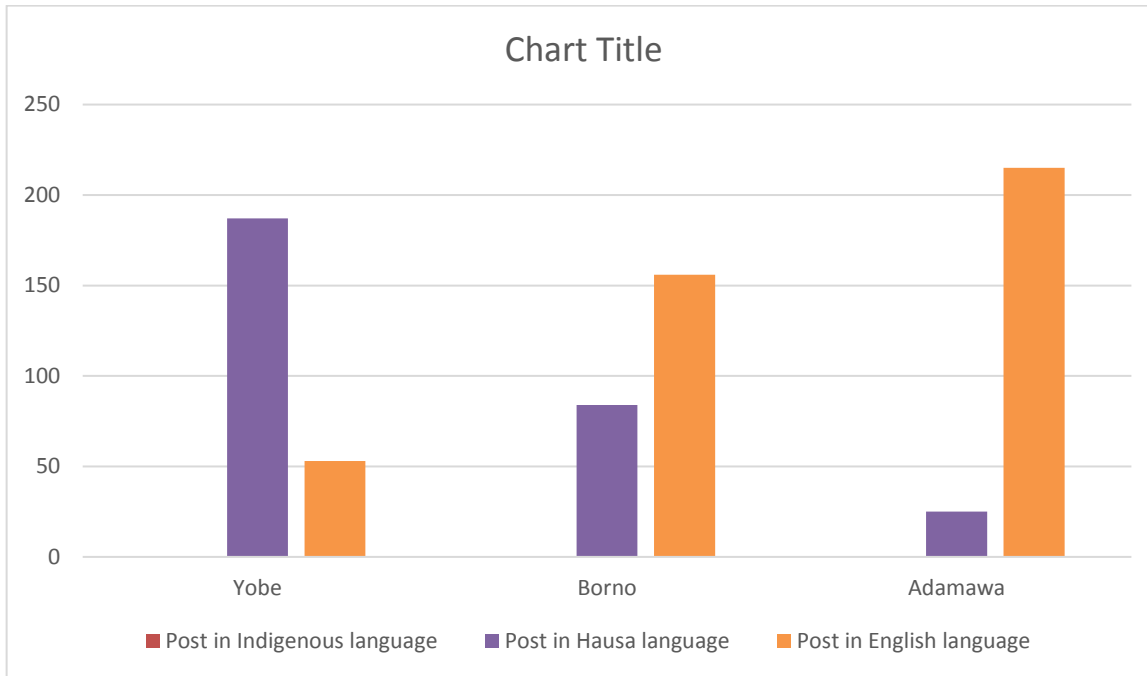
Chiefdom	Indigenous language	Facebook Followership	Post in Indigenous language		Post in Hausa language		Post in English language	
			N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Batta (Damsa)	Batta	2,700	0	0	0	31.25	80	100
Ganye	Chamba	9,300	0	0	20	25	60	75
Michika	Higgi	8,600	0	0	5	6.25	75	93.75

Quantitative analysis of the data

Although, Facebook as social network platform can provide a valuable and unique opportunity for the indigenous languages because of its potential to reach a vast and diverse global audience while offering a wide range of avenue for interaction among the native speakers of the indigenous languages. The data presented in the immediate sub-section show abysmal status with zero percentage of the indigenous languages on the individual Emirates/Chiefdoms' Facebook official platforms. From the statistical data, the continuum of the Facebook posts and comments in the Emirates/Chiefdoms' Facebook official platforms indicates that the social media is the phenomenon in the global digital communication which is redefining the future of the languages and cultural backbone of the people. To understand the danger of linguistic and loss of cultural identities that the evolution of digital communication like Facebook may pose to the indigenous languages, the diagrammatical presentation of above the statistical would bring out the real challenges facing the indigenous languages in each state in the region as you can see in the bar chart below.

Although Facebook, as a social networking platform, offers a valuable opportunity for indigenous languages by reaching a vast and diverse global audience and providing various avenues for interaction among native speakers, the current status is concerning. Data from the immediate subsection reveals that there is a complete absence of indigenous languages on the official Facebook platforms of the individual Emirates and Chiefdoms.

The statistical data indicates that the continuum of Facebook posts and comments on these official pages highlights how social media is reshaping global digital communication, potentially redefining the future of languages and the cultural foundations of communities. To comprehend the dangers of language loss and the erosion of cultural identities that the rise of digital communication tools like Facebook may pose to indigenous languages, the diagrammatic presentation of the above statistics illustrates the challenges facing these languages in each state in the region, as shown in the bar chart below.:



The absence of indigenous languages in the official Facebook posts of traditional institutions—who are the custodians of language and cultural heritage in three states—indicates a concerning sociolinguistic future for these underdeveloped languages in the digital space. Although Hausa is the lingua franca in the northeast region, data shows that English is more frequently used as a medium of communication on the Facebook platforms of Emirates and Chiefdoms in Borno and Adamawa states. In contrast, in Yobe State, Hausa has a slight edge over English on the Facebook page of the Emirates Councils.

Furthermore, a closer examination of the data highlights the challenges that indigenous languages face in the digital era, particularly when comparing the performance of Nigerian indigenous languages, including Hausa, to the more resource-rich English language on the official Facebook platforms of the Emirates and Chiefdoms. Despite the selected Emirates and Chiefdoms in the three northeastern states having a combined followership of 157,000—primarily consisting of native speakers of their respective indigenous languages, with Hausa as the lingua franca—the usage of English in Facebook posts is significantly higher. There were 424 posts in English compared to only 296 posts in Hausa, as illustrated in Table 4 below:

States	Indigenous languages	Facebook Followership	Post in Indigenous language		Post in Hausa language		Post in English language	
			N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Yobe	Bole	58,000	0	0	57	71.25	23	28.75
	Ngamo	8,300	0	0	60	75	20	25
	Ngizim	49,500	0	0	70	87.5	10	12.5
Borno	Kanakuru	2,700	0	0	25	31.25	55	68.75
	Pabər/Bura	9,300	0	0	20	25	60	75
	Lamaang/Waha	8,600	0	0	39	48.75	41	51.25
Adamawa	Batta	2,700	0	0	0	31.25	80	100
	Chamba	9,300	0	0	20	25	60	75
	Higgi	8,600	0	0	5	6.25	75	93.75
Total		157,000	00	00	296	41.1	424	58.9

The statistical data presented in Table 4 highlight the urgent issue of language endangerment among indigenous languages in the digital realm. This situation demands immediate and collective action to prevent the irreversible loss of Nigeria's linguistic heritage. In response to this challenge, it is essential to propose effective solutions to address the endangerment of indigenous languages in Nigeria.

The most effective methods for combating this threat in today's digital age include the documentation, preservation, and digital maintenance of endangered languages, which are often underrepresented online. This approach requires collaboration among governments, communities, linguists, educators, and individuals to protect Nigeria's rich linguistic diversity.

Discussion

An important highlight of this study is the diverse linguistic landscape of the northeast region of Nigeria, which is home to nearly 351 distinct languages out of the approximately 550 Nigerian languages. From Sociolinguistic perspective, many of these languages in the region are underdeveloped and lack an online presence within their respective traditional institutions. The quantitative analysis in the study further reveals that languages like Hausa, which are spoken by millions as a lingua franca in Nigeria and beyond, are marginalized by English in the data sample analyzed. This situation means that speakers of minority or digitally underdeveloped languages are increasingly excluded from the digital space, as evident in the noticeable gaps between Hausa and English in Facebook posts highlighted in the data presentation and analysis.

To achieve digital inclusion for Nigeria's indigenous languages, it is essential to develop a well-articulated process for transitioning these underdeveloped languages from spoken to written form. This process must involve documenting and preserving their grammar, vocabulary, and cultural narratives. In our rapidly evolving digital landscape, Nigerian indigenous languages must be fully developed and compatible with computer algorithms and Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies to survive in the competitive digital era.

The research emphasizes the importance of documentation and preservation strategies to address both immediate and long-term concerns regarding the impact of the digital media revolution on language endangerment. Some possible strategies include creating recorded and printed resources, as well as language transfer primers. Introducing native languages into educational pedagogy is another viable solution for documenting and preserving these underdeveloped Nigerian languages. In this regard, governments at all levels must institutionalize the use of mother tongues as the medium of instruction in primary schools across Nigeria. The National Language Policy should be implemented to ensure that mother tongues are used as a compulsory medium of instruction from primary one to six.

Since various digital and social media platforms serve as catalysts for the documentation and preservation of languages, leveraging digital tools can help shift underdeveloped languages from a state of endangerment to one of empowerment. Promoting language loyalty can raise awareness of the importance of language preservation and advocate for the support and use of local languages in both mainstream and new media. This approach can encourage the use of multilingualism in cyberspace.

Conclusion

The discussions in this study illustrate that the digital age presents both challenges and opportunities for the documentation and preservation of indigenous languages. It highlights how digital platforms, particularly social media like Facebook, facilitate greater engagement with these languages. However, it also notes that digital exclusion and the underrepresentation of indigenous languages within technological frameworks can endanger lesser-known Nigerian languages.

As the technological infrastructure that dominates our lives is primarily in English, minority languages are more threatened than ever. Therefore, the study advocates for inclusive communication

policies from the government, requiring digital media and social networking platforms to support indigenous languages. Such measures would help amplify the voices of those who are already heard, particularly urban, educated, and English-speaking individuals, while silencing those on the margins, especially people in rural areas.

The research recommends fostering collaboration and interdisciplinary research among scholars in the arts, social sciences, and engineering to stimulate comprehensive, sustained efforts in documenting and preserving languages in the digital era. Adequate funding should be allocated for these collaborations and research initiatives focused on combating language endangerment and supporting the maintenance of underdeveloped Nigerian indigenous languages amidst the rise of digital communication.

References

- Azuonye, C. (2022). Igbo as an Endangered Language. *Africana Studies Faculty Publication Series*. 17: 41-68.
- Bamgbose, A. (1991). *Language and the Nation: The Consequences of Language Policies in Africa*. Edinburgh: EUP
- Bamgbose, A. (1993). Deprived, Endangered, and Dying languages. *Diogenes*, 161, 19–25.
- Bedu, A. M. (2024). Artificial Intelligence (AI) Challenges and Opportunities in Translation: An African Experience. *Al-Noor Journal for Humanities Vol. 3 (3)*: 283- 307. *Al-Noor University, Iraq*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69513/jnfh.v2n3.en12>
- Bedu, A. M (2020). An Examination of Impacts of Hausa Language on Chadic Languages: A Social Responsibility Perspective. In Yakasai, H. M. et. al. (eds). *Hausa in Chadic Languages: A Festschrift in Honour of Prof. Nina Pawlak*. Kano: Bayero University Press. Page. 114-28.
- Bird, S. (2022). Computational tools for endangered language revitalization: Lessons from the field. *Language Documentation & Conservation*, 16(1), 45-67.
- Blench, R. M. (2019). *An Atlas of Nigerian languages* (4th ed.). Kay Williamson Educational Foundation.
- Emenanjo, E. N. (1988). *Linguistics, Language of the Nation. An inaugural lecture Delivered at the University of Port-Harcourt on 13th January, 1988*.
- Escor E. U. (2018). Linguistic Survey of Nigerian Languages: A Preliminary Report of the Languages of the North East Geopolitical Zone. *JOLAN Supplement, Volume III*, pp 354- 374
- Harisu A. S., Kaloma ,U. M., Aminu B. S.; Stephen L.; Sharif, M. H.; Rabie A. R., (2024) "Unveiling Sentiments: A Deep Dive into Sentiment Analysis for Low-Resource Languages—A Case Study on Hausa Texts," *IEEE Access*, vol. 12, pp. 98900-98916, doi: 10.1109/ACCESS.2024.3427416.
- Hine, C. (2000). *Virtual Ethnography*. London: SAGE
- Kelly-Holmes, H. (2024). Artificial intelligence and the future of our sociolinguistic work. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 28(5), 3–10. doi: 10.1111/josl.12678
- Kozinets, R. V. (2015). *Netnography: Redefined*. London: SAGE.
- Krauss, M. (1992) The world's languages in crisis. *Language* 68(1): 4–10.
- Morris, M. (2020). Digital storytelling and indigenous language reclamation: Lessons from community media. *New Media & Society*, 22(8), 1392-1410.
- Wodak, R. and B. Busch (2004). Approaches to media texts. In J. Downing et al. (eds.), *Handbook of Media Studies*. London: Sage.
- Wurm, A. S. (ed.) (2001). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing*. UNESCO Publishing
- Yusuf, M. A., Salim, B., and Bello, A. (2017) (eds.). *Endangered Languages in Nigeria: Policy Structure and Documentation. Festschrift in Honour of Professor M.K.M. Galadanci Vol. 1 and 2*. Kano: BUK Press.
- Yusuf, M. A. (2024). *The Status and Classification of Nigerian Languages*. Kano: BUK Press.



Technology, Realism and Creativity in Contemporary African Literature

Dr. Suleiman A Jaji¹,

¹ Formerly of the Department of English & Literary Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This paper examined how digital technology reshapes realism and creativity in contemporary African literature. It posits that mobile phones, social media platforms, and artificial intelligence have become new material conditions for literary production, altering how African realities are represented and circulated. Three shifts are central to this hypothesis: first, the smartphone replaces the printing press as infrastructure, creating “algorithmic gatekeeping” that both democratizes and disciplines authorship; second, realism expands to include “AI Realism” and “digital realism,” where WhatsApp, data costs, and platform logics become part of the social world writers depict; third, creativity becomes multimodal and collaborative, producing genres like Facebook serials, AI-assisted poetry, and African futurism that renegotiate cultural authority. Drawing on Nigerian examples from Okada Books to Hausar littattafan soyayya to Nnedi Okorafor, the paper shows that technology does not replace the book but multiplies the forms through which African lives are made legible, visible and livable. The contemporary African writer is now also a critic of infrastructure as much as a storyteller, tasked with ensuring that human values survive platform logic and protocol.

Keywords

African literature, digital realism, AI Realism, algorithmic gatekeeping, African futurism, platform culture, Hausa literature

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Literature in general, and African literature in particular, has always been entangled with technology. From Ajami manuscripts to the mimeograph machines of Onitsha Market pamphlets to Heinemann’s African Writers Series (AWS) and the contemporary cell phones, the tools of inscription of subjectivity have shaped imaginative literature, the writer as well as who gets to imagine and read it (Julien 4). Apart from the concept of “contemporary African literature, two terms that are central to this study are Realism and Creativity. Realism in literature refers to a mode of imaginative / creative writing that seeks to represent life as it is lived, focusing on ordinary people, everyday settings, and believable social conditions (Fasan 89). Creativity on the other hand refers to the act of making or fabrication, making something new with language, including how creative writers invent stories, mix genres, and use available tools to produce meaning (Okorafor). Also, realism is a literary mode of representation that seeks to portray ordinary life with fidelity and observable detail, plausible causality and socially situated characters and events but avoiding romantic idealization, supernatural invention or overt authorial intervention (Morris 3). Its subject matter is everyday people and events rather than heroic or mythic figures (Furst 8). In terms of technique, it employs detailed description, vernacular / dialogue, and chronological plot that emphasize cause and effect (Levin 21). The literary ethos tilt more to verisimilitude or “the illusion of lived experience” as the basis for narrative authority (Watt 34). Socialist realism for example, depict man in society as a sustained attempt to describe human behavior from the inside in the context of socio - economic determinism.

In the twenty-first century, digital technology is transforming both reality and creativity. Mobile connectivity, platform cultures, and artificial intelligence are changing the realities that must be represented and the infrastructures through which creativity subsists. This paper argues that technology does not merely deliver African stories to new audiences. It also changes the texture of realism and the conditions of creativity in contemporary African literature and society.

Contemporary African literature refers to the literary texts produced by African writers in English, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Pidgin etc. including native language literatures, covering roughly from the mid – 1980s to the present. These are engaged with post - colonial, post- independence, and globalized African realities while employing diverse forms, languages and media and are shaped by digital technology, transnational circulation and shifting sociological conditions (Ogunyemi, Krishnan 12). The distinguishing feature of this literary realm is the temporal frame which is arguably from the post 1980s to the present, making it distinctly apart from the “modern” African literature of the 1950s – 1970s independence era, (Julien 6). Its scope includes writers on the continent as well as in the diaspora who claim African dissent, identity or thematic concern (Adesokan 158).

These literary works include novels, poetry, drama, as well as Facebook serials, Twitter (X) threads, spoken - word, videos and A I assisted texts that reflect new infrastructures of production (Adenekan 5). The thematic concern includes neoliberalism, migration, gender concerns, technology, the environment, state failures and non - state actors as elements of the lived conditions, moving beyond anti - colonial nationalism as dominant themes and subject matter. Briefly put, contemporary African literature could be characterized as the body of work marked by “aesthetic innovation and political urgency that responds to the post - colonial state” (Krishnan 12.)

New Infrastructures of Authorship: from Printing Press to the Digital Phone – Are We Witnessing the Birth of a New Writer?

For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, African literary production was majorly defined by external gatekeeping. African Writers relied mainly on European mentors, including European critics and publishers, the university syllabi, and donor-funded prizes to reach readers (Suhr-Sytsma 112). The political economy of the printing press ensured that only a small elite could write, and an even smaller global audience could read African literature. Digital technology dismantled all these bottlenecks. The mobile phone is now in the business of the printing press, the bookstore, and the library. This is arguably a massive paradigm shift in literature and criticism.

In Nigeria, this paradigmatic shift is most visible in two domains. The first is OkadaBooks, founded in 2013. The platform allows teenagers to publish novellas directly from Techno phones and earn royalties without seeing or meeting an editor (Sanya). In the process, they also improve on their literary creativity, (Crystal, 161.) The second is Hausa littattafan soyayya, that are serialized on Facebook and WhatsApp. After the Kano State Censorship Board banned hundreds of romance chapbooks in the early 2000s, authors massively moved to online sources (Fasan 89). Groups like _Mawallafa and Northern Writers Summit now host novels with the former having over 50,000 members. Writers sell PDF chapters through Opay and Monie Point, turning WhatsApp into a parallel publishing industry (Ibrahim).

This infrastructural change creates what could be considered as genuine literature. The serialized Facebook novel, the 280-character poem on Twitter / X, and the Instagram spoken-word video are not degradations of “real” literature. They are, arguably, new genres of literature born of new technological realities (Adenekan 7). The hitherto “privilege” of being an Author has become a public act or status and interactive. Writers and readers write and comment in real time, demanding plot changes, and crowdfunding the next chapter. The writer performs daily episodes, like a traditional Hausa maroki / praise singer adjusting his tale to the needs of the crowd and readers’ and suggestions; thereby democratizing the writing / creative business.

Yet democratization brings new constraints in the form of “algorithmic gatekeeping.” An algorithm is a set of step-by-step instructions a platform uses to rank content (Gillespie 167). It functions as a

new “mai gadi”, or gatekeeper. Where writers once faced human editors, they now face automatic gates with no visible operators. This has implications for both realism and creativity. Realism now demands that writers depict how algorithms shape daily life, because the code is part of lived social conditions. Creativity now requires negotiating with code, since the algorithm decides which forms, genres, and voices become visible. A poet whose work does not fit X’s / Twitter’s engagement metrics disappears, regardless of its literary merit (Ajayi). The algorithm rewards what is fast, visual, and interactive. A complex novel in PDF gets no readers’ reach because users won’t tap through 30 pages. Writers therefore shape their creativity to what the code prefers in real time.

Platform precarity intensifies this infrastructural condition. In 2023, Meta deleted several large Hausa literature groups for “community violations,” erasing years of work with no appeal (Ibrahim). Unlike print, digital texts are vulnerable to sudden deletion. The timeline replaces the editor, but it is a gatekeeper without memory or accountability or moral scruples. Therefore, the smartphone liberates writers from old censors only to make them dependent on automated, opaque systems programmed by tech companies outside Africa.

Digital Realism and AI Realism: Representing a Coded World

Literary realism in Africa has always meant contending with historical, material conditions: colonialism, the postcolonial state, oil, patriarchy, nationalists / class struggle etc. Contemporary African conditions and challenges include data subscriptions, network outages, and platform policies and even data scams. This produces what could be termed “digital realism.” It is the writer that manipulates the phone, the timeline, and the algorithm as well as other undesirable elements of the process as part of the social fabric, not as external tools. In Nigerian Twitter (X) poetry, for example, the form of the poem is shaped by the platform. Line breaks become thread breaks. A poem ends with “open this” because the algorithm buries tweets without replies (Ajayi). The material reality of data costs enters the text. Writers apologize for “long threads” because readers are on “small data.” The experience of scarcity is textual, not just contextual.

A second shift is “AI Realism.” Since 2023, generative AI has entered both the practice and the subject matter of African writing. Writers use ChatGPT to draft dialogue, Midjourney for covers, and Eleven Labs for audiobooks. More radically, AI appears as character and collaborator. This development tests both terms. Realism expands because chatbots, prompts, and machine learning are now part of ordinary social conditions in Lagos or Potiskum. To write realistically means depicting how people argue with AI, pray with AI, or get scammed by AI. Creativity shifts because the writer is no longer the sole maker. S/he prompts, edits, and curates machine output, making creativity a dialogue between human intention and algorithmic probability. Contemporary stories feature lovers who are chatbots, ancestors resurrected as holograms, and poets who sue algorithms for plagiarism (Adesokan 162). These are not science fiction writers. They are realists attempting to depict a world where machine intelligence is as present as the market or the state.

Hausa digital literature is a good illustration of both modes. Writers now integrate emoji as paralinguistic markers: “Ya ce zai dawo 🤔❤️” conveys tonal complexity that plain text cannot (Mustapha 211). Voice notes circulate as adabi mai jiwuwa a digital return to orality. Meanwhile, novels depict characters who use bots to write love letters or discover their online lover is an algorithm (Adamu). Fatima Salihu’s 2025 novella *Al-Khalifa Algorithm* imagines a 2075 Kano governed by a sharia-compliant AI that allocates water based on taqwa metrics. It was first circulated as a WhatsApp PDF that fuses Islamic ethics, local politics, and the speculative form.

African futurism is a term defined by Nnedi Okorafor, which provides the broader framework for this form of writing. Unlike Western Afrofuturism, African futurism is “directly rooted in African culture, history, mythology and point-of-view” and does not privilege the West (Okorafor). Works like *Lagoon* and *The Old Drift* treat technology not as foreign import but as a site of African agency. Its writer practices realism by insisting that drones, biotech, and networks are already African realities.

Creativity in the Age of Platforms: Multimodal, Collaborative, Contested Creativity

Technology does not only change distribution and representation. It alters the texture of creativity itself. This is where our two definitions meet new conditions. Realism demands that literature reflect how people communicate today: through voice notes, emoji, memes, and links. If daily life in Kano happens on WhatsApp, then a realist text must include the chat bubble, not just the paragraph. Creativity expands because writers now compose with sound, image, and code, not just words on a page. Therefore, three practices stand out. First, literature has become multimodal. A single chapter may contain Hausa, English, Ajami script, emoji, and a link to a TikTok sound. On Telegram, a poem arrives as a voice note accompanied by a meme and archived as PDF. The page is no longer the default unit of literature. However, the chat, the thread, and the voice note are.

Secondly, a typically postmodernist case, genre boundaries collapse. Romance writers in Kano borrow speculative tropes. Literary fiction writers on Twitter (X) borrow the cliffhanger pacing of *_littattafan soyayya_*. The result is a hybrid form that refuse the old divide between “popular” and “literary” culture and literature. As Shola Adenekan argues, internet literature in Nigeria is “a legitimate space of cultural production” that generates its own aesthetics (19).

Thirdly, creativity is increasingly collaborative with machines and audiences. Writers co-author with ChatGPT, but they also co-author with readers who demand plot changes in comments. This recalls the oral performance of the African Griot, but the collaborator now includes code. The ethical questions are sharp and multiple. If a Kenyan novelist trains a language model on oral histories without community consent, is that preservation or extraction (Mwenda 12)? In 2024, Northern Nigerian writers discovered large language models had been trained on scraped Hausa blogs and Facebook novels without consent (Mwenda 12). The issue is not only plagiarism but sovereignty. If an AI can mimic a Potiskum author’s style, who owns that style? The issues here are far beyond ordinary copyright or plagiarism.

These questions have produced new cultural institutions. Writers’ associations in Kano and Potiskum for example, now run workshops titled “AI and Adabin Hausa” to create community datasets and ethical guidelines (Adamu). The aim is to move from being data users to being designers of the systems that use that data. This may sound far-fetched, but it is a germane concern.

Ethics, Authenticity, and the Question of Reality in Contemporary African Literature

The convergence of technology and literature forces a reckoning with authenticity. Digital platforms enable youth to narrate their world on their own terms. A nineteen-year-old in F.C.E.(T) Potiskum can reach 200,000 readers before elders read chapter one. This bypasses traditional malamai and government censorship, who historically regulated public morality (Mustapha 88). This has generated intense debate over *alfasha* content and the “corruption” of youth. The problem of authenticity cuts two ways. On the one hand, platforms can “flatten” African literature into a global brand. TikTok rewards trauma performance; Amazon rewards “African magical realism.” Writers risk becoming content producers for algorithms (Yékú 71). On the other hand, technology enables archiving endangered languages and mobilizing social movements. The same phone that commodifies can also preserve and even mutilate.

The ethical burden on the writer has therefore increased. S/he must protect their community stories while using tools that may undermine that protection. S/he must decide which platforms to trust, which data sets to feed, and which futures to prototype. Literary creativity remains what it always was: a technology of the imagination. The difference is that the imagination now codes, prompts, and posts (Ligaga 35).

Conclusion

This paper examined how digital technology reshapes realism and creativity in contemporary African writing. It posits that mobile phones, social media platforms, and artificial intelligence have become new material conditions for literary production, altering how African realities are represented and

circulated. Technology has not ended up making the book irrelevant, just as the camera could not end or make painting irrelevant. Instead, it has multiplied the forms through which African realities are made legible, represented. The smartphone not only replaces the printing press but also installs algorithmic gatekeepers. Realism is expanded to include data, platforms, and AI as part of the social world. Creativity becomes multimodal, collaborative, and contested, producing genres from Facebook serials to African futurist novels. The task for the next decade is not to reject technology. The griot did not reject the microphone. The Hausa writer will not reject the algorithm. The task is to ensure that amid the noise of the digital world, the signal of African humanity remains clear (Larkin 301). This requires building local platforms, archiving digital work, and training young people to be not just users of AI but shapers of its values. The contemporary African writer is also a critic of infrastructure as much as a storyteller. Their work is to insist that, even as the tools change, the purpose of literature remains human: to entertain, instruct, educate, critique, and preserve what is African.

Notes

In this paper, “algorithm” refers to the set of automated, step-by-step instructions platforms use to rank and distribute content. It functions as a new kind of mai tsaro, or gatekeeper. Where 20th-century African writers faced human editors at Heinemann or officers at the Kano State Censorship Board, today’s writers face an automatic gate with no visible operator. The algorithm scans posts and decides which ones enter the public’s timeline, based on rules written outside Africa and trained on data that rarely includes Potiskum or Africa in general.

Works Cited

- Adamu, Aliyu Lawan. “ChatGPT ya rubuta mini wasika: AI in Hausa Romance.” *Brittle Paper*, 3 Feb. 2024, <http://brittlepaper.com/2024/02/chatgpt-hausa-romance/>.
- Adenekan, Shola. “Internet Literature and the Nigerian Digital Space.” *African Identities*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2022, pp. 3-19.
- Adesokan, Akin. “African Literature and the Economy of Prestige.” *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2021, pp. 155-172.
- Ajayi, Dami. “Poetry and the Nigerian Twitter Timeline.” *Brittle Paper*, 15 Mar. 2022, <http://brittlepaper.com/2022/03/poetry-nigerian-twitter/>.
- Fasan, Rotimi Omoyele. “From Market Literature to Digital Literature in Nigeria.” *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2020, pp. 85-98.
- Crystal, David, *TXTNG THE GR8 DB8*, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Furst, Lilian R. *All is the True: The Claims and Strategies of Realist Fiction*. Duke University Press, 1995.
- Gillespie, Tarleton. “The Relevance of Algorithms.” *Media Technologies: Essays on Communication, Materiality, and Society*, edited by Tarleton Gillespie et al., MIT Press, 2014, pp. 167-193.
- Ibrahim, Yusuf. “Facebook Deletion and the Precarity of Hausa E-Literature.” *The Republic*, 18 Aug. 2023, <http://republic.com.ng/august-september-2023/facebook-hausa-literature/>.
- Julien, Eileen. *African Literatures in the Eighties*. Rodopi, 1989.
- Krishan, Madhu, *Contemporary African Literature in English: Global Locations, Post-Colonial Identifications*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Larkin, Brian. *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria*. Duke UP, 2016.
- Levin George. *The Realistic Imagination: English Fiction from Frankenstein to Lady Charterley*. University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- Ligaga, Dina. “Digital Archives and the Future of African Cultural Memory.” *African Studies Review*, vol. 65, no. 1, 2022, pp. 30-52.
- Morris, Pam, *Realism*, Routledge, 2003.
- Mustapha, Abdul Raufu. *Sects & Social Disorder: Muslim Identities & Conflict in Northern Nigeria*. James Currey, 2022.

- Mwenda, Kenneth. "Who Owns African Words? AI Training and Digital Colonialism." *The Continent*, no. 144, 6 Apr. 2024, 12.
- Okorafor, Nnedi. "Africanfuturism Defined." _Nnedi's Wahala Zone Blog, 19 Oct. 2019, <http://nnedi.blogspot.com/2019/10/africanfuturism-defined.html>.
- Ogunyemi, Chikwenye Okonjo. *Africa Wo/Man Palava: The Nigerian Novel by Women*. University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Salihu, Fatima. *Al-Khalifa Algorithm*. Kindle Direct Publishing, 2025.
- Sanya, Ope. "The OkadaBooks Decade: How Phones Changed Nigerian Publishing." *Tech Cabal*, 11 Sept. 2023, <http://techcabal.com/2023/09/11/okadabooks-decade/>.
- Suhr-Sytsma, Nathan. *Poetry, Print, and the Making of Postcolonial Literature*. Cambridge UP, 2017.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. University of California Press, 1957.
- Yékú, James. "Thighs and Hashtags: Selfies and the Gendered Body in Nigerian Digital Poetry." *Journal of African Media Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2019, pp. 63-80.

SECTION FIVE:

Mass Communication and Social Science



Government Media Regulation and Public Trust in Nigerian News Media: A Communication Policy Analysis

Hajara Garba Ibrahim¹

¹. Department of Broadcasting,
University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between government media regulation and public trust in Nigerian news media within the context of democratic communication and digital transformation. The study adopts a qualitative conceptual and policy-analysis approach, relying on existing literature, communication policies, and regulatory frameworks to analyse the implications of media regulation for media credibility and public trust in Nigeria. The paper argues that although media regulation is necessary for promoting professionalism, accountability, and the control of misinformation, excessive or politically influenced regulation may weaken editorial independence and reduce public confidence in the media. The study further reveals that media credibility is shaped by multiple factors, including ownership influence, commercialization, political interference, and the growing influence of digital and social media platforms. The paper concludes that effective media regulation requires a balance between accountability and freedom of expression. It therefore recommends independent regulatory institutions, stronger self-regulation, ethical journalism practices, media literacy initiatives, and transparent enforcement mechanisms to strengthen democratic communication and public trust in Nigerian news media.

Keywords

Government media regulation, public trust, media credibility, editorial independence, Nigerian news media

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

The mass media play important roles in democratic societies by providing information, shaping public opinion and holding governments accountable. Beyond the function of information dissemination, the media also perform the function of surveillance and agenda setting which influence political participation and democratic culture (Lasswell, 1948; McQuail, 2010). According to Schudson (2008), the media are also expected to perform the function of a watchdog, with the capacity of scrutinizing power and facilitating public debates. Accordingly, it is important for the public to trust the media because democratic participation depends to a large extent on access to credible information.

According to Kovach and Rosenstiel (2014), media credibility is the extent to which audiences perceive media contents as accurate, balanced, fair and trustworthy. However, public trust in the news media has declined globally over the years due to commercialization, misinformation, sensationalism, political polarization and the influence of ownership (Bennet & Livingston, 2018; McQuail, 2010). The rise of digital communication has escalated the concern of public trust in the media by creating an enabling environment to rapidly circulate false and manipulated information

through online platforms and social media. Castells (2009) asserts that digital communication technologies have transformed the nature of information flow and simultaneously weakened the traditional gatekeeping role of professional journalism.

The increase in the spread of misinformation and disinformation has also increased government intervention in regulating the media. Governments have often justified regulation on the grounds of national security, ethical responsibilities and the necessity to tackle fake news. Communication policy scholars have asserted that media regulation can promote accountability and social responsibility within the media systems (Boafo, 1986). However, critics argue that undue regulation can threaten the freedom of the press and editorial independence (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956), which can largely impede the abilities of the press to perform their primary responsibilities. According to Voltmer (2013), regulatory bodies or institutions in many developing democracies are frequently accused of political interference and selective sanctions against important media organization.

In Nigeria, the history of the relationship between the government and the mass media has reflected cooperation as well as conflict. Omu (1978) noted that during the colonial and military era, the Nigerian media experienced harsh censorships, restrictive decrees and political repression. This resulted in denying the media the enabling ground to explore their full potential while operating in the newly independent state. Although the democratic government had expanded the constitutional protections for freedom of expression since 1999, the tension still exists between state regulation and media independence in Nigeria. Oso (2012) has noted that the debates surrounding the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the proposed Social Media Bill, the Hate Speech Bill, and the suspension of X (formerly Twitter) operations in Nigeria in 2021 reflects the continuing concerns about government influence over communication spaces.

Studies on media regulation in Nigeria (Akinfeleye, 2008; Oso, 2012) have focused on censorship, ownership structure, communication policy and democratic development. Recent studies (Umar, Lawal & Garba, 2022) have also examined government control over digital communication platforms particularly in relation to the Twitter ban in Nigeria. However, limited scholarly attention has specifically examined the relationship between the government's regulation of the media and the public trust in Nigeria from a communication policy perspective.

Media regulation by the government is supposed to promote professionalism, accountability and promotion of ethical standards in the media. Regulatory institutions such as the NBC are responsible for regulating the operations of the media and ensure compliance with professional standards. However, media regulation is often seen as being politically influences and capable of limiting press freedom, which hinders the press from operating at their full potential. Simultaneously, Nigerian media continues to experience declining trust due to misinformation, sensationalism, ownership influences and concerns about professionalism. Some scholars believe that stronger regulations can improve media accountability and credibility, while others argue that excessive regulation weakens the independence of the media and the confidence that the public has in them.

This study seeks to examine the nature of government media regulations in Nigeria and analyse the relationship between the media regulation, media credibility and public trust in Nigeria. The study also examines how regulatory practices influence public perceptions of the media and assess the broader implications of media regulation for democratic communication in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Media regulation refers to the laws, policies and institutional mechanisms designed to guide the operations of media in the society. Regulation is usually justified as a necessary tool to ensure professionalism, accountability, and national security. McQuail (2010) posits that regulation may help in facilitating and maintaining standards of operation within the media industry, but excessive involvement of the state can weaken the role of the media as a watchdog in the society. In Nigeria, regulation of the media continues to be a controversial discussion because regulatory

practices are sometimes associated with censorship, sanctions and political influence. Scholars such as Oso (2012) and Akinfeleye (2008) posit that politically motivated regulation may discourage critical journalism and weaken democratic communication.

Media credibility is the extent to which audiences perceive media content as reliable and believable. Public trust in the media is significant because the public rely on news institutions for the information they need for democratic participation. Meyer (1988) corroborate that professionalism and ethical reporting strongly influence the credibility of the media. However, Newman *et. al* (2023) noted that public trust in the media has significantly declined as a result of fake news, commercialization of the media, sensationalism and political bias. Concerns about ownership influence, misinformation and declining ethical standards continue to affect public trust and confidence in journalism practice.

The advancement of digital information and communication technologies have transformed journalism practice the nature of public communication. Online journalism and social media have granted more access to information and simultaneously increased the spread of misinformation among people. Wardle and Derakhshan (2017) describe this condition as “information disorder”, which is characterized by the widespread of misinformation and disinformation. Governments see the need to increasingly regulate digital platforms in response to the spread of fake news, hate speech and security concerns. Even so, critics argue that the regulation of digital spaces may become a tool for censorship and political control of news, especially in environments where regulatory institutions lack independence.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Social Responsibility Theory and Democratic-Participant Theory. The Social Responsibility Theory argues that media freedom should be accompanied by ethical responsibility and accountability to the society (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956). The theory supports the regulation that is aimed at ensuring fairness, professionalism and public interest, but at the same time cautions that excessive regulation is capable of undermining the independence of the media.

The Democratic-Participant Theory emphasizes that decentralization, media plurality and freedom from excessive state control allows the media to function more effectively (McQuail, 1987). The theory posits that democratic communication can only thrive when media institutions are allowed to operate independently and citizens are allowed to have access to diverse viewpoints. These theories come together in this study to explain the discord between accountability and press freedom within media regulation debates.

Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative conceptual and policy-analysis approach. Conceptual approach is adopted because the study focuses on existing scholarly debates, theories and policy discussions that relate media regulation and public trust. The policy-analysis approach allows for critical examination of how regulatory frameworks influence media operations and democratic communication (Dye, 2017).

The study relies on secondary data sources which include books, journal articles, policy documents, media laws, regulatory codes and institutional publications. The relevant materials used to generate the data includes the NBC Code of Conduct, the Freedom of Information Act, the Cybercrimes Act, and literature on media regulation, credibility, and democratic communication.

Analysis and Discussion

The evolution of media regulation in Nigeria demonstrates a long historical trajectory which spans across colonial censorship, military repression and contemporary democratic deregulation. During the colonial era, instruments such as the Seditious Offences Ordinance of 1909 and the Newspaper Ordinance of 1917 were developed to restrict the activities of nationalist journalists and control political expressions (Omu, 1978). The military era put additional restrictions and state control

through decrees such as the Decree No. 4 of 1984, which criminalized publications that are considered humiliating to government officials and resulted to the closure of several media organizations (Ogbondah, 1994). When Nigeria returned to democratic governance in 1999, the constitution guaranteed freedom of expression under Section 39 of the Nigerian Constitution. However, regulatory practices continue to operate through institutions such as the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission, the Nigerian Press Council and other regulatory agencies that regulate communication activities, thus sustaining the ongoing debate between press freedom and state control.

Regulatory institutions such as the National Broadcasting Commission have the mandate of overseeing broadcasting standards, issuance of licences and monitoring of contents. However, as noted by Oso (2012), there are still persistent concerns over the perceived political nature of some sanctions by the commission, especially during sensitive electoral periods. Similarly, the Nigerian Press Council and the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation play complementary roles in regulating the media and public communication, however, the effectiveness of these roles is often a subject of debate because of the institutional limitations and concerns about the politization of information management. The existing legal framework which includes the 1999 Constitution, the Freedom of Information Act of 2011, the NBC code, and the Cybercrimes Act of 2015 collectively attempt to balance freedom of expression with issues of national security and public order, although selective enforcements of these laws continue to generate debates around fairness, accountability and democratic communication.

This study further discloses that media regulation in Nigeria is strongly debated. The arguments that support regulation emphasize its role in tackling misinformation, promoting professionalism and safeguarding national security, especially in light of rapid growth in digital communication and information flow. On the other hand, the critics of regulation argue that the regulatory systems often function as instruments of government control, especially when sanctions appear unevenly applied, which encourage self-censorship and weaken investigative journalism. These debates are consistent with scholarly observations that government influence and ownership of media organizations shape the editorial independence of such organizations and public trust in the media (McChesney, 2004; Freedman, 2008).

Overall, this analysis suggests that the relationship between government media regulation and public trust is not linear. It is instead influenced by institutional independence, transparency and the perceived legitimacy of the regulatory practices. Regulation may enhance media credibility and accountability when implemented fairly, but tend to undermine public trust in media institutions and regulatory bodies when it is perceived to be politically motivated. This highlights the need for a fair and balanced regulatory framework which safeguards democratic communication and at the same time ensure professional media conduct.

Conclusion

The study examined the relationship between government regulation of the media and public trust in Nigerian news media within the broader context of democratic communication and the constantly evolving digital media environment. The analysis shows that while regulation of the media is necessary to promote professionalism, ethical journalism and control of misinformation, the effectiveness of the regulation is highly dependent on the degree of independence of the regulatory institutions and the transparency of the enforcement mechanisms used.

The study concludes that media credibility and public trust are shaped by regulatory frameworks, as well as by the ownership structures, political influence, ethical standards, and the ever-changing dynamics of digital communication. Accordingly, when regulatory systems are perceived as fair, impartial and oriented towards development, they contribute positively to media accountability. But when they are perceived as politically-driven and biased, they risk undermining editorial independence and consequently weaken public trust and confidence in journalism.

The study stresses the need for a balanced regulatory framework which integrates independent regulatory institutions, effective mechanisms of self-regulation, ethical journalism practices and media literacy initiatives. Such framework is essential for sustaining democratic communication, strengthen media credibility and rebuild public trust in Nigerian news media to effectively function in an increasingly complex digital information environment.

References

- Adekoya, H. O., & Ajilore, K. (2012). Empowering national development in Nigeria through appropriate national communication policy. *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 1(4), 16–28. <https://singaporeanjbem.com/index.php/SJBEM/article/view/24>
- Akinfeleye, R. A. (2008). *Mass media and society: A multi-perspective approach*. University of Lagos Press.
- Boafo, S. T. K. (1986). Formulating comprehensive national communication policy for development in African countries: A framework. *Africa Media Review*, 1(1), 35–47.
- Bennett, W. L., & Livingston, S. (2018). The disinformation order: Disruptive communication and the decline of democratic institutions. *European Journal of Communication*, 33(2), 122–139. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323118760317>
- Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Dye, T. R. (2017). *Understanding public policy* (15th ed.). Pearson.
- Freedman, D. (2008). *The politics of media policy*. Polity Press.
- Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2014). *The elements of journalism* (3rd ed.). Three Rivers Press.
- Lasswell, H. D. (1948). The structure and function of communication in society. In L. Bryson (Ed.), *The communication of ideas* (pp. 37–51). Harper & Row.
- McChesney, R. W. (2004). *The problem of the media: U.S. communication politics in the 21st century*. Monthly Review Press.
- McQuail, D. (1987). *Mass communication theory: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- McQuail, D. (2010). *McQuail's mass communication theory* (6th ed.). Sage.
- Meyer, P. (1988). Defining and measuring credibility of newspapers: Developing an index. *Journalism Quarterly*, 65(3), 567–574. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769908806500301>
- Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Eddy, K., Robertson, C. T., & Nielsen, R. K. (2023). *Reuters Institute digital news report 2023*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2023>
- Ogbonnah, C. W. (1994). Press freedom and political development in Africa. *Africa Media Review*, 8(3), 1–39.
- Omu, F. I. A. (1978). *Press and politics in Nigeria, 1880–1937*. Longman.
- Oso, L. (2012). *Press and politics in Nigeria: On whose side?* (47th Inaugural Lecture Series). Lagos State University Press.
- Oso, L., & Pate, U. A. (Eds.). (2011). *Mass media and society in Nigeria*. Malthouse Press.
- Schudson, M. (2008). *Why democracies need an unlovable press*. Polity Press.
- Siebert, F. S., Peterson, T., & Schramm, W. (1956). *Four theories of the press*. University of Illinois Press.
- Suleiman, J. (2018). The media, implementation of the Nigerian national communication policy, and citizens' participation in development. *European Scientific Journal*, 14(26), 193–215. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2018.v14n26p193>
- Voltmer, K. (2013). *The media in transitional democracies*. Polity Press.
- Wardle, C., & Derakhshan, H. (2017). *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making*. Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-report-version-2018/16808c9c77>



Discursive Strategies in “*Good Morning Katsina Programme*” on 92.1 Vision FM Radio

Bello Ibrahim¹ & Usman Ibrahim

¹Department of English,
College of Humanities,
Al-Qalam University, Katsina. Nigeria.

²Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Katsina State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study examines Discursive Strategies used in the “*Good Morning Katsina Programme*” on 92.1 Vision FM Katsina, with three interrelated objectives: to identify the dominant discursive strategies used in the programme; to investigate how these strategies guide, constrain, or enable participant engagement; and to describe how the linguistic framing of discussion topics influences audiences' beliefs, opinions, and perceptions. The research utilizes a qualitative discourse analytic method based on Critical Discourse Analysis of van Dijk. Data were collected from audio recordings of three purposefully selected one-hour episodes broadcast within the month of March, 2017 (1/3/2017, 2/3/2017 and 4/3/2017). The findings show three main discursive strategies that include the Preferred Strategy, the Blame Avoidance/Transfer Strategy, and the Source Avoidance Strategy. The presenter utilizes the tactics, using various transitivity patterns to methodically influence participant alignment, direct criticism toward institutional rather than personal accountability, and foster uncritical acceptance of unproven allegations. The study suggests that interactive radio programme in Northern Nigeria serves as a regulated public realm in which linguistic choices actively shape social reality by negotiating power, persuasion, and consensus.

Keywords

Government media regulation, public trust, media credibility, editorial independence, Nigerian news media

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Radio is one of the most powerful media tools for informing, educating, and promoting public engagement, especially in poor countries where it is widely available and inexpensive. In Northern Nigeria, interactive radio broadcasts serve as an essential public forum for citizens to discuss political, economic, and social concerns, share ideas, and engage with government policies and community affairs. Unlike traditional news broadcasts, phone-in programs allow listeners to directly participate in public conversation, making radio a critical location for shaping public awareness, negotiating social relationships, and influencing civic involvement. Recent research has confirmed that interactive broadcast media continue to serve as important democratic spaces for negotiating public opinion and encouraging civic participation, particularly in societies where radio remains the most accessible mode of communication (Mu & Ma, 2022; Vaarala & Farkas, 2025).

Media discourse is a social practice that constructs and reproduces meanings, ideologies, and power dynamics, rather than a neutral portrayal of reality. According to van Dijk's (2008) Socio-Cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), media discourse influences society by moulding audiences'

mental models, knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes via carefully chosen linguistic and discursive methods. Recent research has supported this position by demonstrating that media organisations use linguistic framing, lexical selection, participant representation, and topical organization to construct ideological meanings and influence public perception of social and political events (Kennedy, 2022; Wang, 2023; Hernández & Jiménez-Briones, 2025). As a result, radio presenters, guests, and callers use discourse to actively shape public opinions rather than simply exchanging information.

The “*Good Morning Katsina programme*” on Vision FM 92.1 is one of the most popular interactive radio shows in Katsina State. It offers a forum for discussing current national and local topics such as governance, leadership, economic development, environmental sustainability, and public accountability. Presenters use the interactive style to propose discussion themes, invite expert viewpoints, and promote audience engagement via phone calls. The linguistic framing of these talks has the potential to impact how listeners perceive public issues, assess government performance, and negotiate collective attitudes. Contemporary studies on broadcast discourse demonstrate that presenters' linguistic choices and framing methods have a major impact on audience engagement and public interpretation of sociopolitical concerns (Ogunlana & Oamen, 2025; Fang & Dong, 2026).

Although discourse studies have increasingly focused on ideology and representation in newspapers, television, digital journalism, and political communication (Kennedy, 2022; Wang, 2023; Hernández & Jiménez-Briones, 2025), little scholarly attention has been given to interactive radio discourse in Northern Nigeria. Existing research has primarily focused on finding ideological bias in news reporting and political rhetoric, with little attention paid to how presenters and listeners collaborate to generate meaning during live radio conversations. Furthermore, current discourse studies show that radio is one of the least examined media, despite its continued influence on public opinion and democratic involvement (Vaarala & Farkas, 2025). This gap inspired the current investigation.

The importance of analysing the linguistic framing of the *Good Morning Katsina Programme* stems from its status as a major source of public information and civic conversation in Northern Nigeria. Because radio is still one of the most trusted communication channels in the region, how issues are introduced, participants are represented, and viewpoints are legitimised has the potential to shape public knowledge, reinforce particular ideologies, and influence citizens' responses to governance and social development. Recent researches have repeatedly shown that media framing not only reflects reality, but also actively shapes public perception by legitimising certain ideas while marginalising others (Hernández & Jiménez-Briones, 2025; Fang & Dong, 2026). Understanding these discursive processes is thus vital for fostering transparent, inclusive, and critically informed public communication.

Given this context, this study employs van Dijk's (2008) Socio-Cognitive Critical speech Analysis to investigate how speech produces social reality and ideological meaning in the *Good Morning Katsina Programme*. Specifically, the study aims to:

- identify the dominant discursive strategies employed in the Good Morning Katsina Programme;
- examine how these discursive strategies guide, constrain, or facilitate participant engagement during the programme; and
- describe how the linguistic framing of discussion topics influences audiences' beliefs, opinions, and perceptions.

2. Literature Review

Recent researches have highlighted media discourse as a key tool for generating ideology, changing public opinion, and navigating social realities. Mu and Ma (2022) use a bibliometric analysis of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) research on news discourse to show that CDA has grown significantly beyond traditional newspaper analysis into interdisciplinary fields such as journalism, politics, sociology, and cognitive psychology. Their findings also show that contemporary media discourse research increasingly integrates CDA with supplementary linguistic theories and corpus

approaches to explain how media companies produce ideological meanings. The assessment, however, focuses exclusively on newspaper discourse and does not investigate interactive radio programmes or audience engagement in broadcast discussions, creating a need for future research on radio discourse in Northern Nigeria.

Similarly, Kennedy (2022) examines corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis in the context of protest news coverage. The study contends that integrating qualitative discourse analysis and corpus methodologies improves the transparency and reliability of detecting ideological trends in media texts. Kennedy concludes that discourse analysts should focus more on systematic linguistic evidence when explaining media representations and public persuasion. Although the study improves methodological rigour in CDA, it is limited to newspaper discourse and hence offers no insight into spoken contact and discursive techniques in radio phone-in programmes.

Wang (2023) uses Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics within a Critical Discourse Analysis framework to investigate news commentary on China's post-COVID policy in *The Economist*. The study, which focuses on transitivity, voice, and nominalisation, shows that seemingly objective news sources contain underlying ideological perspectives expressed through grammatical choices. The findings demonstrate that linguistic structures shape readers' perceptions by emphasising certain actors while concealing others. While the study demonstrates the value of merging SFL and CDA, it focuses on written news commentary rather than interactive broadcast conversation with presenters, guests, and callers.

Hernández and Jiménez-Briones (2025) conducted a thorough review of Systemic Functional Linguistics' use in Critical Discourse Analysis research. After reviewing seventy-eight empirical research, the authors conclude that lexical choices, transitivity, modality, evaluation, and participant representation are still the most commonly used linguistic resources for detecting ideology in media speech. Their review indicates that Halliday's linguistic model remains the primary analytical tool for CDA, however researchers are increasingly advocating for more systematic and conceptually integrated approaches. The review synthesises previous studies but does not look at radio discourse or interactive public communication in African media contexts.

In another recent assessment, Vaarala and Farkas (2025) examine discourse research published in top journalistic publications. They claim that Critical Discourse Analysis is still the most used theoretical approach in journalism research, despite the fact that many studies lack sufficient theoretical integration. They advocate for a more rigorous application of discourse theories to explain how journalistic language produces ideology, institutional authority, and public awareness. Their review emphasises the growing importance of discourse analysis in journalism studies, but observes that research has primarily focused on print and digital journalism, with little attention paid to interactive radio shows.

More recently, Fang and Dong (2026) use multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis to compare media coverage of the 2025 Los Angeles protests. Their findings indicate that linguistic and visual resources collaborate to legitimise or delegitimise social actors, revealing that media discourse systematically impacts ideological interpretations of political events. Although their research expands CDA into multimodal media analysis, they focus on television news and online journalism rather than spoken radio conversation.

Theoretical Framework

This study follows van Dijk's (2008) Socio-Cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which sees discourse as a social activity in which ideology, power, and knowledge are generated and reproduced. The theory describes how linguistic and discursive methods influence people's mental models, beliefs, and perceptions of social reality. It contends that media speech is not neutral, but rather reflects ideological perspectives through language choices, topic selection, participant representation, and responsibility allocation. Based on this paradigm, the study identifies the primary discursive

techniques in the *Good Morning Katsina Programme*, investigates how they influence participant involvement, and explains how they shape audience beliefs, views, and perceptions.

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research approach to evaluate non-numerical data from three randomly selected episodes of the "*Good Morning Katsina Programme*" aired on 92.1 Vision FM in Katsina during the month of March 2017. From a total population of twenty one-hour programs broadcast; Monday through Friday, three-hour episodes were selected for examination using simple random selection. Audio recordings were collected from the station's archive with official permission and converted into text format for clarity and convenience. The transcripts were meticulously documented and tagged to save space while maintaining the authenticity of the conversations. The data were analysed using the Socio-Cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis paradigm developed by van Dijk (2008). Ethical considerations were scrupulously followed, including informed consent from Vision FM management, protection of participants' privacy and archival audio through anonymity and coding, and the avoidance of offensive or discriminatory language throughout the research procedure.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected is presented and analysed as follows:

Data Presentation

Analysis of Discursive Strategies Based on van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive CDA

Excerpt	Discursive Strategy	Linguistic Evidence	Ideological Function	Socio-Cognitive Effect	Interpretation
Figure 1: Do you think padding is going to be a thing of the past (01-03-2017)	Preferred Strategy	Padding	is going to be	a thing	of the fast
Figure 2: Former President Olusegun Obasanjo attributed the slow rate of infrastructural development in Nigeria to lack of synergy between private and public sectors. The former leader also blamed poor leadership in Nigeria's economy and infrastructural development (Thursday 02-03-17)	Blame Avoidance Strategy Blame Transfer Strategy	Former President Olusegun Obasanjo The former leader	Attributed Blamed	the slow rate ... in Nigeria poor leadership	to lack of... sector in Nigeria's...situation
Figure 3: Reports indicate that Nigerians are enjoying economic freedom and benefited from fuel wood balance especially in Katsina State. (Saturday, 04-03-2017)	Source Avoidance.	Reports	Indicate	that Nigerians are enjoying economic freedom and benefited from fuel wood balance	especially in Katsina State.

Transcription of the Leads of the Discussions, Background of the Topic of the Discussion, Presenter's, Guest's, and Callers' Contributions from the Spoken Conversation of the Programme

Figure 1: (1-03-2017).

Lead: Padding in Nigeria: Is padding a syndrome as some Nigerians look at it? What do you think of our padding in Nigeria; Do you think padding is going to be a thing of the past?

Background of the Topic of Discussion

The Director General Budget Office of the Federation says, there is no padding in the 2017 budget as alleged in some quarters. He said this in a news conference on Thursday in Abuja. While clarifying issues rose concerning the budget, the Director said, padding was a term used to describe unauthorised or undisclosed insertion of some finances into the budget. I can say without incubation that there is no padding in the 2017 budget proposal. The process of preparing 2017 budget requires MDAs to upload their budget online by the accredited officers who were issued access code to ensure an audit trail of all entries. The Chief Executive, the Chief Accountants of all MDAs were required to certify their final budget inputs. The budget presented to National Assembly by Mr. President was exactly what the MDAs certified. He said there was a valid concern about difference in prices for some items, adding that, the Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP) was updating its price list.

Caller 1: *As far as padding is concern, if you look at it critically, you will realise that, past administrations were using the so-called padding to siphon money not meant to be reported after budget expenditure by the end of the year. And, if you look at it critically, it will be alarming on the kind of billions that are being siphon in the name of padding, that is why the so-called whistle blower of the National Assembly as far as it is concern was only able to mention it because he was not carried along for a long period of time. In those days when he was being part of the system, we did not hear anything about padding; we did not know that the word padding exists, for the past 3 or 4 assemblies until recently. And now that this government is coming with credible plan, we are now having some level of confidence that padding will not exists. What Nigerians need to understand is that, whenever you come up with a plan and you don't have a clear vision of what you want achieve, how you want to achieve it and how you are going to spend your money, you will end up either not growing or not doing expenditure based on your plan. What is glaring and of full confidence from the present administration is that padding is no more existing in the budget. It now means that what is in the budget will only be what will be utilised. May be if there are needs they can always go back to National Assembly and request for supplementary approval; which I have seen recently in the early days of this year. Even recently, the Federal Government has to request for the National Assembly to give her another approval as per as NPower is concerned. So, you can see we are now having a government that works based on a plan. Just look at the word 'padding'. Padding means you have built something, but you know it is likely to leak and you are trying to create some feverous ways of expenditure. Imagine a padding of Ten Billion Naira, where were they when the plan was done? If there is going to be an expenditure that will cost Ten Billion Naira in a budget in the country, why is it not in the main budget? Why is it in the padding? So, I think this is a very good way that the Federal Government is now assuring Nigerians that padding does not exist in the budget. What is left is for us to continue follow how the money is being spend. Then, where we see it is not very clear we request for explanation. I was expecting a lot of Civil Society Organisations to be in the State Assembly when the budget is being prepared, but you will see only visible CBOs and later when there is problem, you hear people on the social media complaining without even having credible information to pack it up. So, government has done its own by informing us that budget is there and there is no padding, what left is everybody should come on board to ensure that, the monies were spent as they were planned. And I think this is a welcome development as far as Nigeria is concerned. Thank you very much.*

Caller 2: We never heard about this word padding before until when this government has opened up. So, I think they should correct it and clear it from our eyes. And the issue of padding is not the problem. The problem is the implementation of the budget. We have still nothing on 2016 budget. They have not implemented it very well. So, now it comes; 2017 budget. We want to see them implementing the budget. Thank you.

Caller 3: My take here is that, you know this budget padding is an unpatriotic attitude from the side of our politicians. They only use that padding in order to fulfill their personal interest not for the interest of the nation in general. So, in this case, it was discovered that in the last budget, there was this budget padding. So, in this year, we are very grateful that this issue has been checked about and we hope it will be implemented as it is, so that the nation will be developed. That is my take, thank you very much.

Caller 4: Hello, Good morning. My contribution is on that issue, we have heard that great problem from other National Assembly members describing that padding as not taboo or it is not prohibited. So, now the Federal Government or the Accountant General of the federation is saying that, there is no padding in the 2017 budget. So, if you look at this through the executive government on the budget, padding is not a taboo. But, my own understanding is that, the Federal Government or the Executive Government is looking at the padding as prohibited, but the other part looks at the padding as not prohibited. That is my take.

Caller 5: Well uhm, I think I am a little bit convinced that, this 2017 budget does not contain padding. My reasons are the ways that this budget is being scrutinised and watched by Nigerians, I feel there will be no room to pad it. Even that of 2016 that whistle blower blew his whistle we were not really aware that what is padding and that how it actually works. But, now that we know it works and our eyes are opened, we are watching carefully. Anyway, anyhow they want do it, we know it will not be as much as the way they did it in 2016 and the other previous years. So, hopefully even if there is going to be a padding, it is not going to be that much like previous years, and we hope to be watchdog of government for our eyes will be opened and follow the projects line by line to make sure by the grace of God are executed. We are also confident in this government; we know the government is sincere being the government of Muhammadu Buhari. We pray that, Allah in his infinite mercy will bring him back healthy for us and he should continue with his works. Thank you very much.

Caller 6: I think my take is that, I will give kudos to both the executive arms and the National Assemblies for ensuring that, the 2017 budget was not padded. I think this will go a long way in ensuring sanity, equity and transparency in all the federal constituencies across the country, and I think I say well-done and I want to commend them for that. That is all I have to say. Thank you very much.

Caller 7: You see, the issue of padding in Nigerian budget is far-far more than what we are looking at it. For having not existed in Nigerian budget, two things are involved. There must be an agreement between the executive and legislative, that is the National Assembly in the sense that, the budget office most asked for budget preparation from the ministries and parastatals earlier enough for we Nigerians to be able to check against what was actually prepared previous years. The way padding works as they include what has already budgeted in previous years and which possibly been executed and brought back into the budget, as such, they will increase the rate of the budget for giving unnecessary advantage to the legislature. In consistently project, I think the principal officers of the National Assembly should not be given exclusive right to have advantage over ordinary member. And what is supposed to go the constituency should emanate from local people not from the National Assemblies members. There should be an open session at locality for what we masses want add for constituency projects. And that should be captured in the budget and that will be early enough. Thank you.

Figure -2: 02-03-2017

Lead: Former President Olusegun Obasanjo attributed the slow rate of infrastructure development in Nigeria to lack of synergy between private and public sectors. The former leader also blamed poor leadership in Nigeria's economy and infrastructural situation.

Background of the Topic of Discussion

Mr. Obasanjo was the chairman at the 2017 Annual Seminar of Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, said that, the Nigerian Government had over the years paid very little attention to the private sector.

The presenter: *What is expected of a leader?*

The Guest: *A leader is somebody (SIC) leads. He is the representative of the people; he is the choice of the people, not the choice of the party or the choice of few individuals. He makes sure that he contacts his people on all decisions that affected them and make sure that, the will be of people prevail over any other interest and in conjunction with the people, he should be able to work to achieve aspiration and goal of the people.*

The presenter: *Why do we have leadership failure in the country?*

The Guest: *we have leadership failure in the first instance base on the selection of leadership in this country. Because, most of the leaders that are being elected are imposed leaders; they are not the choice of the people; and if they are not the choice of the people, they cannot even identify the interest of the people talk less of to work for the progress of the people. What makes other countries to develop like Korea and India that was third war countries before? The difference is the question of leadership; leaders that aspire for the development of the nation not self-development; leadership that is ready to be accountable to the people not accountable to few people; leadership that wants to mobilise people, the human resources and material resources to achieve the goal of Nigeria. But, our leaders are not concerned about developing productive forces or developing the economy. All they are concern is let us share the cake.*

Political post in Nigeria has become an investment which the investor has to recover what he invested. So, their concern is not much on how to develop the productive forces, but rather what they are going to get from the system; that their major interest and so once the leaders are not concerned about developing the productive forces and creating jobs, then, the country will be in a poor situation.

The presenter: *Leaders are enforced on people. Can you shed more light on this?*

The Guest: *Well, the community knows who is who in their community, then; they have the track record of the members of their society. They know who is capable to lead them. But unfortunately, what happened is that, the money backs god fathers come and decide, okay, this is the person that is going to represent us, whether you people like it or not. I think, the PDP in recent meeting, they had stated that one of the greatest problems of the leadership is lack of internal democracy. Because, the leaders must be the people's choice and people know how to put them to be accountable, but once you have voted for a god father, you will be accountable to the god father or you will be accountable to the party that chooses you and that is major problem.*

The presenter: *How can the electorates know that, this person has been chosen by another person? Because when you have a god father and the god father chooses you to be a leader then, I think he is going to follow the mandate of the god father.*

The Guest: *Yes, as long as we have bad leaders, we have bad followership, because, in most cases, we feel we should not talk; we should leave them, even if we talk nothing will happen. But that is not part of democracy. Democracy is for the people, the government of the people by the people, and so, if the leader is not doing the right thing, the people need to voice out their opinions either by writing letter or by demonstration or by writing in News Papers to bring attention of people to this malpractice and neglecting of people. That will put all these things to check when the leaders know*

that, the followers know their right and they can question whatever decision by giving employment to their closest associates, then leaders will have to re-think before indulge into such act.

The Presenter: What can the follower do in order to make their leaders accountable?

The Guest: Well, there are many ways of making their leaders accountable. First, the vote of an individual is your power. Unfortunately, many people want to sell their vote, they have forgotten that, that is their power. So, political leaders that we have talk and discuss are refused, then, we use our power that is their vote to reward or to punish any leader. If a leader has done well, you make sure such a leader is elected again. But, if a leader has not done well, then, such a leader will be voted out as simple as possible for the people to know that, they have power. They also have in the constitution a close that you can recall your representative if he is not doing well for the people. So, these are the measures the public can do and of course they can write a petition, they can demonstrate, they can also write in a newspaper, so that, people know what is going on.

The Presenter: Do you agree that the underdevelopment of the private sector is the major cause of unemployment, poverty, and crime in Nigeria?

The Guest: Of course there is a synergy, a collaborative effort between a public and private sectors, because the public sector makes policies that affect the private sector. I wish to recall that, the engine of economic growth lies in the private sector, because the percentage of employment in the public sector is just between 20-25%, and about 70% are in the private sector. So, this is how the public and private sectors generate employment. If you want to grow the economy and then you can grow the economy through making a very good policy that will encourage the private sector, even in US and other developed world, the private, the micro, the medium, the small scale industries are those who dominate the economy. So, if the economy of the private sector is not developed, that is why we have a lot of unemployment in the society, this is why we have a lot of crime in the society, this is why we have high poverty rate in the country, because the private sectors have been left undeveloped for so many years.

The Presenter: If opportuned to be one of the people that are leading this government in terms of helping the nation to progress, are you going to give more emphasis on developing the private sector, because as you have just mentioned, it is important to develop the private sector? You cited an example that US does not rely on the government. And when we look at China is the most populated country in the world, but still they are developing. So, why do you think Nigeria can be developed in terms of private sector? Do you think we can go back to farming, because most of the Nigerians especially the government rely heavily on petroleum products, without petroleum, we are having problems.

The Guest: Yes, petroleum product that is the main step of our economy and generate about almost 95%. Unfortunately, that sector employs only 1% of the work force, and it is a high technology means of production which means that almost 99% of the populace is left out of the economic growth. And so, if you want to grow the economy; we have to go back to Agriculture which is being our source of income in this country. In fact, I told a lot people that, if I am to be appointed a Governor or Head of State, I will change my name to Governor Agriculture or President Agriculture, because there are a lot of prospect in agriculture. I do not see any reason we should be importing rice, we should be importing wheat, we should be importing oil which we can easily produce in this country. We spent a lot of money in importation of these; we are import dependent, we are not exporting country, since we do not export, then that is why our Naira is going down almost every day, because it is what we export that will generate income to the nation. In Kebbi State, the farmers are smiling because the government has created enabling environment to go into production of rice and I believe each state has comparative advantage in one area or the other in Agriculture. And so, if this is done, it will create employment and Nigeria will be a better place for all of us.

The presenter: So, we should use our population as a blessing not as problem to us?

The Guest: *Of course yes, why many investors come to Nigeria? It is because of the population and it is also a blessing to us as a nation. So, if you produce, you should know how many people will patronise you. Whatever you produce, you have population that will patronise your product. So, population is a blessing to us in this country.*

The Presenter: *But some of these examples you have just mentioned like Kebbi State, I think the government gave them an enabling environment or capital in order to start this business?*

The Guest: *Yes, we have what is called Agrowal policy where the government gives you the input, give the land, gives you the tractor, gives you the fertilizer, the seed to plant. At the end of the day, it is first smile us, what did you get from the government, and what you have made then you return government money, the remaining part is yours. So, it makes it easy for people to go into Agriculture when government says go into Agriculture and they have not provided enabling environment, how can you expect people to go into such venture? It is impossible.*

Caller 1: *I most commend the presenter of this programme. I want to say that Nigeria is a great country and powerful nation but governed by shout and extrovert leaders. Our leaders do not care for the people they lead. They do not have the mercy at heart; all they care for is their members of their families, friends and themselves. They do not look at the masses. When there is complaint, they do not want to give a little ear to the masses. Imagine for instance, if we are having problem in our educational system in Nigeria, when we complain, they don't care because their children don't school here in Nigeria. Their children are in abroad all over the other countries where they get better education. Can you imagine that right now, I am a co-member serving, but after my service now, I am just thinking what will be my fate, where will I go to after my service, because there is no future? Nigeria is a country that produces a very large number of graduates, but it has no plan for them at all. When you graduated from a university or polytechnic and serve for your father land for one year, there is no provision of a job for you. For instance, someone has graduated from a university or polytechnic and learnt something that is supposed to be practiced in the field and at the end of the day you posted that person to a secondary school to teach and we are also talking about developing skills. So, now how will you take off someone from his discipline and expect good out of him? The discipline will definitely disappear from his brain. I think our leaders need to look into it, because there is a problem here. The process is going down, and I am not happy, each time I wake up, it is like I should be crying and the leaders, don't want to carry the masses along.*

However, they value us only when it comes to election time. And after electing them into various offices, they forget about us. Imagine a state in Nigeria now, from January to this moment that I am talking to you, workers have not been paid their salaries, all they are talking about is screening, screening, screening, and right now the workers' children are no longer going to school. What kind of a country is this? It is a beautiful country, bright with so many resources but there is no human development. The resources are being wasted away and we are suffering. I think the leaders at this moment need to give a little ear to the masses, because our problem can be solved here by us. You can see Ajakuta Steel Company in Kogi State is the best steel company in the whole of Africa, but the company is not working. We have Cold Company in Enugu State, not working; we have so many resources wasting away, while graduates are suffering roaming about the street having nothing to do. Our leaders give little ear to us. We cannot continue this way. The pain is getting too much on us, and I believe God said that, the help of a leader is in His hands. We begin to turn the heart of our leaders so that, this tears on our eyes will begin to clean up. Thank you.

Caller 2: *The leaders we have in this country, some of them are doing well especially this present government. Thank you.*

Caller 3: *We can say our leaders are not doing well. A good leader suppose to know what his people need. A good leader is a person who cares about hi people. So, all what our leaders know is godfatherism, if we are doing godfatherism Nigeria will never go anywhere. Therefore, if we want to solve the problem of this nation, you have to leave people to elect whoever they want, this way they*

elect leaders by themselves, the leader will do all what they need. If we do not stop this godfatherism, Nigeria will not go anywhere. This is my contribution. Thanks..

Caller 4: *Thank you very much for choosing this a very wonderful topic of discussion. Of course, I quite agree with Obasanjo, because, this is the major lingering problem facing Nigeria. Most of our leaders don't give priority to private entrepreneurship activities in our country particularly most of our leaders are not conversant and confident on economic sector. While economic sector is one of the major critical sectors of any nation, without economy, so we have nowhere to go. But, the major problem is that, if you are talking about economic growth and development, but you forget about the constant power supply, then, there is a big problem. How will company or private medium entrepreneurs can produce or employ people without constant electrification? So, the problem is that our leaders do not give priority to economy and power that is why majority of teaming Nigerian youths are highly concentrated on white collar jobs, instead of going back to entrepreneurship.*

So, my own solution to this problem is that, our leaders supposed to be very intellectuals, very competent and very conversant about economy. Because economy is like the central processing unit, is like computer without CPU. So, if the economy of any country is stable, so, I think every sector of any country will definitely go up. So, my advice to leaders is they should give priority to power, because with constant electrification our companies and private sectors will come to stay in Nigeria and investors will also come. But, without power supply, majority of Nigerian teaming youths will definitely seek white collar jobs, because we don't have companies. So, that is the little I can give. Than you, and god bless you.

Caller 5: *Well, I want to actually support the first speaker. Actually, what he said is true, our leaders are not giving priority to the building of this country. What they are after is to loot money and take them to abroad and take their children there to study and do some other things. Thank you.*

Caller 6: *The major problem we have in this country in terms of leadership is that, majority of those who are aspiring for leadership do not have vision. We have poor visionary leadership. Most of the people have no plan for the masses. So, how do you expect somebody who does not have vision, who does not know any idea on how to move and develop people? How do we expect him to perform well? Secondly, majority of those leaders are morally poor; they don't have back sense of if I do good, I will be appreciated; if I do bad, I will not be appreciated. That is my contribution.*

The presenter: *Do you agree that citizens should hold their leaders accountable through voting, questioning, and civic participation to promote good governance and national development?*

The Guest: *I share the pains of many contributors concerning this issue we are discussing. But I must say that, like I said before that, if you allow the leaders to continue to perpetrate this evil, then, Nigerians cannot move forward. Freedom is not one on the flatter of gold and the followers should also have to start a fight for their right. They have to question their leaders. Among the callers, someone talked about election, I will ask him, how many times has he voted? How many times has he contacted his representative, the councilor, the local government chairman or the house of representative member? To ask him questions about his representation of them; because if you leave the leaders alone, they will not achieve anything. But, when the leader knows that, his people are pressurizing by asking for their right, demonstrating, writing on newspapers and questioning them; they will be on toes and many things will change in this country. So, in my opening speech, I said, if we have bad leaders, we should not have had bad followership; the followership should make our leadership accountable, if somebody has children overseas, expose him that, yes this person is in charge of education and he has done nothing to improve education and he has sent his children abroad. Here, community-based organisations can come and speak against the leaders. Many CBOs should stand in various areas to their views known about the leaders. If the leaders know that, yes people are asking for accountability, they will be able to move with care. But, if you leave them alone, they will not do anything because except they want to commit class suicide, they belong to the class and they want to protect that class and we belong to the lower class. We have to make sure that, they*

do well, because democracy is the triumphant of majority not the will of few individuals, not a will of a party and that is why you find out that, the paradox disconnect between economy and poverty reduction in Nigeria. The economy is said to be growing during the last regime, but the masses have not felt the effects of the economic growth, because the growth has been cornered by few individuals. Another caller was talking about private sector, I have agreed with him, the cost of doing business in Nigeria is very high, the interest rate is very high, the exchange rate is very high, there is scarcity of energy, poor infrastructure and many other things. You cannot do a business and break even this kind of environment. And as a result of the fact that, corruption has crept into this provision of infrastructures in this country. Because, the common say is that Nigerians are good planners, but poor executors. Why is it that when it comes to execution, we could not execute it well? The main issue is corruption and people should be able to ask questions as you voted for the money spent for a project and we have not seen or quantify what is on ground. When people start asking questions, when people start demanding for their right, our leaders will be put on their toes and things will be better for this country.

The Presenter: How can we know a leader with a good vision?

The Guest: Yes, that is the most irony of this country, in the first republic; we have what we called ideology; we have what is called manifestos of each party and of course people study each party manifesto and see that this is what we will support and this is not what we will support. But, today a party has no manifesto, they have no ideology, they are like blind person leading people just like that. This is why we have asked individual Politian; you are coming to power as Local Government Area Chairman, what are your intentions? For the people to know, let him state all these things and you assess the person through his visions, goals and missions. If he has not satisfied all these issues, you call his attention and expose him to what you want him to do for the people. But, instead of all these issues, electorates are busy asking for something from the candidate before they cast their vote for him, and once you collect the money or material from him, you have sold the benefit that is supposed to come to you. So, followers should ask, in fact, it should be a condition, anybody that is going to lead this country, we have to look at his antecedents, where he worked before, what contributions he made to the society, whether he is involved in one corruption or the other and what is his mission, what is his vision, what are his goals and what are your objectives of trying to come to power.

Figure 3: 04-03-2017

Reports indicate that Nigerians are enjoying economic freedom and benefited from fuel wood balance especially in Katsina State.

Background of the Topic of Discussion

The paper was based on research that evaluated the availability and management of fuel wood resources in Katsina State, with a focus on their contribution to economic activity and local community livelihoods.

The presenter: What is fuel wood balance?

The Guest 1: Fuel wood balance is an acronym for improving the fuel wood balance in Katsina State precisely in seven LGAs. Fuel wood balance is a project that is financed by the European Union and implemented by two independent organisations: The Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Lot 1 and Up-farming Nigeria and International Centre for Energy Lot 2. Lot 1 has five local government areas in Katsina State. Lot 2 has seven local government areas namely: Mashi, Dutsi, Mai'adua, Daura, Sandamu, Zango and Baure.

The presenter: Any additional explanation?

The Guest 2: Thank you very much. Fuel wood balance in a layman's definition is the provision of increased production of firewood that will reduce the suffering of the people through agro-forestry or through the renewable energy aspect.

The presenter: What is the aim or objective of this project?

The Guest 3: You see, the aim of this project is to increase fuel wood balance in these 7 LGAs. As what the Programme Officer said, this is an EU funded project. So, The EU realizes that, there is fuel wood deficit in the state. So, that is why it comes to assist the Nigerian Government and Katsina State Government in improving the fuel wood balance in these LGAs through farmer manage naturally generation where the farmers will be advised to leave some natural growing trees on their farm land during land clearance to increase the number of tress; and secondly through the nursery approach. The project is to raise seedling of what the farmers want for economic purposes and for entrepreneur approaches. So, the project has 3 nurseries per LGA, where we are raising our seedlings to distribute to the farmers and the public for fighting desertification in the 7 LGAs.

The Presenter: Is there any financial benefit in the project?

The Guest 1: I think we need to say so many relevant facts for the listeners to know little more about the project. The project has 2 components that is why I am here in the studio with the Programme Officer Agro-forestry and the Programme Officer Clean Cook Stove. The programme officers are working in close collaboration to ensure that, the specific objective of planting 5.5 million tress within a period of 4 years is relevantly allowed to grow through the use of efficient clean cook stove and that is why another programme officer is managing planting of trees and the other programme officer is managing the production and dissemination of about 35 thousand clean cook stoves. The essence is that, when trees are planted, people should reduce the interest of cutting down trees indiscriminately and use the most efficient, most effective clean cook stove which we have produced and put in place. This is where listeners want to be more interested, because there are some very efficient stoves that we have produced which saves a lot of fire wood, so this is where we are now.

When we talk about economic benefit of the project, yes, in Agro-forestry component, we have private nursery owners which we have empowered and the essence is for them to continually produce seedlings for all farmers to plant in their farms. By that means, we have created a market for nursery private owners to be producing trees all year round. And you can see the multiplier effect that may be coming through the consistent planting of trees within the intervening local government areas. This will be a kind of habit that we will foresee that we also grow and become attitude to us from time to time people would be longing to plant trees. Because, if the private nursery owners are in market producing trees; they will generate cash by selling the trees in a very economic size to farmers. That is not the end in that, there is also people who have indicated interest to use their land for wood loads, wind breaks, so that, they can from time to time be involved in systematic prowling and sell of the firewood. Firewood in this sense will be controlled in the usage of the firewood because, if the tress are there and there is a legal system by bi-laws, people will not cut down the tree because we have already have an alternative like multi-wood efficient, they will use very sufficient firewood and that our areas have more tress and afforestation will be very meaningful. Secondly, on the economic aspect of the clean cook stove, we have a value chain where many porters are involved, and you can see from time to time, if people show interest in buying the stove, porters will generate some money, that is where economic advantage comes in, that is why our project is trying to encourage local porters, local farmers and local beneficiaries to appreciate the project.

The presenter: Who are the target group and how can they benefit from this project?

Guest:

Well, we have 55,000 households spreading to individual beneficiaries of 275,000 within the 7 beneficiary LGAs. What we have seen on ground, we will be able to get close to 500,000 beneficiaries, because the project has developed specific interest to plant more trees not only because we want to fight desertification but also to ensure that afforestation is coming back to us and we also have by that time generate income; cash flow for tree planting. So, that is the area we are now.

The presenter: Does that means everybody is entitled to participate?

Guest:

Yes, it is opened to every beneficiary particularly within the LGAs we are operating; the farmers, the porters, the households, house wives who are using stove.

The presenter: *Then, that means there is no any application or registration, everyone is okay to join?*

Guest:

No! No! You don't need to register, what we have is, we are working with structure where there are NGOs that are involved. I think we have 4 NGOs, we have Women for Peace in Nigeria (WOPIN), we also have the Federation for Muslim Women in Nigeria (FOMWAN), we have Development Exchange Centre (DEC), we also have another NGO, MiyattiAllah Katolhore who is also a patronage organisation. So, these are also linking up with the local CDOs. This is the structure we have. It does not necessarily require arrangement of coming to register, but you passed through the organized structure of the CBOs. If you are a farmer, we have organised farmers who are registered with us and the local government council areas are also available. If anybody needs information or has any means to get information, the channel is opened; you can get it from local government council areas. We have local government stakeholders platform from where the Director of Agric is the chairman, the Head of council is also in the know of what is happening. The district head representatives are in the committee; we have about 12 members in the committee who are consistently meeting and get ideas from the beneficiary farmers. In fact, the project is down to the edge to benefit the community farmers and beneficiaries. So, it does not require any specific application or registration for that kind of issues. If you have a farm land and you are willing to generate money through planting trees or production of clean cook stove for market production, get the information from your local government, or you can phone us directly and get the information. Within 2 or 3 years you can generate some money from the system.

The presenter: *What are the expected results of this project?*

Guest:

We have 7 expected results. And in every project funded by EU, the concern is, at the end of the project; the beneficiaries should reach sustainable benefit and also claim ownership of the project. One of the expected results is to encourage the beneficiaries to plant trees and for that to happen, there must be a structure in place through capacity building, trainings which we have achieved for the past 2 years. We have trained more than 250,000 beneficiaries out of the 275,000 beneficiaries. Having built the capacity, the next target result is to ensure that, we actually plan and produce 5.5million trees in the 7 local government council areas. For now, we are able to get 2.9million trees, meaning that we have hit a target of over 50% in the past 2 years. The next one is not only planting the trees, what structures are we putting in place, so that people will not cut down the trees indiscriminately? The expected result is also to liaise with the Ministry of Justice and Local Government Legislative to put in place sustainable law to control the tree tenure, so that people will not cut down trees. That is one of the results. The other result is that, what we have been able to do for 4 years will keep into the policy of the state government, so that, there will be a continuity and people who will continue to appreciate the advantage of the programme to the state. Finally, we want to produce 36,000 clean cook stove and here is a value chain where after our exit, the people of benefiting LGAs will continue to be producing these stoves as an alternative way of not cutting down trees. It means therefore, at the time we go or the project closes, people will be able to generate a kind of income by planting trees year in year out and not only planting trees but, to ensure that the trees are controlled and no body cuts down the trees indiscriminately and an alternative instead of rushing to cut the trees for fire wood consumption, you use the clean cook stove. We are producing and disseminating and ensure that you do not spend so much money to buy firewood, but, instead they use the stove to buy less firewood for cooking. This is for now, the stoves are very efficient for the

beneficiaries who have only confessed that they have ripped the value for the money they have invested to procure this stove. These are the expected results.

Caller 1: *I like to welcome the guest. This is a welcome development, we really appreciate the effort of EU and contribution the staff of the project are doing. My question goes to the Project manager. In the exhibition of the programme, he made mentioned that, there are 2 lots. Lot 1 is like being managed by Umaru Musa Yar'adua University which involves 5 LGAs and the second one involves 7 LGAs. He mentioned the 7 LGAs, but did not mention the 5 LGAs, if I am not mistaken; and I would like to call all of them to please help in improving the economy of our people here particularly here in Katsina State and the country in general, in planting economic trees, because I have seen so many things like this in Malaysia. They encourage individual organisations, and even the government encourages planting of trees and it helps the economy. So, I believe the trees they want to give should be please economic trees. Thank you very much.*

The Guest 1: *I appreciate that, a lot of people are listening to this programme. This is a wonderful development. Yes, I did not mention the 5 local government council areas in the lot 1 because we have programme manager there, and like I said that, we are of lot 2. But that is not withstanding, we have a collaborative meeting regularly whereby the 2 lot meet. And is not like I don't have idea of the LGAs where the lot 1 is implementing, they are: Kaita, Rimi, Jibia, Batsari and Batagarawa.*

What is our concern is not only to plant any tree, we are deeply involve in planting economic and fruit yielding trees. In fact, we didn't just come into the system to plant trees; we go to the beneficiaries and ask them what kind of trees they want. Majority of them want economic yielding trees; and I think the Programme Officer Agroforestry here can just give a brief of the names of the trees we have.

The Guest 3: *Okay, as you have said, this is the EU funding project. So, before the commencement of the programme, the EU directed a conduct of a baseline survey in these 7 LGAs where the farmers in these LGAs gave the required seedlings thereby assisting them to raise their economic improvement. So, the project has a species both economic and multipurpose trees. So, for those who are going into the fuel wood balance production, we have great seedling of Neem, Kesia and Aldiga; and then we have fruit bearing trees like the Mango, Guava, Pauper and the rest. So, the farmers during the baseline survey put the number of trees which they want to plant in their farms. We are not the one that dictate the trees they want; it is the farmers that said it right from the beginning of the project. I and the community nursery or private nursery, we raise like about 1 to 19 species for farmers to plant on their farm lands base on their request.*

Caller 2: *Good morning guest. Actually the topic of discussion is very important looking at the issue of kerosene price in Katsina now. So, the programme I think is a welcome idea to Katsina people and Nigeria in general. So, my question is, if somebody wants to embark in this programme, how can he start the programme? That is my question.*

The Guest 3: *In respect to this question, the project in improving the fuel wood balance, is here to work with farmers, women, youths and pastoralise in the 7 LGAs, and you know EU gave us the mandate to go and deliver this project. So, we cannot deliver this project without forming a plat form. So, in each Local Government, we constituted 12-member plat forms that are steering the activities of the project. So, he shall go to the local government of Mashi, Dutsi, Daura, Sandamu, Baure, Zango and Mai'adua and meet the Directors of Agric, they are the chairmen of the plat forms. In the plat form, there is a secretary who is the unit head of forestry and the 12 members are the CDOs, from MiyattiAllah, Kotalhore, FOMWAN, DEC and the WOPIN. So, besides that, the 2 private nurseries are also members; there are representatives of the traditional rulers in the LGAs, the training officer of the clean cook stove and the training supervisor. The 12-man committee is the one that sits down in the local government and assist us based on the planting model they want to carry on in their farms. Therefore, based on that, the seedling we raised in each local government is being distributed within that local government, because that is the target local government area where they*

are to operate. So, he can go to, if he is around the 7 LGAs, he should meet the Director Agric of the 7 local government areas where we are operating and they can assist him to register.

The presenter: You made mentioned collaboration with NGOs, so are you collaborating local NGOs and MDAs presently?

The Guest 1: Yes, presently we have MDAs such as ministries, agencies and government departments. The ministry of Agric is represented through the Department of forestry. We have also Ministry of Justice on the issue of bi-laws, we have Ministry of Environment, and Local Government Affairs is also part of the ministries we are working together. For now, the NGOs we have mentioned before, 4 of them are also liaising with us. Collaboratively, we are now working with the consent and direct involvement of the council Secretaries. So, it is practically a project that has a wonderful structure that everybody is involved. Let me mention this to listeners; I like sharing this point with everyone including the EU Ambassador, when he came last week, we visited His Excellency, the Governor of Katsina State. He told us that your project is wonderful, and 'I am watching you', meaning that, he is interested in the project, and he wants to see the result coming. We also visited the Emir of Katsina, His Royal Highness, He said. 'I will support you, I will want my district heads to support you, for me, I support your project with all 101%. So, this has given us the strong believe that everyone in this project is really very interested. For Daura, His Royal Highness, the Emir of Daura, once we visited him during the visit of the delegation from EU, He said, 'For me, I will and I have already instructed the district heads to ensure that everyone plant a tree in the 5 local government council areas of Daura emirate council. It means that, the collaboration between MDAs, NGOs, the traditional rulers, local government council areas are wonderfully effective and are appreciated.

The Guest 2: What I want to call the people of Katsina State to come into this project is that, we know we have problem that Katsina State is one of the 11 States attacked by desertification in Nigeria or in Northern Nigeria. So, people are indiscriminately cutting tress for firewood. This project is coming up to plant more tress, and with alternative of bringing in the idea of clean cook stove. We are calling it "Dadin kowa stove". May be people are hearing it in the radio. So, 'Dadin kowa stove', is a stove that you can use to cook with no smoke, it is off, you can use a little firewood; we have 65% saving compared to the local three stones stove. So, we have number of people that want to buy the stove; we don't give out the stove free, because we are not the producers. We train people to produce.

5.2 Analysis

Figure 1: Preferred Strategy

The lead "Do you think padding is going to be a thing of the past?" adopts what this study refers to as the Preferred Strategy, in which the presenter frames the topic through an open-ended question that stimulates audience engagement. According to van Dijk's (2008) socio-cognitive approach, the presenter controls the macro-topic of the encounter by choosing budget padding as the subject of public discussion. Instead of simply relaying information, the question frames corruption as a public matter that listeners must evaluate. The presenter thus wields discursive authority by deciding what should be the subject of public debate.

At the level of social cognition, the question engages listeners' prior knowledge and experiences with corruption in Nigeria. Since budget padding has already gotten considerable media attention, the presenter feels that the audience has enough background knowledge to form conclusions. As a result, when replying to the debate, participants recall mental pictures of earlier corruption scandals. This confirms van Dijk's notion that discourse interpretation is heavily reliant on socially shared knowledge and mental models.

The callers' responses show how the Preferred Strategy helps participants engage. Almost every caller adds, either by supporting or criticising the government's stance on budget padding. Although multiple points of view are voiced, the discussion stays within the ideological parameters set by the

presenter. As a result, the presenter has influence over the direction of public interaction while also giving the image of democratic participation.

The conversation also demonstrates how speech shapes public attitudes and views. The majority of callers are favourable about the current administration and blame previous governments for corruption. This echoes van Dijk's ideological square of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, in which one political group is portrayed positively and another negatively. Thus, the Preferred Strategy not only encourages involvement but also moulds the audience's perception of political accountability.

Figure 2: Blame Avoidance/Transfer Strategy

The lead: *"Former President Olusegun Obasanjo attributed the slow rate of infrastructure development in Nigeria to lack of synergy between private and public sector. The former leader also blamed poor leadership in Nigeria's economy and infrastructural situation"*, blames Nigeria's infrastructure difficulties on bad leadership and insufficient collaboration between the public and private sectors. This is a Blame Avoidance/Transfer Strategy, in which responsibility for national problems is shifted away from individual actors and toward broader institutional factors. According to van Dijk (2008), political discourse typically manipulates public opinion through ideological representations that allocate blame selectively.

From the standpoint of mental models, the recurrent allusions to bad leadership lead listeners to link Nigeria's developmental issues with successive governments rather than structural or historical causes. The guest supports this interpretation by constantly referring to leaders as crooked, imposed, and unaccountable. These descriptions progressively establish a common cognitive representation of Nigerian leadership as the primary impediment to growth.

The strategy also controls participant involvement. Rather than disputing Obasanjo's view, most callers repeat the same narrative, citing corruption, godfatherism, and poor government. Their contributions demonstrate that the initial framing effectively constrains the direction of the discussion, causing participants to reinforce rather than question the dominant explanation.

The discourse emphasises the unequal distribution of power and access to speech. Obasanjo's statement is highlighted because of his political stature, whilst the guest is given the opportunity to elucidate on his views. Ordinary callers will only participate after the prevailing interpretation has been established. As a result, elite voices affect the audience's understanding before public participation begins, demonstrating van Dijk's claim that powerful social actors have greater influence over public knowledge.

Figure 3: Source Avoidance Strategy

The lead starts with the phrase *"Reports indicate..."* without mentioning the source of the information. This is a Source Avoidance Strategy because the discourse delivers institutional claims without allowing listeners to verify their authenticity. According to van Dijk (2008), media discourse frequently manipulates public understanding by presenting information as factual but obscuring the authority from which it comes.

The anonymous reporting format affects listeners' mental models before the discussion begins. By asserting that Nigerians are already benefiting from the Fuel Wood Balance Project, the presenter encourages audiences to interpret the programme as effective before hearing supporting evidence. This cognitive framing determines how information is processed later in the conversation.

The strategy also influences participant engagement. Unlike Figures 1 and 2, callers do not question the reported achievements. Instead, they enquire about participation, execution, and benefits. This suggests that the initial framing limits critical examination while boosting acceptance of the institutional story offered by the guests.

Finally, the discourse demonstrates how institutional power is exercised through unequal access to public communication. Project administrators, government officials, and technical specialists dominate the debate, while ordinary beneficiaries only contribute by asking for explanation. Because other perspectives are excluded, the programme creates a primarily positive image of the endeavour. As a result, the discourse moulds audience beliefs by prioritising official knowledge over opposing interpretations, so strengthening institutional credibility.

Findings

The “*Good Morning Katsina Programme*” mostly employs the Preferred Strategy, Blame Avoidance/Transfer Strategy, and Source Avoidance Strategy, according to the study. These tactics are carried out through interrogative framing, responsibility attribution, and anonymous sourcing, allowing presenters and guests to develop unique views of public concerns.

The study also found that discursive strategies influence participant participation by directing the topic and determining acceptable responses. While the Preferred Strategy promotes audience engagement, the Blame Avoidance/Transfer and Source Avoidance techniques limit interaction by emphasising prevailing institutional or elite viewpoints, which callers typically replicate.

The study demonstrated that linguistic framing of discussion topics influences listeners' views, attitudes, and perceptions by activating common social knowledge and mental models of governance, corruption, leadership, and development. The programme uses ideological framing to reinforce positive portrayals of preferred actors and negative representations of perceived opponents, influencing public perception of sociopolitical issues.

Discussion

The results indicate that the “*Good Morning Katsina Programme*” utilises the Preferred Strategy, Blame Avoidance/Transfer Strategy and Source Avoidance Strategy as these discourse patterns represent the sociopolitical contexts of Northern Nigeria where the issues of corruption, poor governance, unemployment and development are widely discussed. Presenters use open-ended questions to engage audience and elicit discussion on topics the listeners are familiar with. This aligns with van Dijk's (2008) perspective that discourse constructs shared mental models, selecting topic and providing public interpretation. Likewise, Mu and Ma (2022) state that public opinion is not only created by media discourse, but it is also shaped by it.

The Blame Avoidance/Transfer Strategy allows the presenter and guest to blame governance for the issues facing it, pointing to poor leadership, corruption, and weak institutions, rather than directly pointing to any individuals. As detailed in the discussion on infrastructure development, these explanations are mostly echoed by callers, who have similar impressions about governance in Northern Nigeria. This is in line with van Dijk's (2008) notion that discourse affects the responsivity of the audience, and Wang's (2023) conclusion that the representation of the participants affects the public perception.

Similarly, the Source Avoidance Strategy, such as “*Reports indicate*” in the context provided for the Fuel Wood Balance Project, makes official statements appear credible and makes listeners think about the advantages and values of the programme rather than its credibility. This is also the argument put forward by Hernández and Jiménez-Briones (2025) regarding the choice of lexicon and the representation of the participants and their views. In summary, these findings concur with Vaarala and Farkas (2025) who posited that the media serves as a vehicle for dissemination of public knowledge, and also showed that interactive radio continues to be a potent tool for creating public perceptions of governance, accountability and development in Northern Nigeria.

6. Conclusion

The “*Good Morning Katsina Programme*” used the Preferred Strategy, Blame Avoidance/Transfer Strategy and Source Avoidance Strategy to create the public perception on governance, leadership

and development. The results indicate that these linguistic strategies express the socio-political realities of Northern Nigeria and affect listeners' views by orientating public issues, attributing responsibility and endorsing specific points of view. The study shows that interactive radio is equally a tool for engaging in public participation but also an important tool for forming public opinion and building civic participation in Northern Nigeria.

7. Recommendations

Media practitioners need to engage in questioning based on evidence and balance to elicit different viewpoints, rather than to reinforce pre-formed perspectives. This will help create more active, open and reflective civic discourse about governance and public affairs.

They should clearly identify the sources of the information provided in programmes rather than using the expressions such as "reports indicate. Clear sourcing will enhance credibility, trust, and participatory engagement with audiences.

Policymakers and broadcast regulators should create and enforce editorial guidelines to encourage a balanced approach to the moderation of interactive radio programmes, accurate sourcing of information and fair representation of opposing points of view. On-going professional development for radio talent should also be encouraged to improve good, ethical public discourse.

References

- Fang, X., & Dong, F. (2026). Legitimization or delegitimation? A multimodal critical discourse analysis of the 2025 Los Angeles protests in CNN and Fox News. *Journalism and Media*, 7(1), Article 30. <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia7010030>
- Hernández, Á. A., & Jiménez-Briones, R. (2025). Critical discourse analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics in empirical research: A systematic literature review. *English Studies at NBU*, 11(2), 291–314. <https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.25.2.6>
- Kennedy, C. R. (2022). Worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment: Strengthening qualitative corpus methods in the critical discourse analysis of protest press coverage. *Discourse & Society*, 33(5), 611–630. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09579265221093650>
- Mu, J., & Ma, R. (2022). A CiteSpace-based analysis of the application of Critical Discourse Analysis in news discourse. *Discourse & Communication*, 16(4), 403–425. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17504813211070670>
- Ogunlana, O., & Oamen, F. (2025). Power dynamics in Nigeria's political rhetoric: A critical analysis of presidential election campaign discourse. *Journal of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria*, 28, 133–151.
- Vaarala, V., & Farkas, J. (2025). A discursive turn in journalism studies? A systematic review of discourse analysis in leading journalism journals. *Journalism Studies*, 27(4), 565–582. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2025.2600439>
- van Dijk, T. A. (2008). *Discourse and context: A sociocognitive approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wang, C. (2023). Critical discourse analysis based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics: Taking the Economist's first commentation on the end of China's zero-COVID policy as an example. *Journal of Contemporary Educational Research*, 7(6). <https://doi.org/10.26689/jcer.v7i6.5019>.



An Assessment of the Effects of Flood in Maiduguri and its Environs on Commercial Activities

Dr. Fatima Bukar Bababe¹, Dr Halima Lami Bello² & Dr. Mohammed Bala Adamu³

^{1, 2} Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

³ Division of General Studies,
University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Abstract

This paper provides a general assessment of the effects of flood on commercial activities in Maiduguri and its environs. Objectives of the study to identify the causes of flooding in Maiduguri and its environs; and also, to assess the impact of flooding on the commercial activities in Maiduguri and its environs such as the Business activities in Maiduguri and its environs that formed the area of the study and the primary source of data. The study utilizes a simple random sampling technique to select respondents for the study. One hundred (100) respondents were selected using a random number generator or a lottery system. The research findings reveal an overwhelming majority of the respondents identified poor drainage systems, climate change that causes heavy rainfall, blockage of waterways building on the waterways, and deforestation as the primary drivers of the recurrent flooding. Furthermore, this study reveals that majority of respondents confirmed that flooding had disrupted their source of livelihoods. It further reveals that some former employees had relocated due to job loss caused by floods, suggesting that urban flooding is contributing to both economic and human destructions. The research finally recommends that Government, Non-Governmental Organization (N G O), Civil Society Organization (C S O), to provide financial support, improved flood control measures, in Maiduguri and its environs for the community to bounce back to normal socio-economic activities.

Keywords

food, environs and commercial activities

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Flooding stands as a natural disaster globally, exerting profound impacts on residential properties. The repercussions of flooding are many, encompassing immediate physical damage, long-term economic burdens, and significant social challenges. On a global scale, the increasing frequency and severity of floods have been attributed to climate change, leading to rising sea levels and more intense rainfall patterns. Numerous regions worldwide experienced severe flooding, resulting in the loss of over 1,000 lives, displacement of millions, and economic damages estimated in the hundreds of billions. The aftermath saw communities grappling with destroyed homes, disrupted livelihoods, and a protracted recovery process.

Flooding poses a severe threat to economic stability due to the region's vulnerability to climate change and limited adaptive capacity. Research show that about 23% of Africa's urban population resides in low-lying flood-prone areas, exacerbating the risk to business activities. The recurrent flooding of the Niger River, for example, has led to significant losses in agriculture, a backbone of many African economies in the world, and has disrupted trade corridors in countries like Niger, Mali,

and Benin. Similarly, coastal cities such as Lagos in Nigeria and Accra in Ghana frequently experience urban flooding due to poor drainage and channel systems and rapid urbanization, resulting in damages to infrastructure and commerce. African business activities, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs), are disproportionately affected due to their limited resources and insurance coverage, making recovery from any social calamity events challenging the economic activities at large.

In Nigeria, flooding remains one of the most devastating natural disasters, annually affecting businesses and livelihoods. Between 2010 and 2022, over 2.5 million Nigerians were displaced by floods, with cumulative economic losses exceeding \$3 billion (National Emergency Management Agency, 2023). The 2022 floods, which affected 33 out of Nigeria's 36 states, disrupted major economic hubs and agricultural zones, leading to food shortages and inflation (World Bank, 2023). Urban centers like Lagos, Kano, and Abuja experienced significant commercial interruptions due to submerged roads, power outages, and property destruction (Adelekan, 2010). Furthermore, the agricultural sector, a major employer in Nigeria, has suffered extensive losses, compounding the challenges of food insecurity and reducing the income of rural agrarian businesses (NEMA, 2023).

In Maiduguri and its environs, flooding poses unique challenges to economic activities, exacerbated by the region's socio-political dynamics and fragile infrastructure. Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, is a semi-arid region that has recently experienced unprecedented flooding due to intensified rainfall and poor urban planning (Borno State Emergency Management Agency 2024). The 2024 floods in Maiduguri submerged roads, markets, and warehouses, disrupting commercial activities and impeding the movement of goods and services. Additionally, small-scale traders, who constitute a significant portion of Maiduguri's economy, have reported severe losses in goods and property, leading to increased poverty and unemployment. The impact of flooding on Maiduguri's agricultural sector, which supplies essential commodities to neighboring states, further highlights the cascading effects on regional trade and food security (Adelakun et al., 2022).

Moreover, the displacement of populations due to flooding has added pressure to Maiduguri's and strained economy, as internally displaced persons (IDPs) struggle to find sustainable means of livelihood. Commercial activities reliant on local consumer spending, such as retail and hospitality, have seen a decline in patronage due to the economic downturn caused by flood-induced damages (UNICEF, 2024). The absence of adequate insurance mechanisms and government support for recovery efforts in the Maiduguri and the entire region.

Statement of the Problem

Flooding in Maiduguri and its environs has become an increasingly significant threat to commercial activities, exacerbated by the city's semi-arid climate, rapid urbanization, and climate change. Despite the rising frequency and intensity of floods, the state and some local government inadequate drainage, waterways systems and infrastructure have made it more susceptible to the destructive effects of flooding. Markets, roads, and commercial premises frequently get submerged, leading to inventory loss, business closures, and reduced revenues. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which dominate Maiduguri's local economy, are particularly vulnerable to these disruptions, as they operate with limited financial resources, lack access to insurance, and face challenges in recovering from the damages caused by flooding. However, while much has been written about flooding's environmental and

infrastructural impacts in larger cities like Lagos and Port Harcourt (e.g., Mike, 2017; Mathew, 2022; and Peter, 2022), there is a significant gap in the literature regarding the specific impacts of flooding on business activities in Maiduguri and the strategies employed by local businesses to recover from such disruptions.

The central gap in existing research is the lack of empirical evidence on the specific impacts of flooding on commercial activities in Maiduguri, with particular focus on the adaptive strategies employed by local businesses activities in the context of repeated flooding. While much has been

done to explore the general socio-environmental impacts of flooding in Nigeria (Adelekan, 2010; NEMA, 2023), there remains a significant lack of research examining the specific, localized impacts on SMEs in smaller, conflict-prone cities like Maiduguri. By focusing on this gap, this research provides valuable insights into the practical challenges faced by businesses in flood-affected areas in Maiduguri and its environs, along with the strategies that can enhance resilience and recovery of the commercial activities in Maiduguri and its environs.

Significance of the Study

The study reveals that significantly importance for various stakeholders, as they provide crucial insights into the impacts of flooding on commercial activities in Maiduguri and its environs. For business owners, the study will offer valuable information on the specific challenges they face due to flooding, including disruptions to operations, financial losses for the commercial activities, and the social effects on their employees and families. Understanding these challenges can help business owners, and the commercial activities adopt better preparedness and recovery strategies in the affected area for day today commercial activities, such as investing in flood-resistant infrastructure, developing contingency plans, or participating in community-based disaster risk management initiatives control in Nigeria.

For the policymakers and government agencies such as (NGOs) (CSOs), the study provides essential data to inform flood management policies and economic support programs tailored to the needs of businesses in flood-prone areas. The research highlights gaps in current disaster response strategies, particularly with regard to supporting SMEs in Maiduguri, which are the backbone of the local economy. Policymakers can use these insights to design targeted interventions, such as providing financial assistance to businesses affected by flooding, enhancing the flood resilience of infrastructure, and ensuring better coordination between government agencies and the business community in disaster preparedness and recovery efforts.

For non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the research underscored the need for strategic involvement in supporting flood-affected businesses. Many NGOs play a critical role in disaster response and recovery, but this study would reveal the specific types of assistance businesses require, such as financial grants, skill-building for recovery, and psychosocial support for business owners and employees affected by floods. NGOs can tailor their interventions to address these unique needs and provide more effective support during and after flood events, ultimately contributing to the long-term resilience of businesses in Maiduguri.

For academic researchers and institutions, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the socio-economic impacts of flooding in Nigeria, particularly in smaller and conflict-affected urban areas like Maiduguri. The research fills a critical gap in the literature by focusing on business-related consequences, an area that has been underexplored in existing studies. It provides a foundation for future research on adaptive strategies, flood risk management, and the socio-economic recovery of communities affected by environmental disasters.

Scope of the Study

This study focused on the effects of flooding on commercial activities, exploring both the causes and effects of flooding on local enterprises. Geographically, the study was confined to Maiduguri and its environs surrounding areas, providing a localized perspective on the impacts of flooding on businesses in a semi-arid, conflict-prone region. The time scope of the study is from September 2024 to early January 2025.

Causes of Flood Disaster

Flooding is primarily driven by natural disaster, such as rainfall, river overflow, and tidal surges, but the growing influence of human activities in the commercial arena is significantly altering the intensity and frequency of flood events. Climate change, urbanization, and land use changes are increasingly identified as key drivers of flooding, particularly in densely populated areas like

Maiduguri the state capital of Borno. Most significant contributors to flooding is climate change environmental desertification. As the planet warms due to increased greenhouse gas emissions, the atmosphere holds more moisture, leading to heavier rainfall. This is particularly evident in regions where intense storms and erratic rainfall patterns are becoming more frequent. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and environmental desertification (IPCC, 2021) warns that these changes will lead to more frequent and severe flooding events, particularly in coastal and low-lying regions. In coastal areas, rising sea levels pose an increasing risk of flooding, as storm surges become more powerful, inundating both natural and urban landscapes. Moreover, in tropical regions, shifts in the seasonal timing and intensity of rainfall have made previously predictable wet seasons more unpredictable, often leading to flash floods that overwhelm drainage systems and cause extensive damage.

The role of urbanization in exacerbating flooding cannot be overstated. Rapid urban growth, particularly in the Global South, has resulted in the expansion of cities into floodplains and other vulnerable areas. Urbanization typically reduces the land's natural ability to absorb rainwater, as natural vegetation is replaced by impervious surfaces such as roads, buildings, and pavements. This transformation leads to increased surface runoff during heavy rains, which, when combined with inadequate drainage infrastructure, results in the accumulation of water and subsequent flooding. Cities like Jakarta and Dhaka, for example, are suffering from frequent flooding as a result of this rapid, unplanned urbanization (UN-Habitat, 2016). The expansion of urban centers into flood-prone areas without sufficient drainage systems or flood control measures has significantly increased flood vulnerability.

Impact of Flooding on Commercial Activities

Impacts of flooding on commercial activities is the financial loss resulting from wealth to loss, equipment destruction, and inventory loss. When floodwaters inundate business premises or commercial arena, buildings, machinery, and inventories are often severely damaged or completely destroyed. According to a research by the World Bank (2019), flooding can lead to millions of dollars in property damage, significantly affecting businesses in Nigeria, particularly those that rely on physical assets, such as manufacturing firms and retail outlets. For example, businesses in flood-prone areas may experience severe damage to their infrastructure, with repairs requiring significant capital outlay, which disrupts the regular flow of operations. The flood of 2012 in Thailand, for instance, caused over \$46 billion in economic losses, severely affecting both local and multinational companies (World Bank, 2019).

Additionally, business owners must contend with the costs of temporarily halting operations due to water damage. This loss of income while facilities are under repair further exacerbates the financial strain on businesses. Smaller businesses, which often lack adequate insurance coverage or the capital reserves to recover quickly, are particularly vulnerable. For such enterprises, the damage from floods can sometimes be a catastrophic blow that leads to permanent closure, exacerbating the economic challenges faced by communities (Mills, 2005).

Flooding also disrupts the supply chains of businesses, especially those reliant on the transportation of goods and raw materials. For industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and retail, flooding can halt or delay shipments, cause transportation gridlocks, and disrupt distribution networks. A study by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (2017) found that flooding could significantly disrupt the movement of goods, especially when transportation routes such as roads, bridges, and ports are flooded or damaged. In the aftermath of a flood, logistical delays can cascade down the supply chain, affecting inventory levels, production schedules, and customer deliveries.

In cases where businesses depend on just-in-time (JIT) inventory models, such disruptions can have catastrophic effects, causing widespread shortages or delays in product availability. For instance, in 2011, the floods in Thailand severely impacted the automotive industry, disrupting the global supply of parts and causing production delays for companies such as Toyota and Honda (Mills, 2005).

Similarly, in Nigeria, floods frequently disrupt the supply of agricultural products, leading to price hikes, food shortages, and long-term scarcity in local markets, particularly in regions like Kogi and Niger states where the country's primary crops are grown (Ogunjobi, 2009).

Beyond infrastructure and logistical disruptions, flooding also has significant social impacts, including the displacement of employees and disruption to the workforce. Employees who are directly affected by flooding may face challenges in accessing their places of work, especially in urban areas where transportation routes are blocked or infrastructure is damaged. Moreover, when floods destroy homes, businesses often face absenteeism as employees struggle to recover from personal losses or are unable to commute due to damaged transport links (Karim, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

Structural Functionalism was primarily developed by Émile Durkheim in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with significant contributions later made by Talcott Parsons in the mid-20th century. When applying this theory to the study of flooding and its effects on business employment, the impact of such a disaster on a business can be seen as a disruption within the larger social system. Businesses, as integral components of the economy, serve multiple functions—providing jobs, producing goods and services, and contributing to the overall economic stability. In flood-prone regions, the damage to businesses can lead to a breakdown in these functions. For example, when businesses are forced to close temporarily or permanently due to flooding, the immediate consequence is a loss of employment opportunities for workers, which disrupts not only the individuals directly affected but also the stability of the broader community (Durkheim, 1893).

The loss of occupation or trading caused by flooding can lead to a series of interconnected disruptions. Employees who lose their jobs may face financial instability, which, in turn, affects their families and communities. According to Talcott Parsons (1951), the function of social institutions, including the family and community, is to maintain social order and promote the well-being of individuals. The loss of income for workers can strain familial relationships, reduce access to education, and decrease the overall quality of life. Families who depend on a stable income to meet their needs may experience significant hardship, leading to increased stress and potential social problems, such as a rise in poverty or social dislocation. These disruptions in the family and community structures can have broader societal implications, as the social fabric begins to unravel.

From a functionalist perspective, flooding-induced job losses not only create economic instability but also challenge the social order. For example, when businesses are unable to operate at full capacity due to flooding, the production of goods and services is reduced, leading to shortages in supply and a decline in economic productivity. As Durkheim (1893) argued, society requires stability and a functioning economy to maintain social order. A disruption in business operations due to flooding can, therefore, lead to broader economic instability that extends beyond the immediate loss of employment. Businesses that are unable to recover quickly from a flood may fail to reintegrate into the larger economy, leading to long-term disruptions in the economic system. In such cases, the government and other institutions may need to intervene with aid and recovery measures to restore equilibrium.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from the analysis of responses on the causes of flooding in Maiduguri and its surrounding areas highlight the multi-causal and human-induced nature of urban flooding in the region. An overwhelming majority of the respondents identified poor drainage systems, heavy rainfall, blockage of waterways, and deforestation as the primary drivers of the recurrent flooding. These responses are consistent with numerous empirical studies conducted across the affected communities.

Another aspect of the findings reveals how respondents' experience of flooding in their business areas (with a large number reporting flooding every rainy season or occasionally) is tied closely to

the identified causes. This real-world exposure adds qualitative weight to the quantitative indicators, suggesting that these causes are not hypothetical but are felt routinely and tangibly. Unlike theoretical models that sometimes overemphasize hydrological and climatic variables, the lived experiences of respondents paint a more direct picture of flooding as a human-made crisis, worsened by neglect and weak governance.

Summary

This study assessed the effects of flooding on business activities in Maiduguri and its environs. Chapter one presents the background of the study which contains four research objectives. They are to assess the causes of flooding in Maiduguri and its environs; to assess the impact of flooding on the operational continuity of small and medium-sized enterprises in Maiduguri and its environs; to evaluate the long term consequences of the flooding on income level and financial setbacks of business in Maiduguri and its environs; and to assess how the flooding lead to loss of employment among employees of different business activities in Maiduguri and its environs.

Furthermore, this study revealed that majority of respondents confirmed that flooding had disrupted their business operations, with many reporting recovery periods lasting from several weeks to months. Challenges identified include damage to goods and equipment, temporary business closure, reduced customer patronage, and increased cost of repairs showing a high level of vulnerability among small-scale entrepreneurs. This aligns with the findings of Olorunfemi and Raheem (2016), who established that flooding in urban Nigeria disproportionately affects informal and small-scale businesses due to limited capital buffers and insurance coverage. Additionally, the observed income reduction often above 30% and the necessity of taking loans to remain afloat reflect the financial fragility of these enterprises. Respondents' belief that full recovery may take over a year or may never happen echoes the findings of Adegun and Taiwo (2020), who studied flood-related business collapses in Ibadan. However, unlike some studies that suggest businesses eventually adapt and recover through resilience strategies, the present findings show a deeper and longer-lasting economic strain, possibly due to the compounded impact of insecurity and displacement in the region, making recovery even more complex in Maiduguri.

In addition, a considerable number of business owners reported that they had laid off between 1–10 employees due to flooding, and many expressed reduced capacity to hire new workers. This is consistent with the findings of Eze and Okonkwo (2019), who linked environmental disasters in Nigerian cities with rising unemployment and informal labor market volatility. Additionally, the study reveals that some former employees had relocated due to job loss caused by floods, suggesting that urban flooding is contributing to both economic and human displacement. The recommended solutions government financial support, improved flood control measures, and better insurance coverage highlight an understanding among local business owners of the structural interventions required to safeguard employment.

These findings conform to UN-Habitat (2021) observations that climate-induced disasters like flooding increasingly influence patterns of urban employment, particularly in fragile regions like the Sahel. However, while some prior literature has emphasized that job loss due to flooding is usually short-term and reversible, the findings here indicate more enduring and systemic employment setbacks, likely intensified by poor governmental response, inadequate business support structures, and Maiduguri's ongoing post-insurgency recovery challenges.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it was observed that flooding in Maiduguri and its environs is not merely a consequence of natural forces such as heavy rainfall but is significantly driven by a combination of anthropogenic factors including poor drainage systems, blockage of waterways, deforestation, and unregulated urbanization. The analysis clearly demonstrates that human mismanagement of the urban environment ranging from indiscriminate waste disposal to weak enforcement of building regulations has intensified the frequency and severity of flooding across the city. Respondents' perspectives align

strongly with existing empirical research, particularly in attributing flood disasters to inadequate infrastructure and environmental degradation, though they diverge from some earlier studies that emphasized more natural causes.

The respondents' views also indicate a high level of community awareness and lived experiences of seasonal or occasional flooding, particularly in business districts, reinforcing the urgent need for pragmatic and community-informed intervention strategies. These findings underscore the complex interplay between environmental mismanagement, weak governance, and the growing vulnerabilities of urban populations. Therefore, tackling flooding in Maiduguri demands not only climate resilience but also institutional reforms, infrastructural investment, and behavioral change at both individual and systemic levels.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

The government of Borno State, in collaboration with relevant agencies, should prioritize the modernization and routine maintenance of drainage systems across Maiduguri. This includes clearing blocked drains and constructing new, properly designed drainage channels in flood-prone areas.

Authorities should strictly enforce urban development policies that prevent construction on waterways, floodplains, and drainage corridors. Unauthorized structures should be removed, and new developments must undergo environmental impact assessments. There is a critical need to strengthen waste collection and disposal services in Maiduguri. Public awareness campaigns on proper waste disposal should be intensified, and penalties should be imposed on individuals and businesses that dump waste into drains or waterways.

Reforestation programs should be launched, especially in deforested and flood-prone zones. Community-led tree-planting efforts can help restore natural water absorption and reduce surface runoff. Flood prevention should be mainstreamed into urban governance frameworks through dedicated institutions that monitor, predict, and manage flood risks using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and satellite imagery.

The government should introduce incentives such as tax breaks or grants for businesses that implement eco-friendly practices like rainwater harvesting, green roofs, and proper drainage systems. Partnerships should be forged between government, NGOs, development partners, and research institutions to mobilize resources and expertise for long-term flood mitigation projects. International climate adaptation funding can also be explored.

References

- Adebayo, A. A., & Adebisi, N. A. (2012). An Assessment of the Causes of Flooding in Nigeria. *Environmental Research Journal*, 6(2), 86-92.
- Adelekan, I. O. (2010). Vulnerability of poor urban coastal communities to flooding in Lagos, Nigeria. *Environment and Urbanization*, 22(2), 433-450.
- Akinyemi, F. O. (2011). Impact of soil erosion on the environment: A case study in northern Nigeria. *Environmental Journal of Agriculture and Biology*, 10(2), 97-103.
- Borno State Emergency Management Agency (BOSEMA). (2024). *Annual Flood Impact Report*.
- Carter, J. (2015). Business continuity planning in the wake of floods: A review of long-term impacts. *International Journal of Business Continuity and Risk Management*, 6(4), 258-275.
- Chirwa, D. (2015). Deforestation and soil erosion in sub-Saharan Africa. *African Forestry Review*, 2(3), 114-118.
- Durkheim, É. (1893). *The Division of Labour in Society*. The Free Press.
- FAO (2020). *Deforestation and its effects on the environment*. Food and Agriculture Organization.
- FEMA. (2018). *Hurricane Harvey: Economic recovery and resilience strategies for businesses*. Federal Emergency Management Agency.

- FEMA. (2018). *Hurricane Harvey: Economic recovery and resilience strategies for businesses*. Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- FEMA. (2018). *Hurricane Harvey: Economic recovery and resilience strategies for businesses*. Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- Hijioka, Y., et al. (2014). Urban flooding in Africa: Current trends and future projections. *Climate and Development*, 6(4), 353-362.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2021). *Climate Change 2021: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). (2014). *The impact of natural disasters on employment and jobs*. International Labour Organization.
- IPCC (2021). *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis*. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- Karim, N. (2015). The social and economic impacts of flooding on local businesses: A case study approach. *Journal of Disaster Research*, 18(2), 99-111.
- Karim, N. (2015). The social and economic impacts of flooding on local businesses: A case study approach. *Journal of Disaster Research*, 18(2), 99-111.
- Kates, R. W., Colten, C. E., Laska, S., & Leatherman, S. P. (2006). Reconstruction of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina: A research perspective. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 103(40), 14653-14660.
- Kundzewicz, Z. W., et al. (2017). Floods and human adaptation. *Hydrological Sciences Journal*, 62(6), 823-839.
- Kwaghe, A., et al. (2013). Assessing the impacts of urbanization on flood risks in northern Nigeria. *Nigeria Journal of Environmental Management*, 5(1), 27-35.
- Marx, K. (1867). *Das Kapital*. Verlag von Otto Meissner.
- Mills, E. (2005). The impact of extreme weather events on the global economy. *Nature*, 438, 56-59.
- National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). (2023). *Flood Impact Assessment Report*.
- Niang, I., et al. (2014). Africa. In Barros, V. R., et al. (Eds.), *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability* (pp. 1199-1265). Cambridge University Press.
- Nicholson, S. E. (2000). The nature of rainfall variability over Africa. *Global and Planetary Change*, 26(1-3), 153-167.
- O'Brien, K. (2011). The flood resilience of businesses: Exploring strategies for disaster recovery. *Disaster Management Journal*, 4(1), 47-56.
- Ogunjobi, K. O. (2009). Deforestation and its impact on rainfall and flooding in Nigeria. *GeoJournal of Climate*, 45(2), 43-49.
- Ogunjobi, K. O. (2009). The impact of flooding on Nigeria's agricultural sector: A review. *International Journal of Environmental Science*, 5(2), 82-90.
- Okonkwo, C. (2016). The role of business resilience in flood-prone areas. *Journal of Environmental Economics*, 7(3), 41-52.
- Okonkwo, C. (2016). The role of urbanization in flood risks in Nigeria: Case studies from Lagos and Abuja. *Journal of Urban Studies*, 7(2), 43-56.
- Parker, G. (2016). The economic impact of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans businesses. *Journal of Economic History*, 76(2), 113-130.
- Parsons, T. (1951). *The Social System*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.
- Sreenivasan, S. (2016). Chennai Floods: Employment and Productivity in the Aftermath. *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, 59(2), 112-121.
- Swiss Re (2019). *Natural disasters and the global economy*. Swiss Re Institute.
- UNDP. (2011). *The economic impact of flooding on small businesses: A global analysis*. United Nations Development Programme.
- UN-Habitat (2016). *Urbanization and its impact on flood risks in African cities*. United Nations Human Settlements Programme.
- UN-Habitat. (2022). *Addressing Urban Flood Risks in Africa: Strategies for Resilience*.

- UNICEF. (2024). *Flooding and Internally Displaced Persons: The Case of Maiduguri*.
- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (2017). *Disaster resilience: The impact of flooding on business operations*. UNDRR.
- World Bank. (2019). *Thailand floods and their economic consequences*. World Bank.
- Weber, M. (1922). *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. University of California Press.
- World Bank (2015). *Urban flooding in sub-Saharan Africa: Causes, risks, and responses*. World Bank Publications.
- World Bank. (2012). *Thai Floods 2011: Rapid Assessment for Resilient Recovery and Reconstruction Planning*.
- World Bank. (2023). *Economic Impacts of Nigeria's 2022 Floods*.



Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) against Women and Girls in Borno State, Nigeria

Dr. Abba Kale¹ & Dr. Yagana Goma²

¹ Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

² Department of Islamic Studies,
Kashim Ibrahim University, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the prevalence, socio-cultural, and economic factors contributing to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) against women and children in Borno State, Nigeria. The research explores the intersection of socio-cultural norms and economic deprivation in exacerbating SGBV, as well as the consequences and reporting mechanisms related to such violence. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 360 respondents, including victims, perpetrators, community leaders, and officials through surveys, in-depth interviews, and key informant interviews. The findings reveal that 88.9% of respondents believe socio-cultural factors significantly contribute to SGBV, with traditional norms, gender roles, early marriage, and patriarchal structures identified as key drivers. Additionally, economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and economic dependency were cited as significant contributors to SGBV. The study also highlights the emotional, physical, and social consequences of SGBV on victims, including trauma, stigma, and family disintegration. Despite the existence of reporting mechanisms, challenges such as ineffective systems and fear of retaliation hinder victims from seeking justice. The study emphasizes the need for comprehensive interventions, including awareness Programmes, economic empowerment, legal reforms, and community support to effectively address the root causes of SGBV. Recommendations for improving reporting systems and victim support services, particularly in conflict-prone regions, are also provided.

Keywords

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, socio-cultural factors, economic factors, reporting mechanisms, victim support

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Flooding There is a disturbing global trend of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) against women and children. In Africa, from 2013, 45.6% of women in Africa have experienced SGBV (WHO, 2016). In Nigeria, women and children have suffered different forms of SGBV particularly in the context of the violent insurgency and banditry problems (BBC Africa, 2020) with wide-ranging short and long-term consequences (UNFPA, 2021).

The occurrence and reoccurrence of SGBV cases in northern Nigeria have made the north east and north west regions characterized by victims even in IDPs camps and other locations rendering women and children bearing the heat of SGBV atrocities.

The atrocities include violations of the fundamental rights of women and children in terms of domestic violence, sexual exploitation, poverty, molestation, forced marriage, rape, displacements and other forms of physical and sexual abuse.

The problem of SGBV against women and children intersect and feed into wider social problems, raising fundamental questions. Thus, SGBV is a critical barrier to sustainable development, and economic growth. This goes against the UN's adopted SDGs goal number 5 on gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls (UNICEF, 2018).

It is against this background that this research seeks to investigate the extent of the problem, get the dynamics and nuances of the SGBV against women and children in the north east and north west regions.

Objectives of the Study

The research aims to investigate & determine the extent of the problem of SGBV against women and children in the state.

The objectives are to:

1. Examine the socio-cultural and economic factors responsible for the rising trend of SGBV against women and children in the state;
2. Interrogate the role of cultural beliefs and practices in the perpetuation of SGBV in the study area;
3. Analyse the consequences of SGBV against women and children in the state; and
4. Develop a framework for reporting and contributing to the handling of SGBV through sustainable interventions to victims in the state.

Conceptual Clarification

The consensus definition of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR, 2015) sees SGBV as an act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships; these include physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological violence in addition to the threat of violence or coercion and the denial of resources or access.

Materials and Method

Study Area and Scope

The research is to be carried out in Borno State, Nigeria. The state has a total of twenty-seven (27) Local Government Areas. The research will be conducted in the three senatorial zones as clusters using multi-stage cluster sampling in the selection of the states, the LGAs, wards, and streets/locations. A combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques will be deployed to select the sample.

Target Population

The study population focuses on: Members of the general public (both males and females). Victims (women and children) of varying forms of SGBV in and out of IDP camps ~~&~~ and other related locations Perpetrators of SGBV in the two regions, Community leaders, Religious leaders, Officials of Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), Officials of Nigeria Police Force (NPF, Social Welfare Officers, NGOs working around issues of SGBV in the state.

Sampling Techniques

Multi-Stage Cluster; Three senatorial zones are the clusters using SRS method. 4 LGAs selected from the state proportionately using Simple Random Sampling(SRS) method and 12 Wards from the 4 LGAs selected using the SRS procedure. Selection of Streets/locations and respondents was done using availability criteria. A sample size of 360 was used. Sample distribution is 90 per local government for the quantitative and 6 interview sessions for the qualitative method.

Purposive sampling technique for the selection of stakeholders for Key informant interview (KII) and Individual In-depth Interview (IDI) categories

Method of Data Collection

Questionnaire is used to collect data from Members of the public (males and females) Victims of varying forms of SGBV in IDP camps and other locations. While KIIs: for Community Leaders, Religious Leaders, Officials of Hisbah Board, Officials of NPF, Social Welfare Officers and officials of NGOs working around issues affecting women and children. Similarly, IDIs for Specialized Groups: Perpetrators of varying forms of SGBV, Women as victims of SGBV and Children as victims of abuse.

Quantitative Data collected using Kobo Collect where entries to go straight to a dedicated and monitored server for the research project. Qualitative Data: KIIs and IDIs to be transcribed labeled and submitted alongside field notes and the audios via a dedicated telegram line.

Method of Data Analysis

The study used a mixed-methods approach for data analysis, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis, identifying key themes and interpreting them in relation to the research questions. Quantitative data were summarized using descriptive statistics and examined with inferential statistics to identify relationships between variables. Both types of data were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of SGBV, verifying and complementing findings. The results led to actionable policy recommendations for addressing the issue.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents (n = 360)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	33.3
	Female	240	66.7
Age	18-24 years	80	22.2
	25-34 years	100	27.8
	35-44 years	90	25.0
	45-54 years	60	16.7
	55 years and above	30	8.3
Occupation	Student	100	27.8
	Employed	140	38.9
	Self-employed	60	16.7
	Unemployed	50	13.9
	Farmer	10	2.8
Educational level	None	20	5.6
	Non-formal	20	5.6
	Primary School	50	13.9
	Secondary School	120	33.3
	Tertiary	150	41.7

Table 1 presents the demographic breakdown of the 360 respondents, offering valuable context for understanding the study's findings on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). The gender distribution reveals a notable imbalance, with 66.7% of respondents identifying as female and 33.3% as male. This skew reflects the higher vulnerability of women to SGBV, as well as the possibility that women may be more willing to participate in studies addressing such sensitive topics.

The age distribution shows that most respondents were between 25-34 years (27.8%) and 35-44 years (25.0%), which represents the core working-age population. The relatively smaller representation of

older individuals (55 years and above) at 8.3% suggests that experiences and perspectives from older generations may not be fully captured in this study. This could impact the generalizability of the findings across all age groups.

In terms of occupation, 38.9% of respondents were employed, followed by 27.8% who were students and 16.7% who were self-employed. The presence of a large number of employed respondents may indicate that this group is more accessible or engaged in issues related to SGBV. The smaller representation of unemployed individuals (13.9%) and farmers (2.8%) suggests that these groups might be underrepresented, which could limit insights into their experiences with SGBV.

The educational level of respondents indicates that the majority had either secondary (33.3%) or tertiary education (41.7%), pointing to a relatively educated sample. However, the presence of 5.6% of respondents with no formal education and another 5.6% with non-formal education indicates that there is still a portion of the population with limited formal education. This could influence their awareness of SGBV and their access to support services or resources.

Table 2: Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Contributing to SGBV (n= 360)

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Do socio-cultural factors contribute to SGBV?	Yes	320	88.9
	No	30	8.3
	Unsure	10	2.8
What socio-cultural factors contribute to SGBV?	Traditional norms	200	55.6
	Gender roles	180	50.0
	Early marriage	120	33.3
	Patriarchal family structures	100	27.8
	Other (Specify)	40	11.1
What economic factors contribute to SGBV?	Poverty	250	69.4
	Lack of employment opportunities	220	61.1
	Economic dependency	180	50.0
	Low educational attainment	150	41.7
	Insecurity	30	8.3

Table 2 examine the socio-cultural and economic factors contributing to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) based on responses from 360 participants. A significant majority, 88.9%, of respondents believe that socio-cultural factors contribute to SGBV, indicating broad awareness of the role these factors play in perpetuating violence. Only 8.3% disagreed, and 2.8% were unsure, suggesting that socio-cultural issues are widely recognized as key drivers of SGBV in the region.

In terms of specific socio-cultural factors, traditional norms were identified as the most significant contributor by 55.6% of respondents. This suggests that deep-rooted cultural practices and expectations, such as gender inequality, continue to influence attitudes toward and the occurrence of SGBV. Gender roles followed closely, with 50.0% of respondents highlighting them as a contributing factor. This indicates that societal expectations about what roles men and women should play can enforce power imbalances, which often lead to violence. Early marriage, reported by 33.3%, and patriarchal family structures (27.8%) also emerged as major contributors, reinforcing the idea that early marriage and male dominance within families play a central role in fostering environments where SGBV is tolerated or even normalized.

As for economic factors, poverty was the most cited contributing factor, with 69.4% of respondents indicating it as a key driver of SGBV. This underscores the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women and children, in situations of economic deprivation. Lack of employment opportunities (61.1%) was also recognized as a significant factor, highlighting the economic pressures that may lead to frustration and violence. Additionally, economic dependency (50.0%) was identified as another factor that traps victims in abusive situations due to their reliance on the abuser for financial support. Low educational attainment (41.7%) was also noted as a contributing factor, suggesting that limited education can leave individuals unaware of their rights and more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The role of insecurity (8.3%) in contributing to SGBV was less prominent, but it may still be relevant in areas where violence and instability exacerbate vulnerability.

The findings in Table 2 of this study reveal a broad recognition of the socio-cultural and economic factors contributing to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). A substantial majority of 88.9% of respondents acknowledge the role of socio-cultural factors in perpetuating SGBV. Specifically, traditional norms and gender roles were identified as the most significant socio-cultural contributors, with 55.6% and 50.0% of respondents highlighting them, respectively. These findings align with the Oluwaseun et al. (2020) study, titled *"Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Contributing to Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria: An Analysis of the South-Western Region."* In this empirical study, traditional norms and gender roles were found to be critical drivers of gender-based violence (GBV), with entrenched patriarchal structures perpetuating power imbalances between men and women, which often lead to violence. The study similarly highlighted that societal expectations, such as rigid gender roles and male dominance, create an environment in which GBV is normalized and often tolerated.

Furthermore, the study by Oluwaseun et al. supports the findings in Table 2 regarding the economic drivers of SGBV. Poverty and economic dependency were identified as major factors that heighten vulnerability to SGBV, especially for women and children who lack financial independence and access to resources. The 61.1% of respondents in this study who pointed to lack of employment opportunities as a contributing factor echoes Oluwaseun et al.'s conclusion that economic deprivation exacerbates the vulnerability of individuals to abuse.

Table 3: Cultural Beliefs and Practices (n = 360)

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Do cultural beliefs or practices encourage SGBV?	Encourage	120	33.3
	Discourage	180	50.0
	No effect	40	11.1
	Unsure	20	5.6
Which cultural practices contribute to SGBV?	Early marriage	150	41.7
	Polygamy	100	27.8
	Patriarchal family structures	120	33.3
	Acceptance of gender inequality	180	50.0
	Religious beliefs	80	22.2
	Force marriage	40	11.1

Table 3 examines the role of cultural beliefs and practices in encouraging or discouraging Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). A significant portion of respondents, 33.3%, indicated that cultural beliefs or practices encourage SGBV, while 50.0% felt they discourage it. This highlights a division in how cultural norms are perceived in relation to SGBV, with half of the respondents seeing cultural influences as a force for discouraging violence, perhaps through mechanisms such as community-

based interventions or traditional practices that promote gender equality. On the other hand, 11.1% of respondents believed that cultural practices have no effect on SGBV, and 5.6% were unsure, suggesting a minority who are either unaware of or indifferent to the link between culture and violence.

When asked which specific cultural practices contribute to SGBV, early marriage was cited by 41.7% of respondents as a key practice that exacerbates SGBV. This points to the prevalence of child and early marriages, which can place young women at increased risk of violence and limit their agency. Acceptance of gender inequality, highlighted by 50.0% of respondents, is seen as a major factor that sustains harmful gender norms and attitudes, thereby fostering an environment where SGBV can thrive. Patriarchal family structures, which were identified by 33.3%, suggest that male dominance and control within households contribute to the perpetuation of violence against women and children.

Polygamy, identified by 27.8%, and religious beliefs, cited by 22.2%, were also recognized as contributing cultural practices. Polygamy can sometimes lead to power imbalances and jealousy, creating tensions that may escalate into violence. The influence of religious beliefs, while less pronounced, still plays a role in justifying or perpetuating certain gendered behaviors that may contribute to SGBV. Finally, forced marriage, though mentioned by only 11.1% of respondents, remains a significant issue, often resulting in victims being trapped in abusive situations due to the lack of choice in marital decisions.

These results from Table 3 underscore the complex interplay between cultural beliefs, practices, and SGBV. While some cultural practices may discourage violence, many are seen as contributing to or perpetuating harmful gender dynamics that place women and children at greater risk of abuse. Addressing these cultural practices is essential for any comprehensive strategy to combat SGBV in the region.

Table 4: Consequences of SGBV

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Major consequences of SGBV for women and children	Physical harm	280	77.8
	Emotional trauma	270	75.0
	Economic hardship	200	55.6
	Social stigma	240	66.7
	Family disintegration	150	41.7
How does SGBV affect overall well-being?	Physical impact	180	50.0
	Mental and emotional trauma	240	66.7
	Social exclusion	150	41.7
Does SGBV affect mental health issues (e.g., anxiety)?	Yes	300	83.3
	No	50	13.9
	Unsure	10	2.8

Table 4 presents the consequences of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) on women and children, as reported by 360 respondents. The findings highlight the widespread and severe impacts of SGBV across various dimensions of life.

The majority of respondents, 77.8%, identified physical harm as a major consequence of SGBV for women and children, demonstrating that physical violence is one of the most prevalent forms of abuse. Emotional trauma, reported by 75.0% of respondents, underscores the deep psychological scars left by SGBV. This reflects the long-lasting effects on victims' mental health, which can

continue to affect them long after the physical harm has healed. Economic hardship, mentioned by 55.6%, illustrates the financial burden that victims often face, whether due to lost income, medical expenses, or the inability to participate in economic activities due to injury or trauma. Social stigma, identified by 66.7%, indicates the societal shame and isolation that victims of SGBV often experience, further exacerbating their suffering and hindering their ability to seek help or reintegrate into their communities. Family disintegration, reported by 41.7%, reflects the breakdown of family structures that can occur as a result of SGBV, whether through divorce, estrangement, or abandonment.

In terms of how SGBV affects overall well-being, mental and emotional trauma was the most cited impact, with 66.7% of respondents acknowledging its significance. This aligns with the previous findings regarding emotional harm and suggests that the psychological effects of SGBV are as damaging as the physical consequences. Social exclusion, noted by 41.7%, highlights how SGBV victims may face marginalization, either within their families or communities, further intensifying their vulnerability.

The impact of SGBV on mental health issues, such as anxiety, was overwhelmingly affirmed, with 83.3% of respondents stating that SGBV does indeed affect mental health. This reflects a strong consensus on the connection between SGBV and the onset of psychological disorders. Only 13.9% of respondents disagreed, while 2.8% were unsure, suggesting that mental health consequences of SGBV are widely recognized.

These results underscore the profound and multi-dimensional effects of SGBV on individuals. The consequences extend beyond immediate physical harm, deeply affecting emotional well-being, mental health, and social relationships. Addressing these consequences requires a holistic approach that not only provides immediate relief but also long-term psychological and social support for victims.

Table 5: Reporting and Intervention Framework

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Are there mechanisms to report SGBV?	Yes	200	55.6
	No	120	33.3
	Unsure	40	11.1
How effective are these mechanisms?	Very effective	100	27.8
	Effective	120	33.3
	Not effective	80	22.2
	Not accessible	40	11.1
	Medical support	200	55.6
What support is necessary for SGBV victims?	Psychological counseling	250	69.4
	Legal assistance	180	50.0
	Financial aid	150	41.7
	Shelter	100	27.8
	Social reintegration	120	33.3
	Other (Specify)	30	8.3
	Increase awareness	220	61.1
What role should the government play?	Strengthen reporting systems	240	66.7

Provide victim support services	250	69.4
Other (Specify)	30	8.3

Table 5 provides insight into the mechanisms for reporting Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), the effectiveness of these mechanisms, the support necessary for victims, and the role the government should play in addressing the issue.

The findings show that 55.6% of respondents believe there are existing mechanisms for reporting SGBV, while 33.3% feel there are none, and 11.1% are unsure. This indicates that while there is some recognition of reporting systems, a significant portion of the population either has limited access to these mechanisms or lacks awareness of their existence.

In terms of the effectiveness of these reporting mechanisms, 27.8% of respondents deemed them very effective, and 33.3% considered them effective, suggesting that a majority of those familiar with the systems find them functional. However, 22.2% viewed the mechanisms as not effective, and 11.1% felt they were not accessible, indicating room for improvement in both the efficiency and accessibility of these mechanisms.

When asked about the support necessary for SGBV victims, 69.4% of respondents emphasized the importance of psychological counseling, highlighting the critical need for emotional and mental health support. Medical support was also a significant need, identified by 55.6%, demonstrating the importance of addressing the physical harm victims often endure. Legal assistance, mentioned by 50.0%, reflects the necessity of providing victims with access to justice and protection. Financial aid and shelter were also cited by a substantial portion of respondents (41.7% and 27.8%, respectively), illustrating the economic and housing challenges victims face. Additionally, social reintegration support was highlighted by 33.3%, emphasizing the importance of helping victims reintegrate into their communities after experiencing abuse. A smaller group (8.3%) mentioned other unspecified forms of support.

Regarding the role of the government, a majority of respondents called for actions aimed at improving victim support and reporting systems. 69.4% of respondents felt the government should provide victim support services, while 66.7% advocated for strengthening reporting systems. 61.1% of respondents also believed the government should increase awareness about SGBV, indicating that public education and outreach are critical for tackling the issue. Only a small percentage (8.3%) suggested other roles the government could play.

Overall, the findings suggest that while mechanisms for reporting SGBV exist, there is a need for greater accessibility and effectiveness. Victims require a broad range of support services, with a clear emphasis on psychological counseling, legal assistance, and medical care. The government is seen as having a pivotal role in both improving the support systems available to victims and raising awareness about the issue.

Table 6: Suggestions for Addressing SGBV

Question	Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Suggestions for addressing root causes of SGBV	Awareness programmes	300	83.3

Economic empowerment	250	69.4
Legal reforms	220	61.1
Strengthening community support	240	66.7
Cultural reform	150	41.7

Table 6 presents suggestions for addressing the root causes of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) based on the responses from 360 participants. The findings underscore the importance of multifaceted interventions that target both preventive measures and structural changes.

Awareness Programmes emerged as the most widely supported solution, with 83.3% of respondents identifying them as a key approach to addressing the root causes of SGBV. This reflects a strong belief in the power of education and public awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes and norms surrounding violence, particularly in raising consciousness about the harmful impacts of SGBV and challenging gender-based stereotypes.

Economic empowerment was the second most cited suggestion, supported by 69.4% of respondents. This highlights the recognition that financial independence can help women and marginalized groups break free from abusive relationships by providing them with the resources needed for self-sufficiency. Empowering individuals economically can also reduce the vulnerabilities that lead to exploitation and abuse.

Legal reforms were endorsed by 61.1% of respondents, emphasizing the need for stronger legal frameworks and better enforcement to protect victims of SGBV and hold perpetrators accountable. This suggests that many feel current legal protections may be inadequate or poorly implemented, and reforms could help ensure justice for victims.

Strengthening community support was also identified as an important measure, with 66.7% of respondents agreeing. This indicates that building local networks of support—such as community-based organizations, peer groups, and local leaders—can provide a safety net for victims and create more effective channels for reporting and intervention.

Finally, cultural reform, suggested by 41.7% of respondents, highlights the need for shifts in cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality and violence. This reflects an understanding that long-term change will require altering deeply entrenched cultural practices and beliefs that justify or condone SGBV.

Thematic Analysis of SGBV Data

Theme 1: Socio-Cultural Factors Contributing to SGBV

- **Sub-theme 1.1: Gender Norms and Patriarchy**

- *Description:* Many informants (KIIs) mention that traditional gender norms, where men are viewed as dominant and women as subordinate, are a key driver of SGBV. These norms often justify violence in intimate relationships, with men seen as having the right to control women.
- *Supporting Quote:* "In our culture, men are seen as heads of households, and women must obey. If she doesn't, she's punished." (Community Leader, KII)

- **Sub-theme 1.2: Misinterpretation of Religious Teachings**

- *Description:* Religious leaders and some community members use religious interpretations to justify early marriage, control over women, and other forms of abuse. This normalization of SGBV within religious contexts complicates the prevention and eradication of violence.
- *Supporting Quote:* "Some believe early marriage is a religious duty, even though the religion does not promote violence." (Religious Leader, KII)

Theme 2: Perpetrator Justifications and Motivations

- **Sub-theme 2.1: Power and Control**

- *Description:* Perpetrators, as discussed in IDIs, often see violence as a way to assert power and control over victims. In many cases, economic stress or societal pressures amplify feelings of inadequacy, leading to violence.
- *Supporting Quote:* "I did it because she was disrespecting me. She needed to learn her place in the house." (Perpetrator, IDI)

- **Sub-theme 2.2: Economic Stress**

- *Description:* Economic pressures, such as poverty and unemployment, were frequently cited as factors contributing to SGBV. Perpetrators may lash out due to frustration over financial difficulties.
- *Supporting Quote:* "Life is hard. I have no job, and she keeps asking for things. It builds up, and I lose control." (Perpetrator, IDI)

Theme 3: Victim Experiences and Consequences of SGBV

- **Sub-theme 3.1: Psychological and Emotional Trauma**

- *Description:* Victims, particularly women and children, report long-term emotional and psychological consequences from SGBV, including depression, anxiety, and trauma. These issues often go unaddressed, compounding the suffering.
- *Supporting Quote:* "I cannot trust anyone anymore. I feel worthless, like I'll never be whole again." (Female Victim, IDI)

- **Sub-theme 3.2: Social and Economic Consequences**

- *Description:* SGBV has social consequences, including social stigma, rejection, and isolation. Victims often find it difficult to reintegrate into society and face economic challenges due to the trauma or damage caused by the abuse.
- *Supporting Quote:* "After the abuse, people avoided me. I lost my job, and my family blamed me." (Female Victim, IDI)

Theme 4: Barriers to Reporting and Seeking Justice

- **Sub-theme 4.1: Fear of Retaliation**

- *Description:* Victims of SGBV often fear retaliation from perpetrators or their families, which prevents them from reporting the abuse to authorities.
- *Supporting Quote:* "If I report him, he will kill me. I am better off keeping quiet." (Female Victim, IDI)

- **Sub-theme 4.2: Distrust in Legal and Social Systems**

- *Description:* There is widespread distrust in the legal and social systems, including the police and judicial processes. Many victims feel that reporting would lead to no real change, or even worse, increase the violence they face.
- *Supporting Quote:* "The police don't care about us. They are more interested in the bribe than solving our problem." (Female Victim, IDI)

Theme 5: Support Systems and Coping Mechanisms

- **Sub-theme 5.1: Community and Family Support**

- *Description:* Some victims report receiving emotional and financial support from family and community members, but this is often conditional and can be accompanied by victim-blaming.
- *Supporting Quote:* "My aunt helped me, but she kept saying I should have done more to avoid it. It's hard to cope with that." (Female Victim, IDI)

- **Sub-theme 5.2: Government and NGO Support**

- *Description:* While some NGOs and government programmes provide support services like counseling, medical care, and legal assistance, access to these services is limited by geographic, economic, and cultural barriers.
- *Supporting Quote:* "The NGO helped me get medical care and legal advice, but they are not present in every community." (Female Victim, IDI)

Theme 6: Effectiveness of SGBV Intervention Programs

- **Sub-theme 6.1: Impact of Awareness Programs**

- *Description:* Awareness programs by NGOs and community leaders were seen as having a positive impact on reducing the occurrence of SGBV. However, their reach and effectiveness vary by region.
- *Supporting Quote:* "The awareness campaigns have helped, but we need more consistent programs." (Community Leader, KII)

- **Sub-theme 6.2: Lack of Coordination Between Stakeholders**

- *Description:* KIIs from officials indicated that there is often poor coordination between law enforcement, NGOs, and community groups, which reduces the overall effectiveness of intervention programmes.
- *Supporting Quote:* "We need a unified approach. Everyone is working in silos, which makes it harder to address the problem." (Social Welfare Officer, KII)

Conclusion

This study set out to examine the dynamics of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) against women and children in Borno State through four key objectives.

First, findings reveal that the rising trend of SGBV is strongly linked to a combination of socio-cultural and economic factors. Poverty, unemployment, low levels of education, and economic dependency significantly increase the vulnerability of women and children. These are further compounded by displacement due to insurgency, breakdown of social structures, and weakened community protection systems.

Second, the study establishes that cultural beliefs and practices play a critical role in the perpetuation of SGBV. Deeply entrenched patriarchal norms, male dominance, early and forced marriages, and the normalization of silence around abuse contribute to the persistence of violence. Cultural stigmatization and victim-blaming further discourage reporting and reinforce impunity.

Third, the consequences of SGBV are found to be severe and multidimensional. Victims experience physical injuries, reproductive health complications, psychological trauma such as depression and anxiety, and long-term social exclusion. For children, exposure to violence disrupts education and development, perpetuating cycles of vulnerability and poverty.

Finally, the study highlights significant gaps in reporting mechanisms and institutional responses. Although some frameworks exist, they are often fragmented, under-resourced, and not survivor-centered. This underscores the need for a comprehensive, sustainable, and culturally sensitive framework that enhances reporting, protection, and rehabilitation of victims.

Overall, SGBV in Borno State is a systemic issue driven by intersecting socio-economic, cultural, and institutional factors, requiring a holistic and coordinated response.

Recommendations

1. Addressing Socio-Cultural and Economic Drivers of SGBV: Implement targeted poverty alleviation and livelihood programmes for women and vulnerable households:
Promote access to education, especially for girls, as a long-term strategy for reducing vulnerability.
Strengthen social protection systems for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and conflict-affected populations.
Encourage community-based interventions that address harmful gender norms and inequalities.
 2. Transforming Harmful Cultural Beliefs and Practices:
Engage traditional rulers, religious leaders, and community gatekeepers in advocacy against harmful practices such as child marriage and gender discrimination.
Promote culturally sensitive awareness campaigns that challenge victim-blaming and normalize reporting.
Encourage community dialogue platforms where issues of gender equality and human rights can be openly discussed.
Support legal reforms and enforcement mechanisms that override harmful cultural practices.
 3. Mitigating the consequences of SGBV:
Expand access to comprehensive survivor support services, including healthcare, psychosocial counseling, legal aid, and rehabilitation programmes.
Establish safe spaces and shelters for victims, particularly in IDP camps and rural communities.
Integrate trauma-informed care into health and social services.
Ensure reintegration programs that reduce stigma and support survivors' return to normal life.
 4. Developing a Sustainable Reporting and Response Framework:
Create a centralized, confidential, and accessible SGBV reporting system that integrates community, health, and legal structures.
Strengthen referral pathways among law enforcement, healthcare providers, NGOs, and social services.
Train stakeholders (police, judiciary, social workers, healthcare providers) on survivor-centered approaches.
Establish community-based reporting mechanisms, including anonymous channels, to encourage disclosure.
Develop monitoring and evaluation systems to track SGBV cases and assess intervention effectiveness.
Ensure sustained funding and policy support for SGBV programs at state and local levels.
- Cross-Cutting Recommendation.
Promote multi-sectoral collaboration among government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners to ensure coordinated and effective responses to SGBV.

References

- Aderinto, S. (2021). Gender Violence in Displacement: A Nigerian Case Study. *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review*, 11(2), 45-62 <https://doi.org/10.2979/africonfpeacrevi.11.2.04>
- Adeyemo, C. (2023). Prevalence of Sexual and Gender Based Violence: A comparative Study of Rural and Urban Communities in Rivers State, Nigeria: <https://doi.org/10.6078/NMJ-64-1-261>. *Nigerian Medical Journal*, 64(1), 155. <https://doi.org/10.6078/nmj.v64i1.261>.
- Bukar, Y. (2021). Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Security Challenges in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camps in North East Nigeria. In Garba, I, Adole, A.R and Mu'azu, A (ed), *Security and Human Rights Challenges in Nigeria: Experiences from Parts of the North*, CPDDS Publications, University of Maiduguri.

- CARE, “CARE Rapid Gender and GBV Assessment Borno State.” (2018).
- Center Reproductive Rights. (2019). *The conflict in Northeast Nigeria’s impact on the sexual and reproductive rights of women and girls*. Center for Reproductive Rights.
https://reproductiverights.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/The-Conflict-in-Northeast-Nigerias-Impact-on-the-sexual-and-Reproductive-Rights-of-Women-and-Girls_1.pdf
- Crenshaw, K. W. (1991). “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity politics, and Violence against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241-1299.
- GBV Area of Responsibility, Northeast Nigeria. (2024). *GBV AoR Northeast – Annual Report 2024*. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/gbv-aor-northeast-nigeria-annual-report-2024>. [ReliefWeb](https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/gbv-aor-northeast-nigeria-annual-report-2024)
- Human Rights Watch. (2020). *Nigeria: Women and girls raped, abducted in conflict zones*.
<https://www.hrw.org>
- Oluwaseun et al , (2020) socio-cultural Economic Factors Contributing to Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria.
- UNFPA. (2018). *Call to action on protection from gender-based in emergencies: Northeast Nigeria Roadmap 2018-2019*. UNFPA. https://nigeria.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/cta_northeast_nigeria_roadmap_v3.final_version_1_0.pdf. UNFPA-Nigeria
- UNFPA. (2022). *Gender-based violence in humanitarian settings: Nigeria country program update*. <https://www.unfpa.org>
- UNFPA. (2022). *Promoting GBV awareness through local partnerships in humanitarian contexts: Nigeria country brief*. <https://www.unfpa.org>
- UNFPA. (2022). *Strengthening GBV services in humanitarian settings: Nigeria country report*.
<https://www.unfpa.org>
- UNHCR (2021). *State of IDPS in North East Nigeria*. Accessed on 23rd May, 2024 from www.unhcr.org/nigeria-emergency.html
- UNHCR (2021). *Nigeria: Protection risks in Borno State*. <https://www.unhcr.org>
- UNICEF (2016). *Country Report on IDPS in North East Nigeria*. Accessed on 23rd May, 2024 from www.unhcr.org/nigeria-emergency.html



A Classification and Analysis of Props in Tungbo Ama-Arú (War Canoe) Performances

Fred Emi Brisibe, PhD

Department of Theatre and Film Studies,

Faculty of Arts and Education,

University of Africa, Toru-Orua,

Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

+2348109523051

ffumayei@gmail.com, fred.brisibe@uat.edu.ng

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3733-3983>.

ABSTRACT

Tungbo *Ama-arú*, an annual celebration of the heroic past of the Tungbo people in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, is an occasion when diverse and intriguing stage properties (props) are used for various purposes. The props are essential to the performance and are derived from the littoral Niger Delta environment, reflecting the social and cultural life of the people. Scholars have studied various aspects of the Tungbo *Ama-arú*, including its significance as a form of aquatic theatre and as a representation of Ijo heritage; however, studies that specifically analyse and classify the types of props used in the Tungbo *Ama-arú* performance are almost nonexistent. Therefore, this paper addresses this gap by classifying and analysing the props used in the Tungbo *Ama-arú* performance to account for the categories. The study uses semiotic theory and relies on qualitative methods, based on field observation of the 2026 Tungbo festival, to conduct the analysis. The study identified four representative categories of generic props, such as paddles, armaments, totemic objects and musical instruments. The props are contrived and serve to accentuate the performance's spiritual aura and highlight its artistic ambience. In conclusion, by classifying these props into the various groups, this study reveals how the riverine environment of the Niger Delta is artistically reconstructed to bridge the physical and spiritual realms. It recommends that scholars conduct comparative studies of Tungbo props with those of other Ijo subgroups to trace broader regional patterns in semiotic expression.

Keywords

Props, war canoe, performance, aquatic theatre, semiotic theory.

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

Any item that an artist utilises or any inanimate object that an actor visibly manipulates in the course of performance to further enhance or communicate the plot or storyline when performing on stage or in front of a camera is referred to as a prop (Koski 2, Emily 17, Ejeke 10). Props are necessary for performance because they foster imagination, bring a performance to life, enhance its theatricality, and enrich the visual picture. They are useful and effective in many other ways, such as enhancing character development and helping characters to realise their roles. Adakole Abdulmalik Amali contends that a stage property advances the story and improves the performers' overall physical and imaginative presentation (247). Using props in performance helps create a more realistic setting,

highlight a particular scene or tell a story. Likewise, it aids the exaggeration of gestures and is an indicator of cultural identity. Apart from aiding dramatic action, props may serve aesthetic purposes and indicate place and period. Props may also be used to exaggerate gestures, create rhythms, and convey ideas or feelings. Solomon Ejeke supports this assertion, stating that "props can create an artistic image with unique charm" (11). This distinction places the character, the act, and the art in their proper contexts during a performance.

Props in the theatre are categorised and divided based on use and purpose (Sofer 179; Strawn 11; Fletcher 10). They are divided into categories such as set props, trim props, breakaway props, and hand props. A set prop is a large item that is rarely, if ever, moved by the cast during the performance. It is a large mobile item not built into the set. A table, a chair, and a settee are examples of set props. A trim prop is also known as 'set dressing'. They complete the look of the set. They are also called set dressings. Examples of trim props include curtains, pictures on a wall, window dressings, books on a bookcase or bookshelf, fancy plates in a china cabinet, and a flag pinned to a canoe. A 'breakaway prop' is a kind of prop that is intended to break or shatter during a scene in a performance, such as glass bottles, ceramic dishes, furniture, and even automobile windows. A 'hand prop' is anything an actor holds. It often helps define the actor's characteristics. These items are carried by and used by the actors in the course of stage directions or stage business. These include guns, swords, wands, feather dusters, cigarettes, bottles, lipsticks, a cell phone an actor uses, a coffee mug they drink from, a journal they use to take notes, etc. Hand props can further be classified as 'practical props', such as a cell phone, which must perform its real-world function, and 'consumable props', which refer to food eaten by the cast on stage.

As with every theatre experience, in all war canoe performances, props are constant and play significant, varied roles. The roles are artistic and utilitarian, depending on the user and the circumstances. Their usefulness is determined by how the performer appropriates them to fulfil an artistic demand or ritual obligation during the performance. The different categories of props outlined above feature prominently in war canoe performance; however, they are not treated as such. This study reveals the various props and underscores their significance to the Tungbo *ama-arū* as materials reflecting the cultural and physical environment of the Ijo people living in the Nigerian Niger Delta.

Theoretical Framework

The semiotic theory is about signs and symbols and how they convey meaning. It is how meaning is socially produced using signs, codes, symbols, and so on (Elam 2002). Semiotics argues that verbal language is just one of the many systems of communicating meaning. Nonverbal communication is another means of communication, and it is in many forms. Sometimes, meaning is conveyed through pictures, costumes, makeup, gestures, architecture, and so on. This is because culture is adept at transmitting and receiving visual information. Through semiotics, stories are told, people are enlightened, and culture is preserved or transmitted. Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce are notable forerunners in the propagation of the semiotic theory. Applying semiotic theory to the war canoe performance is necessary because theatre designers create and use symbols to convey messages. The theory is employed, essentially, to analyse props in the Tungbo *ama-arū* (war canoe) of Bayelsa State, Nigeria, as expressive materials for theatrical communication. Culturally, the Ijo people, particularly the Tungbo people, tell their stories and experiences through objects used within their traditional setting, which are considered props in this work. These objects are commonly identified by and meaningful to any perceiving Ijo. They employ arts such as visual design to give performances the desired aesthetics; hence, this study adopts semiotic theory, which holds that the proper use of props in *ama-arū* will help tell the Tungbo people's story accurately, thereby educating, preserving, and transmitting their culture.

Classification and Analysis of Props in Tungbo Ama-arū (War Canoe) Performance

Generally, the properties used in the Tungbo *ama-arū* performance give the audience a comprehensive understanding of the characters and the roles each plays. Character delineation is easy in the performance because many properties indicate the users. The combined appearance of the

props creates a realistic setting and increases the theatricality of the performance. No property in the war canoe is redundant, and all have meaning. They are also lively, confirming Fletcher's assertion that properties in theatre performances are always lively and constantly in motion (1). It must be emphasised that the props deployed during the performance of *ama-aruru* transcend the default function of stage objects: they convey visual and auditory information about the performance's world. This is in tandem with Brisibe's position that "aquatic theatre productions depend almost entirely on sound and visual components for meaningful entertainment and communication" (65). Though they may enhance dramatic action, set the mood, and tell the story, most are signifiers that illustrate aspects of the performance and, in this case, the Tungbo culture from which it is derived.

The props used in the Tungbo *ama-aruru* performance are drawn from the repertoire of the Ijo performance traditions, especially the tradition of 'war theatre', which is dominantly influenced by the environment. The Ijo war theatre is performed on the water; therefore, all the equipment and implements employed are selected to be consistent with aquatic warfare. A better emphasis is that the war canoe is a replication of the tradition of warfare in Ijo land; hence, the weapons used in those wars are included in the reenactments. The Tungbo *ama-aruru* performances are usually founded on rituals. Rituals are integral to the Ijo performances, including masquerade festivals, funerals, marriage and circumcision ceremonies, and other cultural activities practised by them. As expected, an aspect of the performance brings to the fore the ritual foundation of the tradition. Whether imitated for aesthetic purposes or implicated for efficacy, moments are reserved for rituals during the performance. The props used in the rituals are carried in the war canoe to signify the performance's ritual roots. Usually, these properties are sacred outside the performance and used for religious purposes. They help in communication and communion with the world of the spirits. Their utility value connects the *ama-aruru* to the ritual ambience around it.

Significantly, the creative design of props in Tungbo *ama-aruru* is heightened through colour amplification. Colour is deployed to play symbolic, psychological and emotional roles. It is also used for aesthetic visual appeal and spectacularity. Four basic colours are used in the Tungbo *ama-aruru*: black, red, white, and yellow. These colours are culturally significant and symbolic of aspects of Ijo society. The colours are also used to create beauty and to give an intimidating, terrific appearance. The colours also represent the divinities and symbolise their identity. Black is the most dominant colour used on the war canoe. As much as a colour that enhances disguise, black symbolises death, valour, masculinity, and mystique. Most of the properties in the canoe, including the canoe itself, bear an almost overall black appearance. The black colour serves as a badge of identity, identifying the boat as the Tungbo war canoe. Every item on the boat has at least a tinge of black to depict the qualities mentioned. Red dots are visible on the props, indicating both danger and royalty. White is also used sparingly in the canoe as a symbol of purity, authority and divine justice. The fourth colour is yellow, which symbolises the marine influence on the war canoe, encompassing both the physical reality of the waterways and the environment.

The props also reflect the littoral Niger Delta, where water occupies a greater share of the physical environment. Some of the props relate to fishing, their main occupation. Fishing tools are primarily used because the Ijo man considers fighting and fishing actions to require the same techniques, skills, and instruments. This is particularly so because equal honour is given to the individual who takes the head of an enemy during a battle and to the individual who kills a monstrous creature, whether in the forest or from the sea. They are treated equally because wild animals, such as hippopotami, octopuses, and sharks, are considered enemies of human existence. Therefore, those who wield bravery and courage to kill them are rated as powerful humans. They are both acknowledged as heroes and belong to the same cult of heroes (*Ogbu* cult). The basic weapons for fishing and Ijo aquatic warfare are the machete and the spears.

The sources of the properties also define them into 'utilitarian' and 'artistic' categories. This division is necessary because some properties are specifically regarded and deployed for their religious, symbolic, and semiotic values. Some also have mystical and magical significance. This property

group is intended for utilitarian functions, although some may exhibit aesthetic qualities. A number of them are mostly weaponry in the arsenal of the Tungbo people that aided in the mechanics of battle and victory. In the artistic category, properties are designed to produce pleasure and aesthetics. This set of properties increases the audience's concentration on the performer and leads to a better appreciation of the performance. For the convenience of this paper and to better describe their usage, the props used in the Tungbo *ama-arū* performance are classified. The classification does not, in any way, remove their generic function as hand properties. The categorisation is strictly for proper clarification and identification of the properties. The props are commonly classified as paddles, armaments, totemic objects, and musical icons. See table below:

Prop Category	Local/English Examples	Aesthetic/Artistic Value	Semiotic / Ritual Meaning			
Paddles & Poles	Hardwood paddles, Punting poles	Dictates dance rhythm (paddle dance)	Visual synchrony signifies navigation, survival, and mastery over the water.			
Armament	<i>Okirizi</i> (cannon), <i>Agbudu</i> (sword), and Dane guns	Character delineation, creates visual spectacles	Power, historical warfare, and the defence of community justice			
Totemic Objects	<i>Epi</i> (ritual flag), <i>Atu</i> (gourd), <i>Asain-fere</i> Clay pot	Visual focal point at the stern, colour contrast (white & black)	Core spiritual alignment, peace, justice, divine presence/permission			
Musical Icon	<i>Akpede</i> (flute), <i>Egbelegbele</i> (trumpet), Slit gongs	Acoustic ambience, auditory harmonies, dictate choreography	Substitutes for the human voice, direct communication with divinities			

Paddles and Poles

The major and indispensable accessories in the war canoe are the paddles and punting poles. The paddles and poles are the implements used to move and guide the boat. The war canoe paddles are specially carved from hardwood, with the throats coloured red. They must be hard enough to withstand pressure. Woods are appropriately selected to produce light paddles. Light paddles make it easy to manipulate and manoeuvre. To control the boat's direction and steer it, the paddlers repeatedly and strongly paddle on both sides of the boat or alter the fundamental linear stroke pattern. Paddles are of different shapes, sizes, colours, designs, and lifespans. There are always spare paddles in the boat to replace broken ones. Paddles are useful as weapons, particularly when the fight brings the rival boats to close range. Essentially, paddles are used to create special effects in dance; hence,

the term "paddle dance". Paddle dance is a type of dance in the war canoe that climaxes the performance during the 'choreographed procession'.

1. Armament

The weapons used in the war canoe are diverse. They reflect wars in the olden days. The primary armament consists of guns, swords, spears, bows and arrows, and machetes. Usually, the muzzle of guns is painted red. Red is also applied sparingly to strategic parts of the canoe. The red is not conspicuous, but its presence at strategic points on the weapons and the canoe indicates its significance. The red colour in the props quickly signals spiritual and royal permission. Red is a marine symbol representing the feminine beings in the water. It is used to sustain the water goddesses' influence on the war canoe. It is generally believed that most benevolent divinities that appear to help the Tungbo warriors during war engagements are female spirit beings. This relationship is kept alive by using red-piece materials to tie the head or shoulders of performers or to tie around the neck during performances.

Ammunition of various kinds is also always in supply. The ammunition consisted of bullets or bolts of bar iron, varying in size, cast and cut by local blacksmiths and sword-makers. The cannon is one species that has been in use.



Picture 1: An *okirizi* mounted on the bow of a Tungbo *ama-arú*.

A cannon (*okirizi*) is a crude, heavy artillery weapon that usually launches a projectile using an explosive chemical propellant. Gunpowder (*sibeyi-fún*) was the primary propellant before the invention of smokeless powder during the 19th century. In the Tungbo *ama-arú*, two cannons are strung to the canoe. One is fastened to the bow and the second to the stern. On some occasions, the cannons are mounted on the two upper sides of the canoe. The cannons are used to control speed during an engagement. The front cannon is shot when the canoe's speed becomes too fast and uncontrollable. It is shot into the water to create speed balance. Similarly, it is fired from the back when the boat is moving slowly. The back shooting is targeted at increasing the boat speed. The cannon is the main weapon; however, it also serves as a decorative prop on the canoe. Scenic designers most commonly explore it these days to meet aesthetic needs. Each time it becomes necessary to fire cannon shots, a designated person is on hand to ignite them. He is also assigned to watch over it, adjust it, and control the bullets' direction.

Tungbo warriors also use the musket, which has almost become their regular weapon. Muskets are said to have entered the Niger Delta via the Portuguese. It was made part of the regular trade and a staple of the slave-barter trade on the coast (Ajayi & Smith 14). For a long time, the best imported

firearms were Danish, which gave the name 'Dane gun' to muskets in general use. They are flintlock pieces, usually long-barrelled. They are fitted into gaily painted stocks that are often of local manufacture and are usually fired at arm's length or from the hip, owing to the violence of the recoil. There are single-barreled and double-barreled guns. Each warrior handles one of these guns even while dancing. The guns define their roles as fighters and sometimes their ranks. Indigenous artisans generally manufacture firearms and ammunition in the war canoe. The local blacksmiths introduce several forms of explosives. Other implements are also manufactured and used during wars. The sword (*agbudu*) is one of the oldest implements. The warlords prefer swords to distinguish themselves from the crowd of warriors. It gives them an aura of dignity and authority. Two main types of swords are known to have been used in Tungbo warfare. One is heavy and curved, with a single outer blade, while the other is double-bladed, either slightly tapered or elongated to a leaf shape. All types are designed for cutting, slashing, and stabbing at close quarters. Some of these weapons are used in miming actions, slashing enemies and dispatching them from the war canoe.

There are performers always brandishing a machete and boasting about feats achieved in the past. Machetes also serve as highly valued weapons in Ijo warfare, as they are in the Tungbo. In Ijo warfare, dispatching a rival with a cutlass or machete is highly honoured (Ifie 90). Spears (*Imbiowei*, *Dumoun*) are also handy and are safely tied to the upper edges of the boat. They are deployed during close-range confrontations between rivals. Spears are intended for throwing and thrusting, and their iron heads, often barbed, are dipped in poison, as are the arrowheads. Spears are of many types and designs. Bows are also used among the Tungbo, especially in the early period. The usual bow (*apipi*) is a simple stave, some four to five feet in height, with a string of hemp or hide. Various weapons are used as secondary armament, including several clubs and slings. Just as the latter part of the nineteenth century saw European armies and warfare transformed by the introduction of rifled barrels, breech-loaders, cartridges, high-explosive shells, and, eventually, automatic or quick-firing guns, so too did the wars in Ijoland, especially in Tungbo, undergo a transformation brought about by the spread of firearms. Improvised guns, primarily wooden, are now used instead. When a wooden replica is used instead of a real gun, it loses its functional utility, but gains heightened semiotic weight as a theatrical signifier. The sounds and flashes are also improvised for dramatic effect. The performers' effective deployment of these instruments creates an unusual beauty and a sense of awe.

Totemic Objects

Many objects in the war canoe serve religious functions, even though the actions are now dramatised for entertainment. Some objects are used to approach, reach and communicate with the divinities. During invocations, propitiation, and magic, they are helpful. While some are strictly for ritual purposes, others play dual roles. The material object of the war deity is always in the boat. It is the emblem of the principal god, usually a clay pot or a calabash, depending on the priest. It symbolises an instrument of power that delivers the warriors from danger or defeat. A lad is appointed to bear it. It sometimes gives off smoke and, at other times, flames. The smoke or flames are an index of ritual fire. The chief priest or leader of the boat uses it at every moment of necessity.

Another prop of the gods is the '*Epi*', a complex signifier.



Picture 2: Tungbo *ama-aru* (war canoes) on display, with the *epi* dangling at the back.

The *epi* particularly symbolises peace and justice. This explains why an armed guard is positioned to protect it from external attack. This idea is rooted in the Ijo warrior ethos, which holds that all wars are undertaken to protect peace and justice. As in all Ijo clans and communities that retain *Egbesu* as their war god, the Tungbo wars are fought only when the community is on the side of justice, and its peace is threatened. The *epi* comprises the white-painted bamboo pole fastened to the boat at the stern; the long white cloth that goes down to the water from it; and the miniature calabash or gourd (*atu*) at the end of the white cloth, floating on water. *Epi* symbolises the whole essence of the war: protection of peace and justice. The white cloth is an index of *Egbesu's* presence (the deity of justice); the miniature calabash floating on the water visually maps the spatial connection among the sky (the bamboo pole), humanity (the boat), and the water spirits (the river). Also significant is the bunches of baby palm fronds with which the canoe is festooned. The tender palm fronds serve as spiritual protection and fortification, symbolising qualities such as victory, superiority, abundance, spiritual confidence, and royalty. No other object or part of the boat carries a yellow colour apart from the fronds lavishly used on the canoe. The raffia fronds are generally gold or yellow, depending on the species.

Musical Icons

These are props or instruments used to produce war canoe music. The icons vary in look and sound. They come in various shapes and sizes to make distinct sounds. They include an array of drums, gongs, bells, and flutes. Some icons are blown, shaken, scraped, and struck to produce sound. They are often played together on the war canoe to create harmonies. The instruments express the creativity of the individual handlers and the community. The most conspicuous instruments in the Tungbo *ama-aru* tradition are aerophones, membranophones, and idiophones. The aerophone group includes horns, flutes, and trumpets that produce sound by vibrating their air columns. They are precious instruments that provide melody for spectators and convey important messages to the gods and specific characters. Flutes (*akpede*) and single-note trumpets (*egbelegbele*) come in different shapes and sizes.

The second category consists of instruments that can be described as membranophones. This includes a variety of drums. The drum is the most notable instrument, and it is so important that many assume it is the only available musical instrument on the war canoe. Whether in solo drumming or ensembles, most music relies on the drum, and many dancing styles respond to its rhythm. Drums are a significant property in the war canoe. They are handled by individuals who have the required skills. Another prop is the wooden slit gong. This hollow percussion instrument is usually carved from bamboo or wood in a box shape, with one or more slits on top. It gives a resonant note when struck with two

sticks. The wooden slit gong is a common musical prop on the war canoe. It has small and large sizes. It supplies the music with rhythm. Sometimes, the handler constructs a stand to lay it on.

The idiophone instruments constitute the third group. They produce sounds of indefinite pitch and are all used to supply rhythm. In this group are rattles, calabash drums, bells, and claves. Rattles are usually shaken to embellish and create harmony in the drum sounds. Claves are wooden sticks. They are percussion instruments consisting of wooden sticks about 20-25 centimetres long and about 2.5 centimetres in diameter. Although traditionally made of wood, many modern manufacturers offer claves made of fibre or plastic. When struck, claves produce a bright, penetrating clicking noise. The varied instruments are used in both solo and group performances. They substitute for the human voice when necessary and facilitate singing.

Conclusion

The Tungbo *ama-arú* (war canoe) performance is a profound testament to the power of properties as semiotic tools that transcend mere stage decoration. As explored in this paper, props in this aquatic theatre serve as a vital link among historical warfare, spiritual ritual, and contemporary cultural preservation. By applying semiotic theory, it becomes evident that every object—from the rhythm-producing idiophones to the formidable *okirizi* (cannons)—functions as a signifier of the Ijo people's identity, resilience, and environmental adaptation. The classification of these properties into utilitarian and artistic categories reveals a sophisticated theatrical structure. Hand props like the *agbudu* (sword) and the musket do more than delineate character; they re-enact a history of bravery and social hierarchy. Similarly, the inclusion of fishing tools as instruments of war highlights the littoral reality of the Niger Delta, where the skills of the provider and the protector are inextricably linked. The ritual objects and totemic emblems, such as the *Epi* (ritual flag) and the sacred clay pot, further elevate the performance from mere entertainment to a communal communion with the divine, ensuring that the spiritual foundations of the Tungbo people remain visible and vibrant.

The efficacy of the Tungbo *ama-arú* performance lies in its ability to create a "total theatre" experience where visual and auditory symbols dominate. These props do not simply support the action; they drive the narrative, dictate the rhythm through musical instruments, and inspire the performers to reach heights of aesthetic and emotional intensity. As the Tungbo people continue to navigate the currents of modernity, the deliberate use and classification of these properties ensure that their stories are not only told but also felt and preserved. The war canoe remains a floating stage of cultural memory, where every paddle stroke and drumbeat reinforce the enduring legacy of the Ijo heritage.

Works Cited

- Ajayi, J. F., and Smith, R. *Yoruba Warfare in the Nineteenth Century*. 2nd edition. Ibadan: University Press. 1971.
- Brisibe, F.E. *Agon and Mimesis in the Structure of the Niger Delta Aquatic Theatre*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Ibadan. 2024.
- Charles, I. S. *Introduction to stage lighting*. Merwether Publishing Ltd, P.O. Box 7710, Colorado Springs, 1969.
- Elam, K. *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2002.
- Ejeke, S. O. *Theatre Practice and Science*. Ilorin: Pan African Publishers, 2018.
- Fletcher, J. "Props in Sophocles' Philoctetes and Ajax." www.academia.com. Retrieved March 10th, 2026.
- Ifie, J. E. *A Cultural Background to the Plays of J. P. Clark-Bekederemo*. Ibadan: End-Time Publishing House, 1994
- Sofer, A. *The Stage Life of Props*. Ann Arbor, 2003.
- Strawn, S. *Properties Directors' Handbook*. New York: Routledge, 2012.



The Influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on Nigeria's Economic Development is Imperialism

Adamu Sani Buba, PhD

Department of History and Strategic Studies,
University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria,
asanibuba@yahoo.co.

ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines the influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on Nigeria's economic development, arguing that their interventions constitute a form of modern imperialism. Through loan conditionalities—particularly structural adjustment programmes (SAPs)—these institutions have entrenched dependency, eroded sovereignty, and exacerbated poverty. While their stated objectives are to promote stability and development, evidence shows that their policies have led to inflation, unemployment, and weakened social services in Nigeria. The study concludes by advocating homegrown economic strategies that prioritise sustainable development, regional cooperation, and social protection, thereby reducing reliance on Bretton Woods institutions.

Keywords

IMF, World Bank, Nigeria, Economic

Received
29th January, 2026

Accepted
25th March, 2026

Published online
7th July, 2026

Introduction

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, established at the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944, were designed to stabilise the global economy and foster development. The IMF provides short-term financial assistance to ensure macroeconomic stability, while the World Bank offers long-term loans for development projects. Nigeria, like many developing nations, has relied heavily on these institutions for economic support. However, the conditions attached to their loans—currency devaluation, subsidy removal, and privatisation—have often worsened economic hardship rather than alleviating it.

From the 1980s onwards, Nigeria's adoption of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) under IMF and World Bank guidance led to retrenchment of workers, inflation, and declining social services. These outcomes raise critical questions about whether external prescriptions can truly foster sustainable development in Nigeria or whether they perpetuate dependency and underdevelopment. This paper situates Nigeria's experience within the broader discourse of imperialism, examining how international financial institutions exert control over national economic policies.

During the Great Depression in the 1930s, countries adopted a policy of protectionism to try to improve their struggling economies. This situation prompted discussions about creating a framework for international economic cooperation after the war. As a result, the IMF was officially formed on December 27, 1945, following World War II. Its main objectives are to promote global economic growth and stability by providing policy advice and financial support to its member countries,

particularly focusing on helping developing nations achieve macroeconomic stability and reduce poverty.²⁵¹

The World Bank, on the other hand, is an International Financial Institution that provides loans to countries of the world for capital programmes. It is made up of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). The World Bank is a component of the World Bank Group, which is part of the United Nations system.²⁵²

The World Bank was created along with the IMF at the Bretton Woods conference in 1944. The initial goal of the World Bank was poverty reduction and possibly eradication, particularly in the so-called developing countries. What are the implications of these Institutions on the Nigerian economy?

Implications of IMF/ World Bank Policy on Nigeria's Economy

From the brief history of the World Bank and IMF, as mentioned above, these institutions undoubtedly work hand in hand, intricately interwoven, because they not only run most of their programmes together but also sometimes merge and appear as a single united body or organisation. The general assessment of the IMF and the World Bank's schemes and programmes, particularly as they affect member countries, including developing nations, was not intended to develop the developing countries. Available sources suggest that the aid and loans given to needy nations come with strings attached and therefore have an adverse effect that patronises them.

When the IMF and the World Bank lend money to debtor countries, the loans come with conditionality. In other words, the policy prescriptions are usually referred to as "structural adjustment". In this context, structural adjustment refers to a set of policies and programmes aimed at restructuring a country's economy, purportedly to promote economic growth and development. It typically involves implementing reforms such as privatisation, fiscal discipline, trade liberalisation, and market deregulation. These policies are often imposed by international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as conditions for receiving loans or debt relief. As a result, structural adjustment has been highly controversial, with complex debates surrounding its effectiveness and impact on social welfare.

In recent years, there has been a growing body of literature on the effects of structural adjustment on developing countries. Some studies argue that it has led to economic growth and development, while others suggest that it has resulted in increased poverty and inequality. Additionally, there have been concerns raised about the negative impact of structural adjustment on the environment and the well-being of poverty-stricken Communities in Nigeria. Despite these controversies, structural adjustment remains a key tool in international development and has been implemented by force or persuasion in many countries across the globe, particularly in countries whose leaders have no alternative but to accept what was imposed on them.

Other policies imposed under structural adjustment include allowing foreign corporations to repatriate profits, balancing the government budget by cutting social spending, and devaluing the national currencies of debtor countries. These policies, together with the strict monetarist conditions attached to their credit facilities, were a result of the devaluation of the dollar and the collapse of Bretton Woods' fixed exchange rates in the early 1970s. This harsh policy of the IMF and World Bank is yet another form of neocolonialism targeting the 'third world and developing countries.

The Nigerian economy has not lived up to expectations, based on the general post-independence assessment. Available sources suggest that Nigeria's most prosperous economic years were from 1960 to 1975, with consistent growth. But from 1979, the economy began to drift, and conditions worsened just before the introduction of the 'structural adjustment programme (SAP) in the 1980s. We may assume that, due to the deteriorating economic situation in Nigeria, SAP was introduced under pressure from the IMF and the World Bank, which brought Nigeria's economy to its knees.

Joseph. Jonathan Gandu, 2010, *World Bank and Crises of Development in Nigeria (1999 to 2008)*. P. 6²⁵¹

Joseph. Jonathan Gandu, 2010, *World Bank*, P. 9²⁵²

As indicated earlier, Nigeria, like any other developing country, is a recipient of IMF and World Bank loans. The funds and bank loan conditions are encapsulated in the economic reform programme of SAP (Aid) to developing countries, such as Nigeria, which always comes with conditions attached, and they must adhere to these conditions to receive their funding. The IMF and World Bank exerted considerable pressure on Nigerian policymakers to get the latter medical association and the national association of resident doctors, along with market women, to overturn levies that the structural adjustment programme (SAP) had, over the years, eroded the purchasing power of the average consumer. The cost of production rose substantially, thousands of workers were retrenched, and those on the job were subjected to ad hoc working arrangements, compulsory leave and taxes. Subsidies on petroleum products and fertilisers were removed, and grants, subsidies and loans to parastatals and state governments were curtailed. It also recommended that all “commercial” parastatals be privatised and the customs tariff structure rationalised to ensure the effective protection of domestic industries. Despite the government’s withdrawal of US\$ 737 m from its free balances with the IMF, the balance of payments continued to run deficits. Deficits of three to four billion dollars were recorded in December 1982, and reserves were depleted by an additional US\$ 2.5 billion.²⁵³

The industrial scene was highly volatile in 1983, as companies either closed down, resorted to compulsory levies, or reduced working days. Many state governments could not pay salaries on time, or at all; social services deteriorated, and the government's attempt to implement the fund's recommendations on cost recovery in health and educational services met with stiff resistance from students and members of the public.

According to reports by the IMF, “The social impact of reforms has been significant.” It continued by saying that inflation, particularly food inflation, has reached critical levels, eroding household purchasing power and deepening poverty. Nigeria’s annual inflation rate climbed above 30% in March 2025, with food inflation surging past 40%, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics. The IMF emphasised that while macroeconomic reforms are crucial for long-term stability, urgent and targeted interventions are needed to cushion vulnerable populations from the short-term shocks. The report urged the Nigerian government to scale up social protection programs, including cash transfers and food assistance schemes, to mitigate the hardship faced by millions of citizens. It also called for increased investment in agriculture, education, and healthcare to support inclusive growth.

These financial institutions cannot be trusted; they seem to encourage Nigeria to take on another loan. The IMF, acting through the USA, blocked Saudi Arabia’s loan application in 1985 and stalled negotiations with the creditors, thereby putting considerable pressure on economic performance across all sectors and contributing to a 31 per cent increase in the official composite consumer prices index between December 1983 and August 1984.

Stiff struggles were recorded by the students against the commercialisation of education and the non-recognition of the National Association of Nigerian Students, with the doctors over the health vote, conditions of service, and the banning of the Nigerian Medical Association and the National Association of Resident Doctors, and with market women over levies. The structural adjustment programme has, over the years, eroded the purchasing power of the average consumer. The cost of production rose substantially, thousands of workers were sacked, and those on the job have been subjected to ad hoc working arrangements, such as compulsory leave within the country.

The IMF conditionality also left states unable to govern, as their national economic policies are predetermined under IMF packages. Issues of representation arise as a consequence of the shift in the regulation of national economies from state governments to a Washington-based financial institution, in which most developing countries hold little voting power.

Onuoha, J.I. (1995). “The Role of International Organization in Nigeria’s Development. In J. Onuoha and J. Ozioko(eds) Contemporary Issues in Social Science. Enugu: Acene Publishers.”²⁵³

As previously noted, IMF packages have also been linked to adverse social outcomes, including reduced investment in public health and education. The World Bank, working in partnership with the private sector, may undermine the state's role as the primary provider of essential goods and services, such as health and education, resulting in a shortfall of these services in countries that badly need them. As there has been a growing shift from public to private funding in development finance, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private-sector lending arm of the World Bank, has increased its taxation. Another determinant of the World Bank and IMF's influence on Nigeria's economy is their governance structures, which are dominated by industrialised and developed nations. The decisions and policies made by these countries are binding because they represent the largest donors, with little consultation from poor and developing countries like Nigeria. These unfavourable policies and decisions affect these countries because their economic state is not duly considered.

The problem with Nigeria and its economic reform efforts seems to lie in its willingness to allow the influence of the BWI (Bretton Woods Institutions), the IMF, and the World Bank, which are major national economic policy-makers. This is a result of the harsh policy prescriptions of the multilateral organisations and the disruptive internal sociopolitical dynamics that are hindering the growth and development of Nigeria's economy. The IMF traditionally provides short-term financial assistance, while, on the other hand, the banks give long-term development loans to needy countries. Unfortunately, Nigeria is among the nations that have depended on the IMF and the World Bank for cash. The harsh economic policies forced on nations by these organisations as conditions for loans have derailed and destroyed their economic destiny. For example, the IMF austerity measures imposed on Nigeria in the 1980s led to rising inflation and unemployment, which eroded workers' purchasing power. Class conflicts ensued, prompting massive "capital flight" and 'Brain Drain'. The Nigerian economy had been in shambles.²⁵⁴

Despite loans and funds from the BWT, hardship continued in Nigeria, and the citizens fell into depressing conditions. The unending fuel price increases, a policy prescription of the BWT in early 2000, had caused more crises in society than during the years of military misrule when the IMF withdrew.²⁵⁵ This had overburdened the poor; the middle class virtually withered, and Nigerians were working harder and paying more to feed their families and for transportation to their various places of work.²⁵⁶ This is due to ineffective and inefficient utilisation of abundant resources and looting, prevent economic growth. Does Nigeria have any prospects for economic recovery?

The prospects for economic recovery are bleak because Nigeria still depends on the policy prescription of the IMF, "when a country is dependent, it is likely at least to listen politely, if not attentively".²⁵⁷ Nigeria has not lived up to expectations; it has compromised its sovereignty due to bad governance. Available sources indicate that the IMF has an office in the finance ministry at Abuja, the federal Capital, apparently to direct its affairs, and also remotely control operations of the central bank.²⁵⁸ Despite the funds for "economic medicines," citizens remain poverty-stricken because the economy is barely limping. Nigeria is today ranked among the 13 poorest countries in the world, with a per capita income of \$ 300, below the sub-Saharan average of \$540, approximately 90 million of Nigeria's.²⁵⁹ The problem with Nigeria and its economic reform seems to lie in its

Onuoha, J.I. 1995, "The Role of International Organization in Nigeria's Development. In J. Onuoha and J. Ozioko(eds) Contemporary Issues in Social Science. Enugu: Acene Publishers'. P. 6

Akoronjo. W. 2010. "Economy of Nigeria". Retrieved on 3/3/2010 from <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/economy>²⁵⁵

Soludo. C.C. 1995. "An Evaluation of Structural Adjustment Programmes in African: Issues, Methods and Perspectives", In Onuoha and J. Ozioko (eds) Contemporary Issues in Social Science, Enugu: Aena Publishers. P. 16

Shetty'. S. 2005. Millennium Declaration and Development Goals: opportunities for human rights. In International Journal on human rights, year 2. No.2, P. 5

Shetty'. S. 2005. Millennium Declaration and Development Goals, p. 10²⁵⁸

Bird. G. 1981. "International Monetary Systems and Less Developed Countries". In Third World Quarterly Journal. Vol. 3.P. 8²⁵⁹

willingness to allow the influence of the BWI (Bretton Woods Institutions), IMF, and the world on major national economic policies. This stems from the harsh policy prescriptions of these multilateral organisations and the disruptive internal sociopolitical dynamics that hinder the growth and development of the Nigerian economy. The IMF traditionally provides short-term financial assistance, while the World Bank gives out long-term development loans to needy countries. But all of these are just stories, as the government lacks the political will to solve any problem.

The Negative Impact of the IMF and World Bank on Nigeria's Economy

The involvement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in Nigeria has had several detrimental effects on the country's economy. To address the economic situation, the policies of austerity and structural adjustment programs (SAPs) imposed by the IMF and World Bank have impeded Nigeria's economic growth and development. Their emphasis on debt repayment and the privatisation of key industries has resulted in increased poverty and a more unequal distribution of wealth. By analysing past events and policies, this paper highlights the negative impact these international organisations have had on Nigeria's economy. It concludes by advocating for a more sustainable approach to economic development in the country.

It found that while aid can have positive effects, such as promoting economic growth and reducing poverty if properly utilised, it can also have negative consequences, such as creating dependence and hindering local development.

Unfortunately, Nigeria is one of the countries that depend heavily on development funding from the IMF and the World Bank. The stringent economic policies imposed by these organisations as conditions for loans have derailed and devastated the nation's economic trajectory. For example, the austerity measures mandated by the IMF in the 1980s resulted in rising inflation and unemployment, significantly diminishing workers' purchasing power relative to their earnings. This situation led to class conflicts, prompting massive capital flight and a brain drain. As a result, the Nigerian economy has been in shambles.

Despite receiving loans and funding from the Bretton Woods institutions, the Nigerian economy remains in a state of stagnation. The ongoing increases in fuel prices have further exacerbated the hardships faced by the majority of the population, many of whom live in abject poverty, earning less than one dollar a day.

It is unfortunate that Nigerian leaders have borrowed money but have either misappropriated it or outright looted it, rather than using it for its intended developmental purposes to benefit the citizens. As a result, the loans taken by Nigeria have not generated enough economic growth to enable repayment. This mismanagement has further deteriorated the economy, primarily due to the actions and attitudes of Nigerian leaders, who have burdened the treasury with external debts that have crippled the nation's economic stability.

Imperialism and the Bretton Woods Institutions

Imperialism, traditionally understood as the political and economic domination of weaker nations by stronger powers, has evolved into new forms in the postcolonial era. The IMF and World Bank

represent instruments of neo-imperialism, where economic policies are dictated by external actors under the guise of development assistance²⁶⁰.

In Nigeria, the conditionalities attached to loans, such as structural adjustment programmes, function as mechanisms of control. By enforcing austerity, privatisation, and trade liberalisation, these institutions undermine sovereignty and entrench dependency²⁶¹. The governance structures of the IMF and World Bank, dominated by industrialised nations, further reinforce this imbalance, as developing countries like Nigeria hold little voting power. Thus, the influence of these institutions mirrors the exploitative dynamics of classical imperialism, where external powers dictate the trajectory of domestic economies.

Comparative Case Study: Ghana and Zambia

Ghana, like Nigeria, adopted IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in the 1980s. The conditionalities included currency devaluation, removal of subsidies, and privatisation of state-owned enterprises. Initially, Ghana experienced modest growth, but the long-term effects mirrored Nigeria's struggles. Inflation soared, unemployment increased, and social services deteriorated²⁶². The emphasis on debt repayment diverted resources from education and healthcare, deepening poverty. Scholars argue that Ghana's dependence on external prescriptions entrenched economic vulnerability, reflecting the same neo-imperialist dynamics seen in Nigeria.

Zambia

Zambia's experience further illustrates the imperialist nature of Bretton Woods institutions. In the 1990s, Zambia implemented IMF-backed reforms that required privatisation of its copper mines, the backbone of its economy. While intended to attract foreign investment, the policy led to massive job losses and reduced government revenue. The country became heavily dependent on external aid, with its sovereignty compromised by IMF and World Bank oversight. Like Nigeria, Zambia's economic trajectory was shaped by external dictates rather than indigenous strategies, reinforcing the argument that these institutions perpetuate dependency rather than genuine development.

Conclusion

The involvement of the IMF and World Bank in Nigeria's economy has produced mixed but largely negative outcomes. While intended to stabilise macroeconomic conditions and promote growth, their policies have often deepened poverty, weakened state capacity, and eroded social welfare. Nigeria's dependence on external prescriptions has compromised its sovereignty and hindered the development of indigenous economic strategies. To achieve sustainable recovery, Nigeria must prioritise policies tailored to its unique socio-economic realities, strengthen domestic institutions, and collaborate with other developing nations to establish a fairer international economic order. By reducing reliance on "Bretton Woods institutions" and focusing on inclusive growth, Nigeria can chart a path toward genuine economic independence and stability. It appears Nigeria has not fully learned from its historical experiences, or it has failed to apply those lessons effectively. Leaders should prioritise the welfare of citizens in their economic reform programs rather than yielding to the unending demands of the BWIs, which often come at the expense of the Nigerian people.

To foster recovery, Nigeria should work on repositioning its economy and enhancing its banks' credit portfolios to address developmental needs. This can be achieved by revitalising key economic sectors and increasing the country's bank quota subscriptions through higher foreign reserves, allowing it to

Easterly, W. (2001). *The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economists' Adventures and Misadventures in the Tropics*.²⁶⁰ Cambridge: MIT Press.

IMF (2025). *Nigeria: Staff Report for the Article IV Consultation*. Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund.²⁶¹

World Bank (1994). *Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results, and the Road Ahead*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.²⁶²

play a more substantial role on the international stage rather than relying on sympathy. Nigeria should align itself with other developing countries to establish a new international economic order aimed at overcoming underdevelopment. Furthermore, the country should create economic reform policies tailored to its unique economic landscape, increasing access to infrastructure and social amenities through bank assistance. Such measures could significantly contribute to Nigeria's recovery from the constraints imposed by the IMF and World Bank.