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EDITORIAL COMMENT

We welcome you to the thirty-eighth volume of the ZANGO: Zambia Journal of Contemporary Issues. The African wisdom continue to inspire and teach the ZANGO editorial team on how to connect, learn and cooperate with scholars from all over the world, when we reflect on the words of African sages which say that When a bird builds its nest it uses the feathers of other birds. The current edition contains exciting articles on a wide range of topics drawn from studies conducted and done by scholars coming from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, the United States of America and Zambia.

In the first article, Kalinde catapults us into the understanding of how musical instruments are used to convey culture and values. In an attempt to contribute to the documentation on Zambian musical instruments played by girls and women, Kalinde probes the modern contexts of two musical bows; the Mantimbwa played by the Tonga and the Mtyangala of the Chewa and Tumbuka, found in the Southern and Eastern provinces of Zambia, respectively.

In the second article, Njovu and Ziwa examine the measures, challenges and factors that influenced the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) to promote gender equality among their members. In this case study of the Reformed Church in Zambia, the two scholars drew an interesting conclusion that although the RCZ played a significant role in promoting gender equality in Zambia, it concentrated much on the congregational rather than community and national levels.

In the third article, the Nigerian scholars Adedire and Adeyeye confront one of the most delicate, difficult but important issue to talk about and analyse, corruption. Using a content analysis approach, the duo investigated the civilian and the intricacies of corruption during President Buhari's administration of Nigeria. The analysis helped Adedire and Adeyeye to clearly demonstrate that the limited political will of the anti-graft agencies, and inadequate resources hindered the drives towards attaining the Buhari's tripod vision of fighting corruption, defeating terrorism, and fixing the economy. Without dumping the zeal to fight corruption, the two scholars make realistic recommendations that will interest any reader of this paper.

The fourth article is an analysis of Tsitsi Dangarembga's Novel, Nervous Conditions, which is perceived as a journey through a narrative space. Dangarembga conveys two major themes in this literary work, the gender with the segregation of the female characters, on one hand, and the colonialism with its aftermath, such as alienation and racism, on the other. In its analysis, Sapwe uses the concept of space in narratology as not limited to the representation of a world serving as a container for existents and as a location for events.

Some countries in Africa have grappled with several security challenges emanating from communal and religious conflicts, urban violence, arms smuggling, kidnapping, human trafficking, cybercrime, and armed robbery. In the fifth article, Adebowale, Adeyeye and Omodunbi use the historical and analytical approach to

contend in their paper about the formation of the politics and prospects of Amotekun Regional Security Network in Yoruba South-West in Nigeria. They argue that the security network, despite fierce opposition by some ethnic nationalities and federal government functionaries, cannot be unconnected with the successful mobilisation of the Yoruba ethnic solidarity and renaissance of common attributes.

The final article of this edition is by Kaani and Joshi who examined factors contributing to reading comprehension among bilingual children in Zambia. The findings of their study indicated that overall, reading proficiency was influenced by the writing system. Kaani and Joshi make interesting conclusions and recommendations that would be worth reading and thinking about.

This edition of ZANGO is yet another rich parked journal of academic discourse bringing to the fore a variety and tasty flavours of scholarly works based on well researched papers. I would like to thank the ever hard working ZANGO editorial team, our generous and critical reviewers for making this edition a reality. I would like to also pay gratitude to the authors who provided us with their different feathers to once again weave the ZANGO nest of knowledge and experiences.

Prof. Innocent Mutale Mulenga (PhD)
Chief Editor

MANTIMBWA AND MTYANGALA: MUSICAL BOWS PLAYED BY GIRLS AND WOMEN IN ZAMBIA

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Abstract

In many cultures, musical instruments are used to convey cultural and spiritual values. In Africa, the drum and other instruments played by men are dominant to a point of relegating those involving women. In an attempt to contribute to the documentation on Zambian musical instruments played by girls and women, this article probes the modern contexts of two musical bows; the Mantimbwa played by the Tonga and the Mtyangala of the Chewa and Tumbuka, found in the Southern and Eastern provinces of Zambia, respectively. Data for the study was collected using interviews and participant observations. The study exposed the lack of documentation on Zambian instruments, especially chordophones and aerophones. Besides documentation, the need to record the music played on these instruments using modern technology such as on video and audio Compact Disks (CDs) was indicated. The greater picture that emerges from this study is that musical traditions in Africa are closely tied to culture. Therefore, as certain cultural traditions disappear, musical traditions that are closely tied to them eventually also disappear. There also arise nuances in the study that point to the neglect of meanings that individuals attach to the process of music making.

Keywords: Bows, Chewa, Matimbwa, Mtyangala, Tonga, Tumbuka, Zambia

Introduction

Musical instruments are among the most complex creations of the human mind. They are vehicles used to produce music and are essential in making musical activities more meaningful (Rault, 2000). Dournon (1981) explains that musical instruments embody a musical heritage that represents the physical, mental, and spiritual elements in the lives of groups and individuals. Music and instruments convey the deepest cultural and spiritual values of a civilisation, transmitting knowledge in many spheres (Nketia, 2005, Okafor & Ng'andu, 2005). For years now, it has been said that the use of certain instruments is dying, and researchers feel compelled to engage in a salvage operation hence, the development of ethnomusicology as a discipline (Nettl, 1964, Kaemmer, 1993). There is a dread that modernisation; Westernisation, the breakdown of rural society and the surge in technologies of mass media, are threatening factors to the existence of indigenous music, dance, and instruments (Titon, 2005, Nketia, 2005).

Jones (1948) observes that African music is predominantly singing, drumming, and dancing. As a result, instruments that accompany these activities such as drums have a soar on scholarship (Mapoma, 1982). In Zambia, Mensah (1971) perceives that the second and third most widespread and indeed well-documented on instruments are the *Silimba* (xylophone) and *Kalimba* (idiophone). Little attention has been paid to instruments such as the musical bows despite their interesting features. In many

instances, they are actually regarded as primitive (Brelsford,1948). Zambia has a wide range of indigenous instruments from across all its 72 tribes. However, there are very few comprehensive studies that have been conducted on instruments. The few available are largely descriptions by early scholars and missionaries such as Brelsford, Barnes, Jones, Turner, and Colson (1948). In many cases, these writers underrepresent the role played by instruments in music performances. Mapoma (1982:1) echoes the same concern as Jones (1948) on the lack of books on musical instruments and says:

> There are practically no books published on musical instruments: however, research on them has been undertaken and recorded by Mapoma (1974), Mensah (1971) and Corbeil (1966). Others that have written on Zambian instruments are Kubik, but his work is not available in Zambia. Studies on individual musical instruments are equally few.

The few known scholarly works on music of Zambia with specific interest on instruments include:

(1) *The Occasional Papers on the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum* (1948) were a volume of 16 separate papers. Ladislav Holy who was the director of the museum then claimed that besides being information guides for museum visitors, the papers were an indispensable source of information about Zambian traditional culture and history in their own right. It should be noted, however, that the papers only discussed few Zambian instruments and dances with a leaning towards rituals and traditional medicines.

(2) *Music and Dance in Zambia* (1971) written by Mensah is an 18 paged booklet. It briefly describes various instruments under the acoustic classification of idiophones, membranophones, chordophones and aerophones. The appendix of the book comprises 23 pictures of instruments being played, as well as dance performances. (3) *The Survey of Zambian Musical Instruments* conducted among the Lala people of Mkushi and Serenje districts, Mapoma (1982: 1).

(4) *Ceremony: Celebrating Zambia's Cultural Heritage* (2007) published by a telecommunication company Celtel, which is currently called Airtel simply listed and mentioned the instruments. David Venn who was the managing director at the time acknowledged that the book could not include all the aspects of Zambian ceremonies because it was written in just one year. However, he saw the publishing of the book as the first step for future editions.

The role of women in most music performances in Africa is limited to clapping and singing (Taiwo, 2010) with very few instruments assigned to them hence, the rationale of the study. Restricted participation by women in Zambia is pointed out by Mapoma (1982) among the Lala people where women play rattles and other instruments such as drums only in contexts where men are excluded.

Purpose of the Study

In an attempt to contribute to the documentation of Zambian musical instruments, this study probes the modern contexts of two musical bows played by girls and women: the *Mantimbwa* played by the Tonga and the *Mtyangala* of the Chewa and Tumbuka found in the Southern and Eastern provinces of Zambia, respectively. The study set to establish if these instruments still exist and what their present uses are.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

There are many musical bows found in Zambia, but this study is restricted to musical bows played by girls and women. Due to the limited time and resources involved in travelling to collect data, only two musical bows played by girls were studied, namely: the *Mtyangala* played by the Chewa and Tumbuka and the *Mantimbwa* played by the Tonga. Only one woman who had sufficient knowledge of the instrument was interviewed in each case. The practices and occasions in which the two bows were originally played are no longer commonly practiced hence, the study was conducted out of context. Since the study was conducted in a language different from that of the researcher, people that hail from Eastern and Southern provinces were relied on, making sure the spellings in Tumbuka and Tonga were correct and that the right interpretations of the songs were done at the point of data analysis.

The study may not fully represent all the facts on the instruments involved. In case of any discrepancies, it should be understood that information gathered from participants who were relying on memory may not be entirely accurate as people forget over time.

Literature Review

The review of literature drew particular attention to the origin of the musical bow, musical bows played by girls in Zambia, various types of musical bows and examples of them that are found in Zambia. The Mtyangala and Mantimbwa are further discussed in detail as musical bows played by girls in Zambia.

The Origin of the Musical Bow

The musical bows found in Zambia are similar to those found in South Africa. Kirby outlines some musical bows played by women in South Africa namely: the *Ugubu* among the Zulu, *Uhadi* of the Xhosa played by women and girls when lonely. The Xhosa also have the *Goura,* which is called *Joum-Joum* when played by men (Kirby, 1968). Kirby and Brelsford (1948) see a similarity between the musical bow and the actual hunting bow. From the pinging sound produced on the bow string during shooting, Kirby concludes that the bow could have also served as a musical instrument during hunting. He also mentions that women would play the instruments after the evening meal and rarely in the day time (Kirby, 1968). In as much as musical bows have different materials used to play and make them, they bear quite a similar structure. Reynolds (1967), explains that the musical bows of the Valley Tonga in Zambia consist of a strung wooden bow similar to a simple hunting bow. At a point roughly midway along the bow, however, the string is pulled close to the bow. To the other side of this is fixed a half gourd or a half-shell, creating in effect, two strings.

Musical Bows in Zambia

Musical bows are, according to Nketia (1974), generally divided into the following three types, which depend on the resonator; the earth bow, ground bow and calabash bow. The earth bow consists of a flexible stick stuck in the ground, to whose upper end, a string is attached. This string is stretched down and buried in the earth; a piece of stone may be placed on top of the earth to keep the string in position. An example of the Zambian ground bow is the *Cilimbwi,* found among the Bembas. The mouth bow has section of the bow's string (either close to the tip of the bow or towards the middle) held across the mouth. As the bow is hit at a convenient spot, the shape and size of the mouth cavity is altered to amplify selected partials produced by the string. The mouth cavity acts as a resonator for the mouth bow. The *Mtyangala* of the Chewa and Tumbuka and the Bemba's *Ulumonga* are examples of mouth bows found in Zambia. The calabash or gourd bow, have the resonators placed in the middle of the bow or towards the tip. The string may be in one straight piece or it may be braced half way in the middle of the bow, thus, dividing it into two sections. Some musical bows have as many as three sections. When a bow with a calabash resonator is played, the resonator may be placed on the chest or some part of the body to help change the fundamental pitch. The resonators can either be attached or detached from the bow. Generally, no attempt is made to isolate and amplify specific partials, as in the technique of the mouth bow. The fundamental and overtone sounds are heard simultaneously as a chord. Some bows with gourd resonators found in Zambia are the *Mapanza* of the Choma Tongas, the *Kalumbu* also played by the Tongas, the *Ulutanga* of the Bemba people, and the *Akantimbwa* also known as *Ilintimbwa* found among the Lala people.

The *Mantimbwa* and *Mtyangala:* Musical Bows Played by Girls in Zambia

The *Mantimbwa* and *Mtyangala* are stringed bows classified as chordophones. The *Mantimbwa* is commonly found among the Tonga and the Ila who are a subgroup of Tonga while the *Mtyangala* is a Chewa and Tumbuka mouth bow from the Eastern part of Zambia (Mwesa, 2008). As described by Mwesa (2008), the *Mantimbwa* is a musical bow for girls commonly found in the Southern Province and is specially made for girls in puberty isolation. The music of this bow serves as an entertainment to the girls during this period of loneliness. A *Mantimbwa* consists of a basin put upside down or large clay pot covered with animal skin that amplifies the sound. A bow is placed above it with a string tied from one end to another. The player holds the bow with the left hand and the right hand plucks the string while the chin is placed on and off the string to produce different notes.

   A similar bow to *Mtyangala*, is the *Ulumonga* also played by girls, and is found among the Bemba of Northern Province. Other musical bows found in Zambia as discussed by Mwesa (2008) are: *Kalumbu* also by the Tongas and usually played by young men in pursuit of a wife. A ground bow *Cilimbwi* found among the Bembas is described as a ground bow fixed in the ground with a hole in the earth as a resonator. Bows have very limited notes and in order to break monotony, several bows are played together (Brelsford, 1948). For instance, Ila girls today still play on two *Mantimbwa* in the reclusion of their initiation huts (Mwesa, 2008). The simplest

form of a resonator is supplied by placing a part of the bow in the mouth. Another simple variation is achieved with an inverted tin. Also found among the Lala of Central Province is a bow with a wire string, which is tied to a bow with a wire. About halfway down the string, a calabash resonator is attached to the bow. The instrument is held by the left hand at the point where the string is tied back, and the string is struck with a straw. The thumb of the left-hand presses on the middle of the string in order to alter the pitch. The sound can also be varied by pressing the calabash on-to the chest (Mapoma, 1982).

The Tonga and Lala seem to have some similar instruments despite the fact that they are not neighbours geographically. One similarity is in the naming of the musical bows among the two tribes. The Tonga musical bow is *Mantimbwa* and the Lala bow is known as *Akantimbwa/Ilintimbwa*. The *Akantimbwa* seems to have its origin among the Tonga because according to Mapoma (1982), it is not found among the other Bemba groups but only among the Lala who are linguistically part of the Bemba. Other instruments found only among the Lala subgroup but bearing resemblance with those found in other tribes are, the Lamellaphones, *Kankobele* and *Ndandi*. The names *Kankobele* and *Ndandi* are not found in *Cibemba* (the language spoken by the Bemba people) and this suggests a possible borrowing of these instruments from the Tonga and Kaonde tribes, respectively.

Mensah (1971) describes the Chewa *Mtyangala* bow as consisting of a reed about thirty-five centimeters long carrying a piece of string stretched from one end to another. The player holds the instrument in the left hand with part of the string encased in her open mouth. By plucking the string with the right hand to set the string vibrating, the resultant sounds are amplified in the open mouth. These amplified sounds are varied in their quality by constantly changing the shape of the player's mouth cavity. This alters the upper partials that become more articulate and determine the nature of the sound produced by the vibrating string. The *Mtyangala* is used by Chewa and Tumbuka girls in private lodges where they live before they are married.

Methodology

The research was undertaken among those who play the instruments and not necessarily in areas where the instruments originate. This was done to trace women that used to or still play these instruments. The researcher regarded herself as a student willing to learn how the instruments were played and what they were used for. Participant observation, under ethnography research methodology technique of immersion, is considered more appropriate than when a researcher assumes the role of a collector solely. As advocated by Nettl (1980: 4) 'it is more productive, satisfying and perhaps, ethically more defensible to approach another culture as a student, to be taken in hand by a master who will teach him as he/she teaches students in his own culture.'

Sample

Although *Matimbwa* and *Mtyangala* were originally played by girls, no girls were found to participate in the study. Instead, two elderly women were involved; Eunice Kumwenda who is a *Mtyangala* player from the Eastern Province but based in Livingstone in the Southern Province at the time of the study, and Beatrice Mwiinga

from Kaleya, in Mazabuka, in the Southern Province. Other participants including Elina Mulohzi and Sabata Mwiinga also participated by the convenience of presence and interest in music. For instance, Sabata Mwiinga plays a musical bow called *Kalumbu*.

Data Collection

Data for the study was collected using interviews and observation. An interview guide and observation protocol was prepared beforehand. The formulation of the interview questions was guided by the field-work protocol as discussed below.

Field-work Protocols for the Collection of Data on Instruments

Dournon (1981:17-18) proposes field-work protocols for the collection of information on musical instruments. He explains that protocols are devised as a manual aimed at ensuring that essential questions do not escape the field workers and collectors. Only the protocols relevant to the study were adopted to formulate questions. An attempt was made to simplify the questions as much as possible to ensure clarity in the process of collecting data on the *Mantimbwa* and *Mtyangala*. Questions asked to the interviewees included the following: Origin of the instrument, material used to make the body of the instrument, methods of playing the instrument, and the context and occasions when the instrument is performed. Other questions were directed to the musicians on the changes and views why the instruments should be preserved.

Data Findings and Analysis

This study involved qualitative methods of data analysis. Data was collected through interviews and observation of the participants' actions during the interview process. The interviews were recorded on an audio and video recorder. Descriptions of the instruments and short biographies of the women respondents that participated in the interviews are discussed below along with any other information that was collected during the process.

Interview with Eunice Kumwenda on the *Mtyangala*

Data collected is described under the headings; description of instruments, how to hold and play the instruments, when were the instruments played, examples of songs played on the instruments, and the biography of the instrument players.

Description of the *Mtyangala*

Eunice Kumwenda explained that she did not exactly know the origin of the instrument. She learnt of its existence from her mother when she was a young girl. She described the Mtyangala as having a wooden part known as *Thete,* which is made from a reed. *Thete* is the other name by which the *Mtyangala* is called. The *Thete* is hollow and is cut when still fresh from swampy areas and left to dry before it is made into a bow. The string, *Uliwa* (twine) is the next most important part of the bow. It is tied on both ends of the bow. The size of the bow is measured by placing one part of the reed on the side of the mouth and placing it against the arms length of the player.

This is to ensure that the length of the bow is custom made to the player. Usually, a tall person is likely to play a much longer bow compared to a short person. The wooden bow assumes a curved shape and the string is tied to allow a space between the stick and the string for easy strumming of the string (see Figure 1 below).
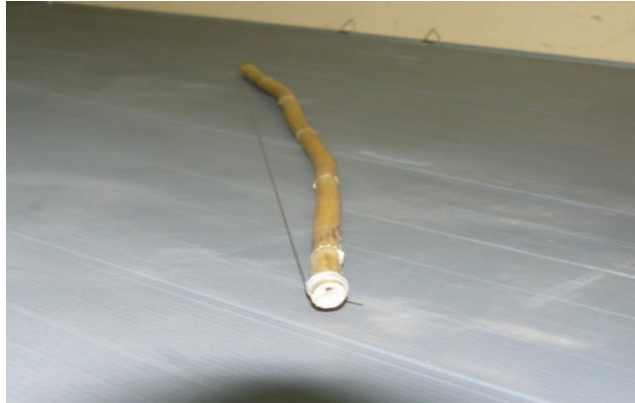

Figure 1: A Picture of a *Mtyangala* (Photo by, Moses Simukonda, Lusaka, 2010)

Once a bow has been made, then one is free to decorate it according to individual taste by either making markings on it using a hot knife or by tying *Zizi* (fibre) round the bow leaving small spaces between the reed, then placing it on fire. The fiber is removed after placing it on fire and this results in a pattern of black burnt parts where the fiber did not cover the reed while the parts covered with the fiber maintain the original colour of the reed.

How is the *Mtyangala* Held and Played?

On one end of the bow, the tip is partly placed in the right side of the mouth, while the other end of the bow presses on the index finger (on the left hand) for support. The left-hand thumb helps to hold the *Mtyangala* in position while the middle or little finger presses on the string to vary the pitch. Usually, the ring finger remains curled and idle. The picture of how the *Mtyangala* is held is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Eunice Shows How the Left Hand Supports and Places the Fingers on the Bow
(Photo by author, Livingstone, 2010)

Figure 3: Eunice Shows How the Tip is Placed in the Mouth When Playing
(Photo by author, Livingstone, 2010)

Figure 4: Eunice Demonstrates How the *Mtyangala* is Held When Playing
(Photo by author, Livingstone, 2010)

When playing the *Mtyangala*, four fingers are usually used on the left hand, the index finger on the right hand and the mouth. On the right hand, the index finger strums the string consistently, a method similar to the one used when playing a guitar. The mouth acts as a resonator and according to Eunice, she mouths the tunes within the mouth cavity to amplify the sound. The variations in the mouth cavity can either be deep to create a bass (low voice) sound or light to produce soprano (high voice). Sound variation is achieved by pressing the string against the bow with the little or middle finger. The *Mtyangala* can be played while seated or standing. It is tuned by either tightening or loosening the string. When the string is tightened correctly, it gives a clear, sharp, and definite sound unlike when it is too loose or too tight.

Occasions When the *Mtyangala* Was/is Played

The *Mtyangala* was played by young girls called *Mbeta* who were considered ready for marriage. Whilst awaiting marriage, they would be kept in seclusion huts called *Mnthanganeni*. The girls would play the *Mtyangala* individually or as group thereby calling for different sizes of the instrument. When played together, this resulted into some kind of harmony. There were several contexts in which the *Mtyangala* was played. For example, a girl who was not being approached for marriage by a man would play the instrument to express her desire for marriage. In such instances, others would even cry as they played. In other cases, when a man asks for a girl's hand in marriage, she would play after the man is gone calling his name to show submission and acceptance for marriage.

Married women were only allowed to play the *Mtyangala* in special circumstances; for example, when the husband is away, and the wife gets lonely, she would ask to go to her parent's home to get a *Mtyangala*. If her mother in-law allowed her to get it, then she would play in the evening after supper singing songs of longing to be with her husband.

Since married women were not allowed to play the *Mtyangala* in normal situations, doing so without permission from the in-laws was considered a taboo. A married woman who defied this rule, was sent back to her mother's home and was only allowed back in the husband's home if she was brought back by elderly women to plead on her behalf and a chicken to be paid as penalty. The playing of a bow by a married woman was considered as serious as committing adultery.

Examples of Songs Played on the *Mtyangala*

The following are some examples of the songs played on the *Mtyangala*. All the songs are sung in Tumbuka, with the English translations written besides:

Darling

Woman sings	*Translation*
Amama darling *wane*, darling,	My darling
Mwamungona vilinga vilimika	How long are you going to be away

Male voice responds

Nagona cimoza pela ine darling	I will stay for a year
Aeya darling	Oh darling

Woman sings

Chimoza chakula neo	One year is too much
Nakana darling	Darling I refuse

Interpretation of the Song

This song would be played by a married woman whose husband was away. It is a complaint song and the woman pleads with her husband to come back soon because a year away from each other is too much. As she plays the instrument, she acts both as the man and the woman and the voice parts vary between male and female.

Amulamu mungonenge makola	**Translation**
Amulamu mugonenge makola	Brother in-law sleep the right way
Pakuuka mungani dyaka lundi	Don't step on my feet
Amulamu mugonenge makola	Brother in-law sleep the right way

Interpretation of the Song

A married woman whose husband is away sings to urge the brother in-law to keep away from her. The expression 'don't step on my feet' symbolises the journey undertaken to look for a wife. The woman tells the brother in-law to undertake his own journey in finding a wife. The playing of the instrument was a woman's commitment to her husband. It may be taken that the brother's wife is not comfortable with the brother-in-law because he was making advances towards her, hence, the advice.

Nthengwa yaniziya	**Translation**
Nthengwa ni nthengwa,	Marriage has brought me problems
ni nthenga yaniziya	
Apongozi lekani kuchita nthana	Mother in-law stop what you are doing
nilimwana wamunyinu ine	I am someone's daughter
Ayo ayo niwomboleni	Please save me
Abenge mubali munyane	Were you not my mother in-law
Ngatimbana somba apongozi	We would have fought
Ayo ayo niomboleni	Please save me

Interpretation

A married woman laments about the ill-treatment she is receiving from her mother in-law. Asking her to make her life easier because she is also someone's daughter. She goes on to say that if her mother in-law was someone else, she would fight her. In essence, a married woman sends a message she would not ordinarily have the courage to say with words to her mother-in-law.

Kankhali bila bila	**Translation**
Girls sing	
Kankhali bila bila	Pot boil boil
Tibanole ba mumphala	So that we cook quickly and not give the men that don't want to marry
Male voice responds	
Asungwana lekani kuchita nthana	Girls don't do that
Kubanola ba mumphala	Do not refuse to give us food

Interpretation of the Song

This is a teasing song where girls sing saying they will not give food to any man who does not want to marry. The men respond back pleading with the girls not to refuse to give them food. The song may imply that girls are socialised to perform certain roles

just as wives. In a sense, the relationship of boyfriend and girlfriend does not come with certain benefits such as being cooked for.

Imwe amama

Woman sings	*Translation*
Imwe amama enye we	My mother
Munyumba mpambe mwana we	My house is childless,
Nimtumeko kachande nja delele	No one to send a calabash for okra

Male voice responds

Nimfwile mpala ndine	Will I just die like the unmarried

Interpretation of the Song

This song was composed by Eunice Kumwenda. It is a song that expresses sorrow for her childlessness. Having no one to send in a home is a misfortune and as her reality of having had no child at all was, it made her sing the song. The song may be understood as an emotional outlet of sorrow in return, gaining comfort.

Biography of Eunice Kumwenda - A *Mtyangala* Player

Eunice Kumwenda was born on 3 October in 1958 in Lundazi District, Chief Magodi's village in Echilumbeni. She calls herself *'Nyasuzgo',* which means problems. At the time of the interview, she was based in Livingstone, a tourist town where she was part of the National dance troupe that entertains visiting tourists. Eunice was taught how to play the *Mtyangala* at the age of ten by her mother who noticed the daughter's interest in learning the instrument. She recalled how in times of sorrow, she would play the instrument in the night to help take her sorrows away and it would always make her feel better afterwards.

Apart from her mother, there were also other elderly women who would teach young girls how to play the *Mtyangala* although most of them are now dead. One of her surviving aunties is too old and no longer plays the instrument. Asked why she thinks the instrument went out of fashion, she explained that parents no longer teach their daughters how to play it and she would advocate for girls to continue playing the instruments because girls today are exposed to many dangers and the *Mtyangala* could be used as an instrument for constructive use of leisure.

On the changes that have occurred in the use of the *Mtyangala,* Eunice explained that the instrument was no longer played in seclusion as before. She played it in public and sometimes, colleagues joined in to dance unlike in the olden days when no dancing accompanied the songs. The instrument has now changed its role to become mainly for entertainment and there are no restrictions on who should or should not play the instrument. She felt that the instrument was completely being phased out; this was evidenced by her visit to her village. She was saddened to find that no girl played the instrument anymore and even when she offered to teach some of them, they did not show any interest in learning how to play the instrument.

Eunice had been invited to many countries to play the *Mtyangala*. In 1990, she travelled to Tokyo, Japan. Everyone was mesmerised at how such a simple instrument could produce sound. They made her play over and over again until she got sores in her mouth due to friction. She has also visited Germany several times, South Africa, Libya, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. She was an accomplished singer and had released two albums *Napokela Nkalata* and *Tujilijili,* which was waiting to be launched. Her other musical involvements included performing at local pubs and clubs, *Vimbuza* singer and teaching young women entering marriage through kitchen parties.

'*Nyasuzgo*' briefly narrated the challenges in her life but smiles because she had *Mtyangala,* which she considered her companion. She played the instrument when she was lonely and it always brought back old memories, she felt the instrument has healing powers. Each time she played, it felt like sharing her problems with a friend.

Interview with Beatrice Mwiinga on the *Mantimbwa*

Beatrice Mwiinga was the main respondent but other family members including Elina Mulohzi, Naboi and Mr Sabata Mwiinga also participated in answering questions. The respondents expressed that they had no particular knowledge on the origin of the instrument. They said they knew of the instrument as they were growing up and their parents and other elderly people never explained the origin of the instrument to them.

What is Used to Make the *Mantimbwa?*

The *Mantimbwa* is very similar in appearance to a hunting bow. It was usually made using indigenous trees that are not easily found like *mwiingili* (grewia *monticola*) in Tonga. In place, is a mulberry tree with an interwoven nylon string, which is tied on both ends of the bow. A bow is usually about three quarters of a meter in length.

The *Mantimbwa* has a detached resonator as most other African musical bows except for the mouth bow. Originally, the resonator was made of a clay pot covered with animal skin. The size of the pot would depend on how loud and deep one wanted the sound to be. A big pot would produce a deeper and louder sound while a smaller pot would give a lighter and high sound. Today, an inverted tin is used as a resonator instead of a clay pot. The wooden bow is decorated using a hot knife to make patterns according to individual taste.

Figure 5: A Photo of Mantimbwa-without the Resonator
(Photo by Moses Simukonda, Lusaka, 2010)

How is the Instrument Held and Played?

Mantimbwa is usually played while seated with the resonator placed between the knees. One end of the bow is placed below the left jaw for support. The middle part of the bow is placed on the resonator supported by the left hand in the middle of the bow as illustrated in the photo below.

Figure 6: Beatrice Demonstrates How to Hold the *Mantimbwa* (Photo by author, Mazabuka, 2010)

When playing the *Mantimbwa*, the chin is placed on and off the string while the right hand strums the string using the index finger. The left hand also taps on the resonator while acting as support. The instrument is tuned by tightening and loosening the string.

Figure 7: Elina Playing the *Mantimbwa* while Beatrice and Other Villagers Look on (Photo by author, Mazabuka, 2010)

In What Context or Occasion was the *Mantimbwa* Played?

Mantimbwa was played by girls between the age of 16 and 20 in huts where they were kept awaiting marriage from the rest. This was probably a time when teachings about marriage were given. The instrument was played to escape boredom and loneliness. The *Mantimbwa* was only played by girls. Married women were only allowed to play when teaching the young girls how to play the instrument.

Examples of Songs Played on the *Mantimbwa*

The themes of the songs played on the *Mantimbwa* would be centered on calling for help while in the seclusion huts, entertainment and self-encouragement. Unfortunately, the women that took part in the interview could not remember most of the songs. However, one example of the songs played on the *Mantimbwa* is illustrated below:

Shimulendema	**Translation**
Lubanje ndomufweba shimulendema	The 'dagga' you are taking
Ndendemu ndedemu shimulendema	Is to make you eat a lot shimulendem

Interpretation

Girls in seclusion huts were forced to smoke 'dagga' to make them eat too much. This was done to fatten them before marriage. This song was sung to encourage the girls to eat a lot.

Biography of Beatrice Mwiinga - A *Mantimbwa* Player

Beatrice is from Kaleya, Mazabuka district in the Southern Province of Zambia. She remembers having started playing the bow when she was about 17 years old. Her grandmother taught her to play. Together with other girls in the seclusion huts, they would compose songs and take turns to play the *Mantimbwa*. Asked why she thinks the instrument went out of fashion, she says that marriage initiation ceremonies called *nkolola* are no longer practiced. She, however, feels that this tradition should continue because very important teachings were taught to girls in preparation for marriage unlike today.

Beatrice and Mr Mwiinga explained that many changes have occurred in the construction of the *Mantimbwa*. In the olden days, the bow string was made from the bark of the tree of piliostigma thonningii, Bauhinia locally known as *Moobazuba* or *Musekese* in Tonga. Nowadays, the string is made of a nylon string. The resonator which was initially made from a clay pot covered with animal skin is now replaced with a tin, which is placed upside down. Beatrice's elder sister who also played the instrument and other elderly women in her family are all dead. She says whenever she plays the 'i', she recalls childhood memories and feels happy.

Conclusion

The greater picture that emerges from this study is that musical traditions in Africa are closely tied to culture. As clearly argued by Herndon and McLeon (1990), music exists as culture rather than in culture. Therefore, as certain cultural traditions disappear, then even musical traditions that are closely tied to them eventually, also

disappear. The occasions and contexts in which most of the musical activities were performed no longer exist and this possesses a greater risk on the survival of such instruments. This is particularly true for the *Mantimbwa* and *Mtyangala.* Girls are no longer put in seclusion huts and automatically, the instruments linked to this practice ceases to exist.

Musical traditions that are carried forward through family generations have a greater chance of survival than those that are learnt for the sake of tradition. In the case of Eunice Kumwenda, the tradition of playing the *Mtyangala* was carried on from her great grandmother, mother and finally, to her. Her ten-year-old niece who lives with her is learning to play the *Mtyangala* and often sings along as she plays. Although this study was only limited to two instruments, the importance of recording music was to some extent realised as it is a fact that the writings, descriptions and illustrations on these instruments can only be understood, let alone appeal to a few. It is not always easy for a reader to visualise how the instruments looked and imagine the sound they produced. Greater appreciation lies in listening to their sound.

The role that the musical bows plays in personal expression and communication places it just as highly as other instruments for cultural transmission. There arise nuances in the study that point to the neglect of meanings that individuals attach to the process of music making. Biographies of musicians are perhaps not just a highlight of personality but an attempt to acknowledge the particular motivation and source of inspiration in music making.

Recommendations

To ensure the preservation and appreciation of indigenous musical instruments, there is need to:

i. Encourage the preservation of indigenous musical instruments through various means such as documentation, recording, and educational programmes. It is essential to recognise that these instruments are not just artifacts but integral components of cultural heritage.

ii. Promote cultural education in schools and communities to ensure that younger generations learn about the significance of these instruments and the cultural practices associated with them. This can be achieved through workshops, seminars, and educational initiatives.

iii. Facilitate the inter-generational transfer of musical traditions within families and communities. Encourage grandparents, parents, and older generations to pass down their knowledge and skills related to these instruments to the younger generation.

iv. Support research and innovation aimed at finding modern ways to incorporate indigenous instruments into contemporary music and artistic expressions. This can help keep the traditions alive and relevant in today's society.

v. Continue documenting and recording indigenous music and instruments. This includes audio and video recordings, as well as written descriptions and illustrations. This documentation serves as a valuable resource for future generations and researchers.

vi. Raise public awareness about the cultural significance of indigenous instruments and the role they play in preserving cultural identity. Public campaigns, exhibitions, and cultural festivals can help achieve this goal.

vii. Zambian scholars and researchers at whatever level should take a keen interest in conducting studies aimed at preserving indigenous instruments in modern ways. Only then can a true reflection of these instruments be portrayed.

viii. Challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about indigenous instruments. Educate the public about the complexity and cultural richness of these instruments, dispelling notions of primitiveness or inferiority. For instance, the musical bow was termed 'primitive' perhaps because of its basic appearance. However, the intricacy of playing the bows and the subsequent sound they produce does not qualify them to be primitive at all.

ix. Explore the personal stories and biographies of musicians who play these instruments. Understanding the motivations and inspirations of musicians can provide deeper insights into the cultural and emotional significance of the music.

x. Provide funding and support for scholars and researchers interested in studying indigenous instruments and their cultural contexts. Encourage academic institutions to include courses and research opportunities related to indigenous music.

xi. Foster international collaboration and exchange of knowledge regarding indigenous musical traditions. This can promote a global appreciation for the diversity and beauty of these traditions.

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THE ROLE OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN ZAMBIA IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AMONG MEMBERS IN SELECTED CONGREGATIONS IN LUSAKA DISTRICT: 2012-2017

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Abstract

The study examined the measures, challenges and factors that influenced the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) to promote gender equality among their members. A case study design that involved the use of semi-structured interview and focus group discussion (FGD) qualitative methods, was used. Purposive sampling was used to select the 28 participants. The findings revealed that the RCZ played a significant role in promoting gender equality in the church through training religious leaders responsible for counselling young people and couples about to get married. The study concluded that although the RCZ played a significant role in promoting gender equality in Zambia, it concentrated much at the congregational rather than community and national levels.

Keywords: Religion, Church, Congregation, Gender Inequality, Gender Equality

Introduction

The first missionary to set foot on Northern Rhodesia (now Zambian) soil was Frederick Stanley Arnot, a young Brethren missionary who settled at Lealui to work among the Lozi people, in December 1882. According to Ipenburg, the early missionaries perceived the Africans as indigenous and backward heavily covered in ancient traditions and rites, thus, the need to quickly proselytise them.[1] However, this invasion and the demise of the famous Scottish explorer, Dr David Livingstone, opened many doors to what would be a hive of missionaries' activities in Zambia. Among the missionaries were those from the RCZ who emanated from the mission efforts of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) of the Orange Free State in South Africa, at the end of the 19th century.[2] This century witnessed a mushrooming of mission fields outside the borders of that country since voluminous missionaries, including the DRCM, were all inspired by the opening up of this part of Africa by the great Scottish missionary explorer, David Livingstone in the 1850s.[3] According to Verstraelen-Gilhuis, in 1899, the DRCM arrived in Zambia from Nyasaland

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1 Arie Nicolaas Ipenburg, *The Development of Lumbwa Mission, Chinsali, Zambia 1904-1967* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: ProQuest LLC, 2017), 18.

2 World Council of Churches, 'Final Report of the Seminar on the Role of Religion and Religious Institutions on the Dismantling Apartheid' (Geneva: UNESCO, 2019), 23.

3 Mark Shaw, 'David Livingstone, Missionary Explorer: Recommended Resources,' Accessed 13 December, 2023, https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/uploaded/50cf837ba957f5.93613164.pdf.

and founded itself in the eastern part of the country at a place called Magwero.[4] According to Ziwa and Simuchimba, religious congregations were organised into small communities and lived among the people they served so that they might understand the people's concerns and try to combat them in their midst.[5] This justifies why the DRCM settled at Magwero, and later, in other areas, among the people they served. Magwero was the first mission station to be opened by the DRCM in Zambia. However, on 23 April 1966, the DRCM changed its name to RCZ.

Mwandayi and Shoreshore argued that the RCZ originated from Ancient Near East (ANE) where men considered themselves superior to women. This position was due to the Dutch culture which encouraged women to be homemakers and children caretakers while men were traditionally considered to be breadwinners of their families.[6] Similarly, Leigh and Associates stated that women in Dutch societies were regarded as home caretakers and children inculcators of good morals.[7] This culture spread to the DRCM where women were discriminated against and their roles did not involve holding of leadership positions. The Dutch culture had a bearing on the running of the DRCM in Africa, Zambia inclusive. The RCZ as a product of the DRCM seemed to have been influenced by the DRCM approach, which was gender discriminatory in nature. For example, record at Justo Mwale University, a theology training institution affiliated with the Reformed Church of Zambia showed that from around 1960's to 2017, only male ministers were trained and licensed to be ministers in the RCZ.[8]

With regard to ordination of women, the year 2017 marked 16 years since the RCZ accepted the ordination of women as ministers of God's Word in February 2001. Presently, the RCZ has about 42 trained evangelists of which the majority are men; it has also 139 ordained pastors of which 128 are men and 11 are women. The RCZ Synod Executive has 7 members of which 6 are men and 1 is a woman. There are over 154 congregations spread across the country and over one million members. Several of the RCZ members are in the Eastern Province where the Church was first established. These congregations are convened in a cluster called Presbytery and in total, there are 17 presbyteries in Zambia.[9] These statistics showed that there was gender inequality in the RCZ in the period of study.

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4   Foston Dziko Sakala 'A Study of the History of Theological Education in the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Zambia and its Role in the Life of Zambian Christianity'(Masters diss.,University of South Africa,1996), 4.

5   Judith Lubasi Ilubala-Ziwa and Melvin Simuchimba, 'Contribution of the Holy Cross Sisters to the Educational Empowerment of Women in Western Province of Zambia' *Zambia Journal of Education*, Vol. 5, No.1 (2018): 75.

6   Canisius Mwandayi and Itai Shoshore, 'The Woman of Shunem (2Ki 4:8–37) and Reformed Church in Zimbabwe Women: Towards a Recognition of Oft-forgotten Heroes', *In die Skriflig,* Vol. 57, No.1 (2023): 2.

7   Jennifer Leigh and Associates, *Dutch Cultural Profile: An Initiative of HACC Multicultural Advisory Service* (West End: Diversicare, 2012), 14.

8   Jackson Phiri 'Church and Culture? Exploring the Reception of Women's Ministries in the Reformed Church in Zambia in View of 1 Corinthians 14:26-40' (PhD, Diss., Stellenbosch University, 2017), 71.

9   Reformed Family Forum, 'The Reformed Church in Zambia', Accessed 13 December 2023, https://rff.christians.co.za/the-reformed-church-in-zambia-rcz/.

Conceptualising Gender Equality

The word equality means achieving fairness of privileges and representation between women and men.[10] As put by Ella, gender equality is a human right and a foundation for social, religious, political and economic development.[11] This refers to the equal perceptibility and involvement of men and women in all aspects of community and religious life. For the RCZ, women have equal privileges as men, but they may not be elected into positions enabling them to share in these privileges. Though the RCZ practices gender equality in its involvement of women as pastors, there is still gender inequality as women cannot be elected to the highest position (as Synod Moderator) in the church. This is despite the relationship in the first union between Adam and Eve created in God's image, and being equal.[12] Therefore, in this study, gender equality entails that both men and women should be free to hold leadership positions in the church, if they qualify to do so. There is also need for married couples to value each other as humans created by God. This necessitated the need for this study, which explored the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality among members of the church.

Literature Review

Nell argued that women in Africa, like all women world over, experienced a long history of patriarchal leadership not only in the area of politics and economics but also in the area of religion.[13] Women aiming for religious leadership face obstacles from their male counterparts. Likewise, Arce-Valentin argued that the church lost its vision on the equality of women and men. When the church was established in the continent of Africa by the first missionaries, it applied its power like an imperial state. Arce-Valentin further argued that as the church became more famous and powerful in the society, the role of women was completely sidelined and its leadership became dominated by men. This move arose from the missionary approach and patriarchal structural systems which favoured more men than women.[14] Nell and Arce-Valentin's were relevant to the current study but they focused on religion in general. The current study was necessary as it focused on one specific religion and how gender equality was promoted thereby showing how other religions could promote gender equality in their dominations.

The continent of Africa has also been a home of gender inequality, marital conflicts and other social evils erupted due to men's strong bias and unfair treatment of women. In the midst of this marginalisation, the church has the task of bringing the message of hope to the oppressed women. Dreyer argued that in male-dominated communities, women intermingled with men to absorb bad descriptions ascribed to

10   UNICEF, Gender Equality: *Glossary of Terms and Concepts* (Kathmandu: UNICEF, 2017), 3.

11   Cecilia Toledo, ELLA Guide: Gender Equality in Latin America, *A Regional Commitment to Reducing Gender Gaps*, Accessed 13 December 2023, https://fundar.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Guide-Gender-Equity-in-Latin-America_2014.pdf .

12   Genesis 1:27, Good News Bible, (Lusaka: The Bible Society of Zambia, 2009).

13   Ian Nell, 'Hitting the Glass Ceiling: Reflections on Women in Leadership through the Lenses of Social Identity'. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, Vol.3, No.3 (2014), 40.

14   Dora Arce –Valentin, 'Introduction to the Justice and Partnerships' Work on Gender Justice: The World Communion of Reformed Churches,' Vol. 66, No.2 (2017), 3.

them such as weak, inactive or evil.[15] They accepted such derogatory remarks from their male counterparts not because they were happy but rather to maintain peace and harmony in the community. So due to these tendencies, women may be marginalised even in churches because the majority of the leaders are men who have been brought up considering women to be inferior and not able to take up leadership positions in the church. As such, the current study sought to examine how the RCZ promoted gender equality among their members so that the findings could help strengthen the relationship between men and women in general and married couples, in particular.

Another scholar, Moyo argued that being brought up in a remote area of Zambia and raised up in one of the ethnic groups in Eastern Province at a tender age of her life, she begrudged the position of men in society where they were highly favoured. Male figures were favoured by, for example, the backing they got from society, the type of food they ate, the type of work they did and the type of marriages they came into. This attitude towards women was influenced by the patriarchal system which mostly favoured men rather than women in all aspects of life. As observed by Moyo, the patriarchal system did not accept that women should make contributions during meetings.[16] Similarly, churches tended to practice the patriarchal system which favoured more male than female dominated leadership. In some churches in Zambia, women are the majority of the church membership but the key leadership positions are occupied by their male counterparts. Ndhlovu, asserted that women in the RCZ proved themselves to be the observers of traditions and mentors of children and were also productive in carrying out their fellowship tasks in the church such as, but not limited to helping the most poor and vulnerable people mostly within the boundaries of their congregations.[17] Although women were not appointed or elected to take up certain key decision-making and leadership positions in the RCZ, they contributed in one way or another in the development of the church. It was, therefore, imperative that the current study was carried out so that information could be gathered on how gender equality was promoted in the RCZ, a church with many women and men who might have passed through a patriarchal system.

With regard to training of women, Phiri defended the position of educating women worldwide by African churches and theological institutions, with the view of promoting togetherness between men and women in religious institutions. The training should be viewed as empowering Christ's servants for the people who were willing to build a community of women and men.[18] The study by Phiri focused on training women but it did not include efforts made by churches, such as the RCZ, to promote gender equality among the members in their everyday occurrences, which the current study endeavoured to do. Additionally, Payne argued that men and women were created by God as equal beings who should exercise authority according to

15 Yolanda Dreyer, 'Women's Spirituality and Feminist Theology: A Hermeneutic of Suspicion Applied to Patriarchal Marriage'. *AOSIS Open Journals,* Vol. 67, No.3 (2011), 2.

16 Nolipher Jere Moyo, 'The Influence of Cultural Practices on the Spread of HIV and AIDS on Zambia', (PhD Thesis, University of Pretoria, 2010), 2.

17 Japhet Ndhlovu, 'Some Missiological Challenges Facing the Reformed Church in Zambia' (Masters diss., University of South Africa, 1999), 44.

18 Isabel Apawo Phiri 'Major Challenges for African Women Theologians in Theological Education 1989-2008'. Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae,' Vol.34, No. 2 (2008), 15.

God's calling.[19] According to him, the qualifications for the Christian service included obedience to Christ and empowerment by the Holy Spirit. So, regardless of their gender, men and women qualify to take up decision-making positions in the church, thereby promoting gender equality.

Ndhlovu further explored alternative ways of supporting every RCZ member to fully participate in all church activities regardless of their gender. The study showed that church members who had the ability to lead should receive sufficient training in financial management. He also stated that training of the church leadership empowered the church to have energetic vision that embraced any church member regardless of their gender. He further asserted that educational establishment of miscellaneous classes, from ordinary members to those at the Synod level, bestowed the church with information and skills intended to advance understanding of church doctrines and policies.[20] Training is one way of providing answers to the challenges that the church encountered in trying to promote gender equality.

Ndhlovu's study touched on an important aspect of empowering women in the RCZ through training them. However, the study was rather general while the current study was selective and specific so that what prevails in one denomination could be shared to other denominations and churches.

For Ademiluka, Jesus demonstrated that the behaviour of men towards women did not always reflect God's position. This is evidenced by different ways Jesus treated women when he was on earth.[21] Therefore, any ideology born out of the people's selfish ambitions for power and privileges was not part of God's master plan for mankind. According to the Good News Bible, the original relationship between man and woman was to be one, demonstrating His image and likeness and not to be hierarchical. In addition, Genesis 1:26 states that both male and female were created in God's image and likeness.[22] This stance in the Bible further exemplifies that God's original plan for both male and female is the unity of purpose, love, care and respect for each other regardless of their gender and status. Women could, therefore, be afforded the same responsibilities as men. Ademiluka's study makes reference to Biblical teachings on how God, as demonstrated by His son Jesus, values both men and women in general. The current study used Biblical teachings of the RCZ and how these might have influenced the church to promote gender equality, thus, justifying the need for the study.

Further to the reviewed studies above, is the 2019 Republic of Zambia National Gender Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcomes of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly. This is in the context of the Twenty Fifth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The National Gender Policy was revised in 2014 to ensure the attainment of gender equality in the development processes by redressing the existing gender imbalances. The policy provides for equal opportunities for women and men to

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19 Philip Barton Payne, 'The Bible Teaches the Equal Standing of Man and Woman.' *Priscilla Papers,* Vol. 29, No. 1 (2015), 3.
20 Ndhlovu, 'Some Missiological Challenges', 76.
21 Solomon Olusola Ademiluka, '1 Corinthians 14:33b–36 in Light of Women and Church Leadership in Nigeria', *Verbum et Ecclesia,* Vol.38, No. 1 (2017), 3.
22 Genesis 1: 26, Good News Bible.

actively participate and contribute to national development. The policy further calls for gender equality in the social and other spheres.[23] There is a gap in the policy as it focuses on a broad perspective of promoting gender equality, as opposed to a specific approach, which the current study spearheaded. Furthermore, Ziwa carried out a study in which a New Apostolic pastor said 'it is our tradition to consider women different from men, women will never be considered equal to men as long as culture remains part of our life'[24]. So, men and women treated each other differently for cultural and religious reasons. Culture influenced the way Christians applied what they learnt in churches; culture might condition women to submit to men and remain silent in order to please the men. Though Ziwa's study focused on the subject of religion and gender equality, it did not make mention of churches in Zambia, which promoted gender equality, creating a gap that the current study thought to fill.

Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Liberal Feminist Theory (LFT) which was founded by Wollstonecraft. In her study on the vindication of the rights of women, Wollstonecraft questioned the viewpoints about women, which were destructive and discriminatory.[25] Agassi asserted that modern LFT was based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status with men, all stereotyped social roles for men and women had to be abolished.[26] If women's equality was to be achieved, gender segregation of occupational roles should be abolished. So, Bem stated that Liberal Feminist Theorists believed that men and women could work together to androgenise gender roles and eradicate old-fashioned guidelines and practices that discriminated either of the two sexes.[27] Therefore, LFT was suitable to the current study because it held the view that supported equal, not special, treatment for women and men in society in general and the RCZ, in particular. The theory supported the equal presentation of opportunities for women and men. It was developed with the view that generally, religion discriminated against women even when they were qualified for certain positions. The theory was, therefore, favoured as it propagated that women should be considered for different positions as much as men were. In this regard, it spearheaded for fair play in the provision of opportunities for both sexes in different spheres, religion inclusive. As such, in the context of the church, by including women in leadership positions, they are enabled the opportunity to work hand in glove with their male counterparts and may be liberated from the York of maginalisation they have experienced for centuries.

23 Government of the Republic of Zambia, 'Progress Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcomes of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000), (Nairobi: United Nation, 2019), 3.

24 Ziwa, Judith Lubasi Illubala, 'The Role of Church and Ecumenical Mission in Gender Emancipation and Equality in Lusaka District, Zambia,' *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies (JAIS)* ISSN 2523-6725, vol. 2, no. 7 (2018), 96.

25 Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Women: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects, accessed 14 December 2023, https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/wollstonecraft1792.pdf.

26 Judith Buber Agassi, Theories of Gender Equality: Lessons from the Israeli Kibbutz. Gender and Society, Vol. 3, No.2 (1989),165.

27 Sandra Lipsitz Bem, 'The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny.' *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, Vol. 42, No.1 (1974), 23

Methodology

The study used a qualitative case study design so that the researcher could have an in-depth understanding of the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality among the members in Lusaka District. The RCZ was chosen because unlike other churches such as the United Church in Zambia, which had the first-ever ordained woman in Africa who rose to the highest church rank and served on the central control of the World Council of Churches, among other responsibilities, there was not much known about the RCZ. It was necessary to examine what the church was doing to promote gender equality in terms of empowering women by training and involving them in the leadership of the church.

The researcher used interviews and FGD qualitative research methods to gather data from sampled participants in the two selected congregations in the district. The congregations were selected due to their nature and uniqueness as they comprised members who had received formal education and those who had not. Purposive sampling was used to select the 28 participants who were willing to take part in the study, 14 from each congregation. Names of congregations and participants were not revealed; instead, they were given identity letters and numbers. For purposes of this article, 8 responses from 8 participants (4 from each of the two congregations) who were interviewed and took part in the FGD are given to vindicate the findings whose data was collected in 2017. Data was analysed using themes gathered from the common responses of participants.

Findings and Discussion

The results are presented according to the research questions that is: role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality, challenges faced by the church and factors that influenced the Church to promote gender equality in Lusaka District, 2012-2017. The findings are presented according to the descriptions given by the participants. To vindicate the data, verbatim responses are given. The researcher also presents the findings according to themes identified from the findings.

Role Played by the RCZ in Promoting Gender Equality

In line with Wollstonecraft's LFT theory which questioned the viewpoints about women which were destructive and discriminatory, the first research question sought to examine the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality. Participants gave different roles the RCZ was involved in. In the FGD participants generally agreed that the church put up programmes that specifically responded to the needs of church members who were about to get married so that they could understand what marriage was like and work together as couples. This improved family relationships in many homes. A male ordinary member from Congregation B (P6) stated the following:

> The Reformed Church in Zambia carries out counselling sessions and teachings that address gender equality in the church family and community; this is especially offered to married couples and those in courtship. This has helped improve relationships among married men and women.[28]

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28 Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.

The reverend from Congregation B (P5) indicated in an interview that the church was responsible for providing guidance for people to live in harmony and peace. She added that the RCZ sensitised its members about the importance of men and women respecting each other as humans created by God. She concluded, "We have also established desks for women to discuss issues related to their gender. The church also trains female preachers at Justo Mwale University as a way of promoting gender equality and reducing prejudices that are associated with being female". The initiative taken by the RCZ to train women reverends encouraged them to participate in key decision-making processes. It also motivated other women to be trained and participate in leadership positions. This is what was promoted in Liberal Feminist theory that for women's equality to be achieved, gender segregation of occupational roles should be abolished. This point was emphasised by the reverend from Congregation A (P2) who said:

> The church conducts activities to spread the news about gender equality. As a church, we sensitise, teach and conduct workshops and preaching activities. Fellowships are also held among couples in which topics on relationships are discussed. This helps to create awareness on gender issues among the members.[29]

Additionally, in an interview, the researcher held with the First Treasurer from Congregation A (P4) indicated that the church endeavoured to bring men and women together through workshops to sensitise them on the importance of working together. He said, "As a church, we ensure that women are involved in leadership roles at different levels, this has helped improve gender equality in the church and community".

The findings revealed that the RCZ played a role in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District. This was done through the sermons which were conducted by the reverends during Sunday worship. The reverends preached the importance of family ties as it was the backbone of the church. This move by the RCZ to promote gender equality through preaching and teaching of God's word was in line with the findings of Townshed who argued that the word of God was a basis of power because it had a positive influence in the lives of numerous people and it was so powerful that it could control people's behaviour.[30] In addition, the findings gathered from Congregation A and B's top leadership showed that the RCZ played a significant role in promoting gender equality through seminars and counselling held among couples who faced marital problems and those who were about to get married. Unlike Ziwa's study in which she stated that culture might influence the way Christians applied what they learnt in churches; and might condition women to submit to men and remain silent in order to please the men[31]. In the current study, church members were also encouraged to worship together in fellowship groups. These acted as small Christian communities similar to those practiced by the Catholic Church. It was possible that

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29 Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.

30 Patricia Olwyn Townshend, 'A Gender-Critical Approach to the Pauline Material and the Zimbabwe Context with Specific References to the Position and Role of Women in Selected Denominations,' (Masters diss., University of South Africa, 2008),148.

31 Ziwa-Illubala, 'The Role of Church and Ecumenical Mission in Gender Emancipation', 97.

as the members worshipped together in small groups, they discussed and understood Biblical teachings better than when they were in a congregation.

Bem stated that Liberal Feminist Theorists believed that men and women could work together to eradicate old-fashioned guidelines and practices that discriminated either of the two sexes.[32] In this vein, the RCZ allowed women to occupy key leadership positions such as being reverends and moderators. In order to achieve this, women were offered training at Justo Mwale University. The number of women in leadership positions was a good example to other women, and, indeed, men. It could be argued that apart from the theological training women received while at the theological institutions, they also interacted with their fellow students, socially. During their interactions, ideas were shared, some of which included the promotion of gender equality in the church. Phiri defended the position taken by African churches to educate women globally, with the view to enhance the attitude of working together between men and women.[33] This demonstrated that the church acknowledged the gifts from God to His children to develop the church. Additionally, the RCZ leadership conducted meetings, seminars and other training to discuss the challenges that affected the church, such as gender inequality.

When asked if there were any improvements in the way adherents viewed gender equality, P6 noted:

> There is a big difference because our church leaders get involved from the family level. When we tell our reverend that we were having problems in our homes, she takes keen interest in counselling us as couples. This never used to happen but now since our leaders show interest in our general wellbeing, things have changed in the way we now treat each other as couples. However, some members of the church are too shy to approach our leaders. They do not trust their leaders and feel that they might disclose the issues discussed in confidence.[34]

The response by P6 showed that the RCZ leadership were interested in the affairs of their members. As they visited their homes, they sensitised them on gender equality. This was supported by the findings gathered from the FGD in which members generally agreed that there were improvements in the way church members viewed gender equality as women could contribute to the affairs of the church. Women could also be elected to top-most leadership positions. However, P2, the reverend from Congregation A, noted that respect for each other as couples should be encouraged. Respect is a virtue which can enhance unity and cooperation among couples, families and communities. Without respect, couples may lose the stamina to love each other, the family, the church and community. Although the RCZ made strides in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District, some adherents were rather too shy to approach the elders for counselling services because they thought that if they did so, their marital problems might be disclosed to other members of the church. This was in agreement with Dreyer who argued that in male-dominated communities, women intermingled with men to absorb bad descriptions ascribed to them such as weak and

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32 Bem, 'The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny', 23.
33 Phiri, 'Major Challenges for African Women Theologians', 14.
34 Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.

inactive, which might influence them to avoid sharing their problems with the church leadership.[35] According to the views by P6, these members might not trust their leaders as providers of counselling services related to gender equality. There were no measures put in place to help these members use the counselling services. This negated this group of people from making use of the services. From the responses of the women who took part in the FGD, it was established that a lot more needed to be done in order to help all church members to have confidence in their leaders.

When asked to pin point the specific activities the RCZ had done to improve gender equality, the First Secretary from Congregation B (P7) said in a FGD:

> As a church, we have not tried to promote gender equality among our members: This is because we only preach about gender on Sundays. We do not have seminars or workshops meant to sensitise the members on gender equality. If we are to reach out to a bigger crowd, we need to conduct workshops and seminars both in the church and community, but so far, this has not been happening.[36]

Some participants expressed lack of knowledge whether the church held seminars at which gender equality was discussed. This showed that seminars might not have been conducted in all RCZ congregations or that some members were not willing or not available to attend the seminars. Whatever the case, the study revealed that during church services, the RCZ religious leaders disseminate information on gender equality. This was a good platform as church members usually attended congregation meetings. So, members had information on gender equality if they paid attention to the sermons.

The findings further showed that in order to promote the welfare of women in the church, the RCZ had a women's desk at the Synod office. In the same vein, P6 narrated the following:

> It is good to see female reverends in the church. This is advantageous for us women as we can share our personal problems with fellow women. We are happy that Justo Mwale University admits and trains a number of female students as reverends, which was not the case in the past.[37]

The results showed that the number of women reverends kept increasing each year. The acceptance of women to train in theological universities was indicative enough that the promotion of gender equality the RCZ endeavoured to achieve, bore fruitful results. In this regard, Kasomo stated that women were highly recognised and appreciated in the church since they participated as deacons, companions of Paul and other apostles and as apostles themselves.[38]

However, the highest positions in the church were held by men due to cultural trends, which compelled men to aspire for positions while women remained in the background, as was the case during the time of the early Christians. It is for this reason that Nell asserted that women in Africa experienced a long history of

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35 Dreyer, 'Women's Spirituality and Feminist', 2.
36 Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.
37 Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.
38 Romans 16:1, 3-5, 7, Good News Bible.

patriarchal leadership not only in the area of politics, economics and culture but also in the area of religion.[39] In addition, women targeting for spiritual leadership might encounter hindrances for them to achieve their intended goals. Men continue to take advantage of women in order to gratify their own goals which might be for selfish gains. Although the RCZ ordain women to ministerial positions as reverends and evangelists, the church structure has continued to be patriarchal. The church should take into consideration Agassi's assertion that modern LFT was based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status with men, all stereotyped social roles for men and women had to be abolished.[40] Nevertheless, the church endeavoured to promote gender equality amidst challenges for the transformation of church members' attitudes and behaviour in bringing about change among the members in Lusaka District.

Challenges

When asked if the church was financially capable of running programmes related to gender equality, an ordinary member from Congregation A (P1) indicated the following in a focus group discussion:

> The Church should source for funds that can be used in the dissemination of information. As at now, there are not sufficient funds reserved for this noble cause. Otherwise, the Synod would have notified all congregations regarding the issue.[41]

Financial constraint was the major hindrance to promoting gender equality in the RCZ. Without sufficient funds, it was difficult to hold sensitisation workshops on the importance of members practicing gender equality. Nevertheless, participants who took part in the study expressed confidence in the church's effort to promote gender equality in the church and community. However, without funds, the efforts made by the church might prove to be futile.

At this juncture, it is worth quoting the views by P5, the reverend from Congregation B, captured in an interview:

> On special Sundays, we raise enough money to contribute to all needy areas such as evangelism and helping the vulnerable. We also have partners at the headquarters supporting gender desks. Our learning institution, Justo Mwale University, has also received funds to train female reverends. All this is a way of supporting the gender desk.[42]

The findings gathered from the FGDs were similar to what was collected in the interviews. Generally, the members who took part in the FGD agreed that funding was a major issue that had negatively affected the activities of the church. For example, P1 noted that if there was more funding, outreach programmes and workshops would be held to sensitise church members on gender equality. Similarly, the findings from the Deputy Secretary from Congregation A (P3), showed that in the RCZ leadership positions were dominated by men. Some leaders were elected to leadership positions

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39 Nell, 'Hitting the Glass Ceiling', 40.
40 Agassi, 'Theories of Gender Equality', 165.
41 Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.
42 Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.

on the basis of their gender and not on merit, thereby causing an imbalance between women and men in leadership positions. As Wollstonecraft's LFT theory propagated, women should be considered for different positions as much as men were. P3 had this to say on this matter, 'No wonder as a church we have never had a female Synod Moderator. The solution to this problem is to ensure that people are elected or appointed into leadership positions on merit. Nevertheless, I still believe that one day, things will change for the better.' The Reformed Family Forum shows that the number of male evangelists, reverends and Synod Executive in the RCZ is much higher than that of women. This is the case in many churches in Zambia.[43] It will require much more effort and strategies to have a balance between female and male religious leaders.

The first secretary from Congregation B (P7) indicated that couples who belonged to different denominations also paused a challenge in promoting gender equality in RCZ. When there were marital disputes, it was difficult to counsel them because they held different beliefs and doctrines. 'You will find the wife congregates with the RCZ whereas the husband belongs to a totally different church or he does not even fellowship anywhere,' said P7. This showed that it was a challenge to sensitise some couples because they attended different churches and had different doctrines that were not compatible with the teachings of the RCZ. It would be easy to discuss gender equality if both spouses belonged to the same denomination sharing the same beliefs. To the contrary, in the RCZ, as might be the case in other churches, it was common to find a wife who was RCZ member while the husband attended a different denomination with different doctrines. If either spouse did not belong to any church, it was easier to convince him or her to attend the sessions on gender equality. This is a problem the church leadership should try to solve at the initial stage of the marriage relationship. Since the doctrine of the RCZ puts emphasis on Biblical teachings, members who wish to marry should be encouraged to select partners from their church or other religious denominations who understand Christian principles. As the newly married couples worship together, their marriage relationship is strengthened. This should, however, not be part of the church policy, but it should be left to individuals to make their own decisions.

Additionally, the findings gathered from the ordinary member of Congregation A (P1) revealed that the majority of women in the RCZ were not willing to participate in the top leadership because of their busy schedules at home, and the leadership roles came with responsibilities that might require them to spend time in meetings or at seminars as facilitators. Furthermore, P8, Deputy Secretary from Congregation B, indicated that women usually refused to take up leadership roles since traditionally, women were treated as helpers and if a woman was chosen to take up a leadership role, she might not accept the responsibility because her husband did not permit her, especially if he was not a member of the church. Ziwa attributed this to culture which influenced the way Christians applied what they learnt in churches.[44] P8 added that some husbands did not allow their wives to take up leadership positions and the wives obeyed them. PI summarised the challenges as follows:

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43 Reformed Family Forum, accessed 14 December 2023 https://rff.christians.co.za/the-reformed-church-in-zambia-rcz/.

44 Ziwa-Illubala, 'The Role of Church and Ecumenical Mission in Gender Emancipation', 97.

> Nowadays in our Congregation, the number of women taking up leadership positions is growing. For instance, our first treasurer is a female and our choir chorister is also a female. But the problem is at Synod level because as the RCZ, we have never had a female moderator. For example, the Synod executive is composed of 6 men and 1 woman. This clearly shows that we are still very far from achieving gender equality. Our church leadership should, therefore, acknowledge that change should start from the top leadership.[45]

Though the church faced challenges, participants expressed confidence in its ability to transform people's attitudes and behaviour in bringing about gender equality among the members in Lusaka District and the Zambian society at large. Strides have been made by the RCZ to try and promote gender equality by including women as leaders. The church's efforts were influenced by the factors discussed below.

Influential Factors

With regard to the factors that influenced the RCZ to promote gender equality in Lusaka District, the findings showed that the driving force was the increase in the gender based violence (GBV) cases that were noticed in the church. Furthermore, the responses gathered from the participants who took part in the interviews indicated that the word of God (the Bible) helped to strengthen gender equality. P6 cited Genesis 1: 26 as one of the scriptures that influenced the church's efforts:

> And now, we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. They will have power over the fish, the birds, and all animals, domestic and wild, large and small. So, God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female.[46]

Similar to this point of view, P9 indicated that the Word of God in the book of Genesis Chapter 1: 26, taught Christians that both male and female were equal. Biblical teachings compelled the religious leaders to enhance gender equality among church members and society, at large. Biblical teachings also required both men and women to preach the gospel to everyone. This was the stance taken by the RCZ. Some churches had not yet started allowing women to preach but the RCZ had done so. From Munroe's point of view, men and women were created in the image and likeness of their God who invested in them with inestimable worth, dignity, and importance. Human dignity was, therefore, embedded in creation and this implied that both women and men were intrinsically worthy of respect.[47] This respect is derived from being part of God's creation and particularly being made in God's image. So, both women and men could preach God's message and hold leadership positions.

Another influential factor was gathered from P2 who indicated that cultural values and cases of gender based violence compelled the RCZ to promote gender equality among church and community members. P2 said, 'Some traditions perceive women as unequal to men; some oppressive tendencies have also pushed us to work on issues to do with gender equality. Members who have no formal education do not

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45   Focus Group Discussion, February 10, 2017.
46   Genesis 1:26, Good News Bible.
47   Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose and Power of Men: A Book for Men and the Women Who Love them* (Nassau, Bahamas: Bahamas Faith Ministries International, 2002): 91.

understand the value of gender equality. They need to be taught in their communities'. In Ochieng's view, women were models of the Church and the general public, not only in times of conflicts, but also in times of peace.[48] With or without education, women continue to show allegiance to Christ and his church. Male dominance of the positions in the RCZ has resulted in women remaining observers in both the church and the society in general. Ochieng further stated that patriarchal systems that supported male dominance in African societies had influenced gender imbalance.[49] In a similar manner, traditional practices that marginalised women influenced the RCZ to promote gender equality in the church.

The findings gathered from P2 also revealed that in some families, violence and verbal abuse against women was prevalent in Zambia. Violence against women and men could have detrimental effects to the family, especially if the woman was injured physically. She might spend time meant for the development of the family in hospital nursing wounds resulting from her husband's uncaring attitude. This is not to say that men cannot be injured by their wives and/or other relatives. The point is, in Zambia there are more women than men afflicted with abuse. Generally, women are verbally and physical abused by their spouses. This might also cause psychological harm to the physically abused spouse.

The findings further showed that women were still lagging behind their male counterparts due to some patriarchal structures which were introduced in the church. This is in line with the findings of Moyo who asserted that gender discrimination against women emanated from selfish traditional rulers who wanted to stick to power for their own advantage and selfish motives.[50] In striving to achieve their goals, they came up with rules which prevented women from getting involved in the top management of the church. An interview held with P8 showed that women were still affected by the rules introduced in the DRCM that marginalised women. He said:

> Being one of the members of the RCZ, I am grateful to God because there
> is a great change. Currently, the church has women in leadership positions.

The findings also revealed that some of the female reverends in the RCZ preached better than male reverends. So, male members of the church should humble themselves and appreciate the good work done by their female counterparts.

Furthermore, P5 indicated that the church doctrine influenced how women were treated. She further stated that the church doctrine supported the involvement and fair treatment of female members. When asked what posed a challenge to the formulation of a policy on gender equality, P7 indicated that people were still complacent about gender equality and, therefore, were not interested in coming up with a policy on gender equality which the RCZ could adopt. P7 suggested that the RCZ should further treat women as equal to men by continuing to encourage and sensitise members to elect a female Synod moderator if the church's role in promoting gender equality not only in Lusaka District but also other districts in Zambia and beyond, might bear more fruits. The tradition of placing women under a man's leadership is long gone.

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48 Merab Ochieng, 'Role of Women in Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Transformation Africa: A Catholic
     Church Perspective', International Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, vol 1. No. 2 (2019), 1.
49 Ochieng, 'Role of Women in Peacebuilding', 6.
50 Moyo, 'The Influence of Cultural Practices', 5.

In concluding this section, it is worth noting Ziwa's sentiments that the wrestle against harmful cultural practices is not for one church or ecumenical mission alone. Ecumenical missions are urged to help society understand that culture is simply a product of human imagination. Thus, each generation of Africans has the right to uphold, transform or reject any cultural beliefs and practices that marginalise women. Ziwa also asserted that culture should not be presented as a fixed and 'compulsory' package; each generation has the mandate to critique what the previous generation bequeathed to it.[51] In order to win this battle, there is need for efforts from African ecumenism, African Christians, African Muslims, followers of other religions and ideologies, and secularists to engage in an open revaluation of African cultures in the context of gender equality. To do this is to approve Wollstonecraft's Liberal Feminist Theory (LFT) in which she vindicated the rights of women by disapproving viewpoints about women which were destructive and discriminatory.[52] To this end, LFT seeks no special privileges for women but demands that everyone (including female church members) receives equal considerations without discrimination on the basis of gender. LFT further seeks to achieve women's equality through abolishing gender segregation of occupational roles, enabling men and women to work together, androgenise gender roles and eradicate old-fashioned guidelines and practices that discriminated either of the two sexes. This is what the current study endeavoured to achieve.

Conclusion

The study has shown that the RCZ played a significant role in the promotion of gender equality in Lusaka District. This was done through preaching, counselling, training of women and seminars that were mostly held at the Synod level. Additionally, a desk was established at the Synod office for the needs of women. The RCZ also had female reverends in some of the Congregations in the country. In order to have representation in the leadership of the church, Justo Mwale University increased the number of women who were trained to become reverends. The female reverends acted as role models to other women and, as such, more female members of the RCZ served as church leaders.

On the challenges faced by the RCZ in their endeavour to promote gender equality in the church, financial constraints were top on the list. Due to lack of funds, the religious leaders could hardly organise congregation members to meet together and share information on the importance of gender equality. The study also established that promotion of gender equality was challenging because many members of the church were not knowledgeable about the issue as they lacked formal education and were not sensitised enough on the importance of gender equality among married couples. In addition, cultural practices that hindered women from contesting the leadership positions continued to pose a challenge and discouraged women from participating in the running of the church. Currently, women worked side by side with men and sometimes, did the work better than men. This helped women to get recognised as equal partners in the ministry of teaching and preaching God's word. However, attainment of the highest position in the church was still a preserve of men.

51   See Ziwa Judith Lubasi Illubala, 2018.
52   See Wollstonecraft 1975.

The study further examined the church doctrine and how it influenced the church to promote gender equality. The doctrine of the RCZ supported the inclusion of women in the leadership of the church. However, the RCZ did not have a clear policy on gender equality. Due to lack of a policy, the RCZ might not allocate funds for the promotion of gender equality. The study recommended that the church should formulate a policy on gender equality. It further recommended that workshops and seminars should be held at both the Synod and congregational level so that members could acquire knowledge and understanding on the importance of gender equality. In order to help women, build confidence and compete for topmost positions in the church, the RCZ should ensure that capacity-building workshops are held in all congregations.

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THE CIVILIAN AND THE INTRICACIES OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC: A CASE STUDY OF BUHARI'S ADMININSTRATION (2015-2022)

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Abstract

The paper investigates the civilian and the intricacies of corruption during President Buhari administration. This article is a conceptual paper based on content analysis. It forwards its arguments using neo-patrimonial theory. The article reveals that the scale of corruption in Nigeria under Buhari's administration is massive, widespread and pervasive. It contends that the politicisation of anti-corruption crusade of Buhari as well as "sacred cows" in his government have created doubt in the fight against corruption. This is quite evident in the records of various allegations levelled against political office holders. The content analysis shows that the limited political will of the anti-graft agencies, and inadequate resources hinder the drives towards attaining the Buhari's tripod vision of fighting corruption, defeating terrorism, and fixing the economy. The article concludes that, despite the anti-corruption crusade, there are still rising insecurity, democratic backsliding which have hindered anti-kleptocracy efforts, and created new corruption opportunities for unscrupulous officials and their enablers. Therefore, it recommends autonomy of the anti-graft agencies; improved standard of living of people above poverty line; strong institutions; public awareness by the civil society on the threat posed by corruption, and value re-orientation of the people.

Keywords: Civilian, Intricacies, Corruption, Fourth Republic, Anti-corruption Crusade, Anti-kleptocracy.

Introduction

Across the world, particularly in the last few decades, corruption has become a cankerworm that has eaten deep into almost all the facets of human society. Specifically, the magnitude of corruption differs in manifestations and costs in all nations. Democracies in Africa reflect practical manifestations of indisposition.[1] Since 1995, the Transparency International, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) publishes annually the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which measures

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1 See Adeyeye (2011), Dibie (2009), Ogundiya (2011) and Baker (1995; 2000) for a discussion on the magnitude of corruption.

the degree of corruption among public officials and politicians in nations.[2] CPI is a composite index, drawing on 16 different polls from 10 independent institutions. The countries close to 10 are considered 'highly clean' and those close to zero, 'highly corrupt'.[3]

In 2005, CPI revealed that nearly half of the countries score less than three, indicating a severe corruption. Corruption is perceived as most rampant in Chad, Bangladesh, and Haiti. Similarly, countries with high levels of per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) like Poland, Argentina, the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Canada, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Israel, Slovenia, Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela have lower levels of corruption.[4] There has been a marked increase in the perception of corruption in countries with high income such as Canada and Ireland.[5]

In the 2022 Corruption Perception Index, Nigeria was ranked 150 out of 180 countries. Other countries in the same ranking with Nigeria include Cambodia, Central African Republic, Guatemala, Lebanon, and Tajikistan. This made Nigeria to be one of the most corrupt nations in the world. In order to curb corruption in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, the civilian administration under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo introduced an anti-graft agency, the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to tackle corruption. However, the civilian administration effort to combat corruption suffered serious setbacks due to the neo-patrimonial orientation of the Nigerian political class, inadequate structures, and a weak judicial system.[6] The state of corruption during Buhari administration is worrisome. For example, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Babachir Lawal was alleged of breach of Nigerian laws in handling contracts awarded by the Presidential Initiative for the Northeast (PINE).[7]

Barely three years after the inauguration of President Buhari, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) announced 603 corruption convictions. The former governor of Taraba state was sentenced to fourteen (14) years imprisonment. Similarly, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Joseph Nwobike was convicted of attempting to pervert the consent of justice.[8]

The post-independence era in Nigeria, which marked the First Republic was notorious for corrupt practices where government contracts, purchases and loans were

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2 Transparency International is a non-governmental organisation that publishes the Corruption Perception Index of nations. Transparency International Corruption Perception rankings are used as a proxy for assessing the level of government corruption for each economy.

3 Countries on a scale of 0 are highly corrupt while countries on a scale of 10 or close to 10 are very clean.

4 International Institute for Educational Planning, 2005. Scholarly works reveal that corruption is perceived as most rampant in Chad, Bangladesh, and Haiti.

5 A global survey of corruption singles out Canada as suffering from an increased perception that it's plagued by corruption.

6 Enweremadu, David (2006). The struggle against corruption in Nigeria: The role of the national anti-corruption commission (ICPC) under the Fourth Republic, IFRA Special Research, 2, 41-46. The ICPC is an anti-corruption agency that investigates allegations of corruption against public officials and prosecutes.

7 A N544 million contract fraud offence was brought against the former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Mr Babachir Lawal and five others by the EFCC.

8 Mr Nwobike was prosecuted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for attempt to pervert the course of justice. The Lagos State High Court in April 2018 found him guilty of the charge, while the Court of Appeal in Lagos also upheld his conviction and 30-day imprisonment.

systematically manipulated to enrich political office holders and their cronies.[9] The collapse of the republic could be partly attributed to the cankerworm of corruption.[10] The Second Republic that followed was not far better, as the magnitude of corruption increased among public office holders. This was evidenced with the discovery of fraud at the Ministry of Communication where the government was losing N50 million monthly.[11]

The Fourth Republic that started in 1999 was fraught with corrupt practices. Despite the establishment of anti-corruption agency such as Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) in 2000, and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) in 2003, the end of Obasanjo's tenure manifested corruption through the Halliburton and Siemens scandals, and $10 billion spending on the power sector.[12] Corruption under Buhari's administration has been described as massive. According to the 2020 Country's Reports on Human Rights Practices by the United States Department of State, the scale of corruption in Nigeria under Buhari's administration was massive, widespread and pervasive. In Section 4 of the Report focusing on Nigeria titled: 'Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government', the US noted that:

> Although, the law provides criminal penalties for the conviction of official corruption, the government did not consistently implement the law, and government employees frequently engaged in corrupt practices with impunity.

The above is an indication that the anti-corruption agencies set up by the government were not alive to their responsibilities during Buhari's administration. The reality of the dispensation of the Fourth Republic has dashed the hopes of Nigerians in the civilian administration that was supposed to show probity, transparency and accountability in government.

Scholarly works have focused on anti-corruption crusade of Buhari government, corruption during the military regime, Corruption Perception Index during the civilian administration, Nigeria's encounters with corruption, and politicisation of the anti-corruption fight. For example, Akinwole[13] observes that the 23 years of the return of democracy have been characterised by "leadership of empty promises and dashed hopes. According to Akinwole[14], given the prevailing level of corruption and loss of hope in the future, political leaders in Nigeria have shown lack of willingness and capacity to protect lives and properties, and they have successfully failed in promoting productive activities that can boost the Nigerian economy.

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9   Oluwashakin, A. (2012). The International Community and Corruption in Nigeria (1999-2012). 57th Annual Congress of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 28-31 October 2012.

10 See Agubamah (2009). Africa Weekly News May 27, 1994, on the Collapse of the First Republic.

11 Enweremadu, D.U., and Okafor, E.E. (2009). Anti-corruption Reforms in Nigeria since 1999: Issues, Challenges, and the Way Forward. IFRS Special Research, 3, 60-86.

12 The former President Olusegun Obasanjo was accused as one of the three Nigerian leaders whose palms were greased in the Halliburton bribery.

13 Akinwole (2022). The 23 years of the return of democracy have been characterised by "leadership of empty promises and dashed hopes.

14 Ibid

Similarly, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) revealed that the highest rate of corruption incidences in Nigeria from 2016 to 2019 occurred in the North-Central, South-East and South-South zones.[15] NBS uses data from a study conducted between May and June 2019 involving 33,000 households. The Bureau's study shows that three (north-east, north-west and south-west) of the six regions recorded small decreases in the prevalence of bribery.

Previous scholarly works are in no doubt useful to the analysis of corruption under the civilian administration. Yet, there is still dearth of literature on how anti-corruption crusade of Buhari has affected the security, economy and aggravate corruption. It would be recalled that the anti-corruption crusade of Buhari was the major reason that brought him to power.[16] Corruption has constituted social obstacle to the execution of government projects, and it is undoubtedly a principal affliction, which causes public resentment and may lead to social upheaval in any country.[17]. Klitgaard[18] observes that systemic corruption distorts incentive, undermines institutions, and redistributes wealth and power to the undeserving. Those who pay and receive bribes are expropriating a nation's wealth, leaving little for its poor citizens. When corruption undermines the rule of law and incentive to investment, economic and political development are crippled. Nigeria's ranking in the Corruption Index released by Transparency International has continued to deteriorate. Political corruption has created widespread national disaffection, which has been hijacked by some interest groups for their own parochial purposes.[19]

The aftermath of corruption is the shortage of public goods, and poor service delivery. On a large scale, it poses a threat to democracy and good governance.[20] The corrupt ridden nature of Nigerian society has made it difficult, if not impossible to achieve. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all United Nations' Member States in 2015.[21] Member states of the United Nations recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth-all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.[22]

With corruption, there can be no sustainable development, nor political stability. By breeding and feeding on inefficiency, corruption invariably strangles the system of social organisation. In fact, corruption is literally the antithesis of development

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15 National Bureau of Statistics (2019).

16 Buhari's Administration Promised to Fight Corruption, Defeat Terrorism and Fix The Economy.

17 Oyebode, A. (1990). Overview of corruption: Political and Economic Recovery in Nigeria: Seminar Paper Presented at the Faculty of Law, University of Lagos. *Premium Times.* March 12, 2021.

18 Systemic Corruption Distorts Incentive, Undermines Institutions, and Redistributes Wealth and Power to the undeserving.

19 Nigeria ranks 145 out of 180 countries, the same as Mozambique, Madagascar, and Liberia. Nigeria had in 2022 scored 24 out of 100 points and was ranked 150 among 180 countries on the 2022 Corruption Perception Index.

20 Olurode, (2005). Corruption as a Social Problem. In L. Olurode and R. Anifowose (Eds.), *Corruption and Good Governance in Nigeria,* 1-18.

21 See United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.

22 Member states of United Nations recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth.

and progress.[23] The ills of corruption in the society is quite obvious, particularly, it deters development, and impoverished the citizens. According to Terence McCulley, the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria,

> Corruption harms the citizens of all nations in varying degrees. Therefore, for development and its sustainability to take place, there is the need to root out the cancer of corruption that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the society.

The centrality of this article is to interrogate the civilian administration claims of accountability and transparency in government. The disposition of Buhari's administration at the inception was to eradicate corruption of all forms in the country. Hence, the establishment of anti-corruption crusade. The questions that arise are: How did anti-corruption crusade address the corrupt ridden nature of Nigerian society under Buhari's administration? What impacts did the anti-corruption crusade have on the economy, security and level of corruption in the country? Interestingly, Nigeria's ranking in the Corruption Index released by TI continued to deteriorate. The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), a non-governmental organisation concerned with economic and social rights in Nigeria, and anti-corruption work, has made allegations of several corrupt infractions against the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari.

Barely one year to the expiration of his tenure, a sum of N4 trillion was approved by the National Assembly to fund fuel subsidy.[24] The perception of the civilian administration is that it is accountable and transparent than the military. However, the 23 years continuous governance of civilian administration has proved otherwise. Seemingly, it is not far better than the military administration it replaced. Available records have revealed that food inflation rate from the month-on-month analysis rose to 2.0 per cent in April from 1.62 per cent in January during the administration of President Buhari. The surge in food prices would hinder poverty alleviation progress in Nigeria.[25] It is against this backdrop that this article investigates the intricacies of corruption during the civilian administration of President Buhari with a view to examining how anti-corruption crusade of Buhari administration has affected economy, security, and corruption.

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23 Political corruption has created widespread national disaffection, which has been hijacked by some interest groups for their own parochial purposes.

24 Premium Times May 20, 2022, on fuel subsidy barely one year to the expiration of his tenure, a sum of N4 trillion was approved by the National Assembly to fund fuel subsidy.

25 World Bank, Vanguard June 12, 2022.

Conceptual Orientation of Corruption

For clarity, and to situate the concept within the context of Nigerian society, a conceptual clarification of corruption is necessary. Giving a precise definition of corruption may be misleading because different scholars and researchers have defined corruption from different perspectives. The concept of corruption is so wide that it has become very difficult to give a single definition to the concept.[26] The primary requirement for debating anything is to understand first and foremost the actual thing being talked about.[27]

The role of the state and politics is essential to the understanding of corruption.[28] Amundsen defines corruption as the private wealth seeking behaviour of someone who represents the state and the public authority, or as the misuse of public goods by public officials for private ends. Corruption is ubiquitous in human society. In this, Roy[29] argues from the functionalist perspective that the prevalence of corruption in all societies and at all times, is attributed to its culturally integrative role. The World Bank defines corruption as the offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting of anything of value to influence the action of a public official in the procurement process or in contract execution. Similarly, the Asian Development Bank defines corruption as the sale of official posts, or illegal payments to foster or sustain monopolistic access to markets.[30] Corruption is a disease, a cancer that eats into the cultural, political and economic fabric of society, and destroys the functioning of vital organs. According to Transparency International,[31] corruption is one of the greatest challenges of the contemporary world. It undermines good governance, fundamentally distorts public policy, leads to the misallocation of resources, harms the private sector and private sector development, and particularly, hurts the poor.

Yury Fedotov[32], states that corruption is the thief of economic and social development; stealing the opportunities of ordinary people to progress and to prosper. Without corruption and bribery, millions of women, children and men cannot be trafficked as slaves; thousands of small arms cannot reach their violent destinations; and tons of illicit drugs cannot reach their consumers.

Hallak and Poisson[33] define corruption as the systematic use of public office for private benefit. Corruption is any organised, independent system in which part of the system is either not performing duties, it was originally intended to; or performing

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26 Adedire, S. A. (2014). Corruption and the Challenges of Sustainable Transformation in Nigeria (1999 to 2014). *Journal of Social Sciences and Public Affairs*, 4, 2, 88-118.

27 Chafe, (1994) The primary requirement for debating anything is to understand first and foremost the actual thing being talked about.

28 Amundsen, I. (1999 (*Political Corruption: An Introduction to the Issues.* Chr: Michelsen Institute of Development Studies.

29 Roy (1970) argues from the functionalist perspective that the prevalence of corruption in all societies and always is attributed to its culturally integrative role.

30 Asian Development Bank (2000).

31 Transparency International stresses that corruption undermines good government, distorts public policy and leads to misallocation of resources.

32 Fedotov (2015) in the Chief at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

33 Hallak and Poisson (2002).

them in an improper manner, to the detriment of the system's original purposes.[34] To Ibrahim Shihata,[35] corruption occurs when… in all cases, a position of trust is being exploited to realise private gains beyond what the position holder is entitled to. In the word of Alex Gboyega[36], corruption is any decision, act, or conduct that subverts the integrity of people in authority or institutions charged with promoting, defending, or sustaining the democratisation process, thereby undermining its effectiveness in performing its assigned roles.

Dikwa[37]observes that corruption is a systematic vice associated with an individual, society or a nation which reflects favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, sectionalism, undue enrichment, amassing of wealth, abuse of office, power, position, and derivation of undue gains and benefits. Corruption is the criminal misconduct by public servants in the discharge of official duty, which among others, may include habitual acceptance of illegal gratification for himself or for any other persons; misappropriation or conversion of property entrusted to him as a public servant or allowing another person to do so; acts of obtaining pecuniary advantage for himself or for any other person.

For Nye[38], corruption is defined as the behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains, or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private regarding influences. The above definition by Nye has been criticised for its narrowness and excessively concerned with the illegality of such practices defined from a Western point of view.[39]

In its broad sense, De Sardan[40] opines that corruption includes nepotism, abuse of power, embezzlement and various forms of misappropriation, influence peddling, prevarication, insider trading and abuse of the public purse.

Theoretical Framework

Neo-patrimonial theory provides appropriate theoretical explanation that underpins the intricacies of corruption during Buhari's administration. The proponents of this theory are J.F. Medard, R.H. Jackson and C.G. Rosberg, R. Joseph, Peter Lewis and J. F. Bayart. The analysis of corruption by these scholars are related to 'prebendalism' 'personal rule' and the 'politics of the stomach' Neopatrimonialism denotes the simultaneous operation of two Weberian ideal types of domination: patrimonial

34 Aluko, Y.A. (2009). Corruption in Nigeria: Concept and Dimensions. In Enweremadu and Okafor (Eds.), *IFRA Special Research,* 3.

35 Shihata (1997) posits that corruption occurs when a position of trust is being exploited to realise private gains beyond what the position holder is entitled to.

36 Gboyega (1996).

37 Dikwa, Federal *Accounts Nigeria Revenue*. Abuja: National Bureau of Statistics.

38 Nye (1967) defines corruption is defined as the behavior, which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains, or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private regarding influences.

39 Nye (Ibid) has been criticised for its narrowness and excessively concerned with the illegality of such practices defined from a western point of view.

40 De Sardan (1999).

(a subtype of traditional domination) and legal-rational[41] In other words, the basic proposition is that formal state institutions are fused with informal, particularistic politics of rulers.[42] This theory seeks to explain how authority is personalised and shaped by the ruler's preferences, rather than any codified system of law.[43] In this case, the rulers selectively distribute favours and material benefits to followers.[44] Medard[45] identifies the characteristics of patrimonialism to include no distinction or confusion between personal and public property; personalisation of power at the summit and at all the levels of authority, and a direct exchange of political and economic resources or 'straddling'.

Neo-patrimonial theory is adopted for the study to explain the behaviour of politicians who have turned to businessmen. In most cases, public office holders award contracts to themselves in the name of their companies, thereby violating the extant laws on public procurement. The politicians, in turn, redistribute the resources stolen to their acolytes and party supporters to remain in power or re-elected. Corruption in the Nigerian perspective is characterised by 'straddling', a system where economic and political powers overlap, a confusion between the private and public realms, and patronage or clientelist redistribution of the 'national cake', what Joseph calls 'prebendalism'[46].

In the Nigerian context, the expectation of the society is that, after leaving office, public office holders must be wealthy. The primacy of office holders in Nigeria is to become rich, while services to the people become secondary. Specifically, the average office holder like the police, a civil servant in Nigeria, sees the office as an opportunity to have a share of the 'national cake'. Even, when an allegation of corruption is levelled against a public office holder, his kinsmen and the communities he represents still insist that replacement should come from the same communities. The reason is for the kinsmen, the communities, and the supporters of the public office holder to continue enjoying the dividends of corruption.

The neo-patrimonial theory is suitable for the corruptive ridden nature of the Nigerian society. The politicians are always willing to bribe their supporters with money in order to win political power, hence, they induce voters with monetary rewards for patronage. For the officials in either private or public sector, they collect kickbacks to render services to whoever they get in contact with, particularly when such person's need their services. Unfortunately, the anti-corruption agencies of the Buhari's administration have not been able to stem the tide of corruption ravaging the society, partly because of the value orientation of the leaders and followers, limited political will and sentiments of the anti-graft agencies amongst others. Therefore, a

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41 Max Weber proposed that neopatrimonialism was a patrimonial and legal-rational.
42 Brattan/van de Walle (1997) observes that the basic proposition is that formal state institutions are fused with informal, particularistic politics of rulers.
43 Neopatrimonial theory seeks to explain how authority is personalised and shaped by the ruler's preferences, rather than any codified system of law.
44 Medard, J.F. (1994). *Democratic Transitions in Comparative Perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
45 Medard (1998). Proves that the characteristics of patrimonialism are: no distinction or confusion between personal and public property; personalisation of power at the summit and at all the levels of authority, and a direct exchange of political and economic resources or 'straddling'.
46 The politics of Prebendalism was used to redistribute national revenue and to favour the political acolytes of the office holders.

pragmatic approach towards re-orienting the value of the society is needed to curb the menace of corruption. Otherwise, corruption in Nigeria may subsists.

Forms of Corruption

Corruption manifests in various forms. This takes the form of public officials demanding for money to deliver services to the donor, misuse of public funds by government officials and politicians, or any other actions taken by the donor or the receiver to influence the performance of an act. Corruption occurs both in the private and public sectors. However, the public sector is more prone to corruption than the private sector, simply because citizens get in contact with public officials for services. Broadly, corruption can be categorised into: political, judicial, and economic.

Political corruption occurs when the politicians and the decision-makers, who are saddled with the duties of formulating, implementing, and interpreting the laws in the name of the people 'are themselves corrupt'[47] Political corruption is any transaction between private and public sector actors through which collective goods are illegitimately converted into private-regarding payoffs.[48] The term 'political corruption' tends to refer to corruption occurring at the policy-making stage or, in Eastonian terms, the input side of the political system. Political corruption includes electoral malpractices such as rigging and falsification of election results, registration of under aged voters, votes buying and so on.

Other aspects of political corruption are the influence of 'godfathers' on the election of representatives, lopsidedness in appointment of political office holders, and the use of public office to siphon public funds.[49] Prominent among the warlords in the states are Senator Modu Ali Sheriff vs Governor Mala Kachalla of Borno; and Dr Olusola Saraki vs Governor Mohammed Lawal of Kwara State. In the case of Kwara State, Olusola Saraki, a former Senate leader fell out with Mohammed Lawal on the sharing of political booties. In Lagos State, political godfather, Bola Tinubu and the former Governor, Mr Babatunde Fashola had a cold war where the former did not want the latter to go for the second term.[50] Interestingly, the cold war between the former Governor of Lagos State, Mr Akinwunmi Ambode and his political godfather, Senator Bola Tinubu led to the the loss of second term for Akinwunmi Ambode.

The concern of International Observers on corruption has necessitated them to monitor the conduct of election in most African countries, particularly in Nigeria. The International Observers that witnessed the 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019 elections commented on the level of irregularities that were associated with Nigeria's elections.

Judicial corruption is now prevalent in Nigeria, particularly with the return to democratic governance of the Fourth Republic, in 1999. One of the cardinal pillars of the rule of law is an independent judiciary. Indeed, an independent, competent, fair,

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47 Aluko, Y.A. (2003). Corruption in Nigeria: Concept and dimensions. In Enweremadu and Okafor (Eds.), *IFRA Special Research,* 3 Nigeria *and the Politics of Unreason: A study in the Obasanjo regime*. London: Adonis and Abbey Publishers.

48 Heidenheimer A.J., Johnston, M. and Levine, V.T. (eds.) 1989. *Political corruption: A handbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publisher.

49 Majekodunmi, A. and Awosika, F.O. (2013). Godfatherism and Political Conflicts in Nigeria: The Fourth Republic in Perspective. *International Journal of Management and Social Sciences Research*, 2, 7, 11-25.

50 The cold war occurred between the political godfather and son.

impartial and accountable judiciary is indispensable for the fight against corruption.[51] Judicial organ of government is responsible for the interpretation of law and adjudication of disputes. Section 6 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (as amended) vests in the Courts and Tribunals established by law, the powers to adjudicate between the State and the accused of corruption, money laundering and other related crimes.[52]

According to Transparency International, judicial corruption includes any inappropriate influence on the impartiality of the judicial process by any actor within the court system. Thus, judicial corruption includes misappropriation of funds allocated to the judicial body, and taking bribes to influence trial and judgement. In a bid to curb corruption in the judicial organ of government, the late President Abacha set up a seven-man judicial panel for the reform of the judiciary under the chairmanship of Justice Kayode Eso, the then retired justice of the Supreme Court.[53] In the report submitted in 1994, 47 judicial officers were indicted. Also, the Babalakin panel that was set up in 2001 indicted 28 judges, while in 2011, the National Judicial Council recommended the removal of Justice Musa Ibrahim Anka of the Zamfara State High Court over allegations of taking bribes. Justice Anka was suspended by the Council in July 2010 following a petition written against him by Zamfara State Director of State Security Services alleging that he received bribe from one Zubairu Abdulmalik in order to deliver judgment in his favour. This situation has become worrisome for the Nigerian judiciary who supposedly are now 'hunter have become the hunted.'

Economic/Commercial corruption takes the form of inflation of contracts, bridging the due process of awarding contracts, tax reduction through bribes, and extortion. In bribery, societal interests use extra-legal payments or bribes to implement the content of state policy or its implementation. Extortion involves the use and abuse of state power by public officials to demand extra-legal payments or rents in return for providing a legitimate or illegitimate service.

Organised corruption are relatively large-scale complex criminal activities perpetrated by group of elites and control agents, loosely or largely organised, such as hoarding, racketeering, smuggling and 419 scams.[54]

Administrative/Professional corruption are casual but deliberate acts carried out by top administrative and professional officials such as falsified accounts, are embezzlement of government funds. Working class corruption is close to the administrative type of corruption but differs because of the actors and their status. This concerns artisans, account clerks and messengers in the office.[55].

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51 SERAP **(**2016). *Go Home and Sin No More: Corrupt Judges Escaping from Justice in Nigeria*. Lagos: SERAP.
52 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999).
53 SERAP **(**2016). *Health in Decline: Human Rights Impacts of Corruption in Nigeria's health Sector.* Lagos: SERAP.
54 Adeyeye, A.I. (2011). Corruption in Nigeria: An Assessment of Twelve Years of Democratic Governance (1999-2011). *Ilorin Journal of Sociology,* 3, 2, 190-209.
55 Aluko, J.O. (2006). *Corruption in the Local Government System in Nigeria*. Ibadan: BookBuilders Publishers.

The Civilian Administration and the Intricacies of Corruption under Muhammadu Buhari Administration

Prior to the civilian administration of President Buhari, corruption appeared intractable. This is because past governments (both military and civilian) attempted to curb the menace of corruption, but all to no avail. For example, the military regime of Buhari's administration was overthrown due to lack of accountability and transparency. The nine-year rule of General Babangida ushered in a new era of 'contractocracy' and 'settlementocracy' Babangida regime was known for its political corruption, particularly its transition programme without an end that ultimately led to the annulment of 12 June, 1993, presidential election.

The presidential election of 12 June, 1993, was considered to be one of the freest and fairest election in Nigeria. The records of his level of corruption after Babangida voluntarily handed over power to an Interim Government of Ernest Shonekan, was greatly alarming. The military junta of Abacha was the most corrupt government during the military.[56] The ongoing Fourth Republic that commenced in May 1999, is fraught with a catalogue of evidence of corrupt practices, involving ministers, governors, legislators, the police and oil marketers.[57].

At the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999, General Olusegun Obasanjo's policy reform focused on the major sectors of the economy like pension, energy, and power. The reform led to the privatisation of Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Banking reform that allowed for merger and acquisition, the setting up of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC), and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) by Obasanjo's administration.[58] The ICPC was set up on 29 September 2000 following the recommendation of President Obasanjo with the mandate to prohibit and prescribe punishment for corrupt practices and other related offences.[59] Section 6 (a-f) of the ICPC Act 2000 further sets out the duties of the Commission.

Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) was established in 2003 with the mandate of combating financial and economic crimes. The Commission was empowered to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and penalise economic and financial crimes. Thus, the two agencies are responsible for tracing and confiscating the proceeds of crime.[60] Through the ICPC and EFCC, the administration of Obasanjo 'hunted' to prosecute the perpetrators of crimes. However, between 1999 and 2007, the undue executive interference of the two commissions had retarded progress in the anti-corruption crusade.[61] A onetime Chairman of the ICPC, Justice Mustapha Akanbi alleged that it was disheartening that most of the corrupt offenders in Nigeria were being

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56 Ibid
57 Oluwashakin, A. (2012). The International community and corruption in Nigeria (1999-2012). 57th Annual Congress of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 28-31 October 2012.
58 President Obasanjo reform led to the privatisation of Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Banking reform that allowed for merger, acquisition, and the setting up of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC), and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).
59 The ICPC Act prohibits and prescribes punishment for corrupt practices and other related offences.
60 SERAP (2016). *Health in Decline: Human Rights Impacts of Corruption in Nigeria's Health Sector.* Lagos: SERAP.
61 Under Obasanjo administration, the undue executive interference of the two commissions retarded progress in the anti-corruption crusade between 1999 and 2007.

given bail conditions on the order of the executive arm of government through the Office of the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) and the Minister of Justice.[62]

Akanbi comments on the miserable score card of the commission in its anti-corruption crusade. According to Akanbi[63]:

> As at today (August 19, 2004) there are 76 individuals facing trial for corruption and related offences in designated courts. The number cuts across every stratum of life. Standing trial today are some former federal ministers, a former governor, a permanent secretary, a chief medical director of a university teaching hospital. In fact, only recently, the Chief Medical Director of a University Teaching Hospital was convicted. Not less than six principal officers of universities spread across the country are being investigated. Some former chairmen of local government councils, a deputy registrar of a high court, and indeed some judges, and lawyers are also on trial.

The above scenario shows the various categories of people involved in corruption, and their trials. However, some of these allegations ended in trial without prosecution in the court of law.

Anti-Corruption Crusade of President Muhammadu Buhari Administration

The United Nations Convention against corruption that came into force on 29 September 2003 was to: (1) promote and strengthen measures to prevent and combat corruption more efficiently and effectively; (2) promote, facilitate and support international cooperation and technical assistance in the prevention of and fight against corruption, including in asset recovery; and (3) promote integrity, accountability and proper management of public affairs and public property.[64] Rather than combating corruption in Nigeria, the rate of corruption in the country is alarming, particularly with the military government that ruled the country for long years. However, the democratic governance of the Fourth Republic was not far better. The People's Democratic Party that ruled the country between 1999 and 2015 failed the electorates due to the high level of insecurity, dwindling economy, and pervasive corruption that ravaged all facets of life.[65] President Muhammadu Buhari accused the two former rulers, namely, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Jonathan of being responsible for the decay in the oil industry and the increasing wave of corruption in the country. During his campaign, Muhammad Buhari promised the electorates to bring an end to terrorism, improve the economy, and fight corruption. The anti-corruption crusade of Buhari rests on a tripod implementation of Treasury Single Account (TSA), Biometric Verification Number (BVN) and 'Whistle Blowing' policy.

Treasury Single Account (TSA) is a public accounting system using account, or a set of linked accounts by the government to ensure all revenue receipts and payments are done through a Consolidated Revenue Account (CRA) at the Central Bank of

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62 There was an undue interference of the executive arm of government in favour of the corrupt officers.
63 Akanbi comments on the miserable score card of the commission in its anti-corruption crusade.
64 Report of the General Assembly resolution on war against corruption, New York, 31 October 2003.
65 There was a high level of insecurity, dwindling economy and pervasive corruption between 1999 and 2015.

Nigeria. TSA allows all government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) to remit their revenue collections to the CRA through their individual commercial banks on a fee-for-service remuneration basis.[66] BVN is a biometric identification system implemented by the CBN to curb or reduce illegal banking transactions in Nigeria. It is a modern security measure in line with the CBN Act 1958 to reduce fraud in the banking system. Whistle blowing is the term used when a person passes on information concerning wrongdoing, such as corruption, sexual harassment.[67]

The anti-corruption crusade of Buhari's administration, which rests on a tripod implementation of TSA, BVN, and Whistle Blowing's policy have received commendations, as seen in increased savings. Nevertheless, the politicisation of anti-corruption crusade of Buhari as well as 'sacred cows' in his government have created doubt in the fight against corruption.[68] This is quite evident in the records of various allegations levelled against political office holders. The acting head of EFCC, Ibrahim Magu was accused of corruption, insubordination, and abuse of office by the Attorney General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami. The EFCC boss was suspended and still placed on half pay for 16 months after suspension. The primacy of Magu's case was that the delay in the implementation of the Salami's panel report created doubt in the commitment of the Federal Government to transparency, accountability, and the anti-graft war.[69]

Similarly, the former Chairman of APC, Adams Oshiomole, encouraged the defectors from the opposition party to join the ruling party and have their 'sins' forgiven. According to him, all sins are forgiven once you teamed up with the ruling party.[70] This clearly shows that anti-corruption fight of President Buhari persecutes the opposition parties and preserve the members of his party. At the commencement of the second term of office of President Buhari, Nigeria was ranked 146 and by 2020, it was ranked 149 in the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index. In response to the country's performance, President Buhari described the rating 'as senseless and baseless'. Similarly, corruption is not far-fetched in the Nigerian judiciary during Buhari administration. Constitutionally, the judiciary is saddled with the responsibility of interpreting laws and adjudicating disputes. Although, National Judicial Council (NJC) has indeed sanctioned quite a number of judges found to have run afoul of the Code of Conduct. However, a worrying development noticeable in addressing judicial corruption in Nigeria is the fact that accountability has been limited only to the enforcement of compliance or non-compliance with the Code of Conduct for judicial Officers.[71] For example, a high court judge, Christopher Senlong was suspended for allegedly influencing the tribunal's judgment in favour of a party to an election petition before the tribunal. However, Selong's suspension was set aside by the court, but he was nevertheless retired from the service.

66 Premium Times March 7, 2016.
67 Whistleblowing is a disclosure of information relating to crime, sexual harassment, and other wrongdoing.
68   Buhari VS Atiku: The politics of the anti-corruption fight. Vanguard January 27, 2019.
69 The delay in the implementation of Salami's panel report on the erstwhile Chairman of EFCC sparked doubt on the federal government's commitment.
70 The Defectors from the Opposition Party are forgiven once they Teamed up with the Opposition.
71 The Code of Conduct for Judicial Officers was Published in 1998. See SERAP (2016) *Go Home and Sin No More: Corrupt Judges Escaping from Justice in Nigeria*. Lagos: SERAP.

The NJC has applied civil sanctions on erring judges but in some cases, has failed to hand over the corrupt judges to the law enforcement agencies for prosecution. Corrupt judges not only keep the illicit proceeds of their crimes, but they also get their pension and retirement benefits as if they have done no wrong while the victims of their corrupt acts are left without effective remedy.[72] In a survey conducted on corruption in 2019 by UNODC, the data showed the total number of bribes paid per type of official as a percentage of all bribes. It revealed that the police officers, public utility officers, tax/revenue officers, teachers/lecturers, doctors/nurses/midwives, federal road safety corps, vehicle inspection officers and other types of officers had 35.7 per cent, 19.3 per cent, 5.1 per cent, 5.6 per cent, 4.2 per cent, 6.8 per cent, 5.4 per cent, and 18.0 per cent, respectively.[73]

Police officers constitute the category of officer that received bribes more than any other officers in 2019. This is because people have daily contact with the police officers and are, therefore, prone to give bribes.[74] Transparency International (TI) has observed that the cancer of corruption is still prevalent since President Buhari assumed office in 2015. The 2021 report released by TI showed that Nigeria scored 24 out of 100 points and ranked 154 out of 180 countries. When compared to the 2020 report, Nigeria dropped five places from its 149th ranking, making her to become the second most corrupt country in West Africa. Amidst the poor performance of the country in the Corruption Perception Index, the TI identified seven weaknesses of Nigeria's anti-graft campaign. This included security corruption failure, failure to investigate high profile corrupt cases, illicit financial flows, absence of asset recovery, lack of effective protection of whistle-blowers, lack of key anti-corruption legal framework, and judicial challenges. More importantly, the partisan politics introduced by Buhari in his fight against corruption has dampened the war against corruption. Corroborating the prevalence of endemic corruption during Buhari administration, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a two-time Minister of Finance, laid out in granular detail how each of the three types of corruption (grand corruption, political corruption, and administrative corruption) persisted.

Consequently, both the executive and the judiciary have shifted blames on each other in the fight against corruption. The executive blames the judiciary for the delay in dealing with high-profile corruption cases while the judiciary blames the executive, particularly, the anti-graft agencies, for the poor investigative and prosecutorial abilities, which frequently lead to high-profile cases collapsing in court.[75] On some occasions, the president delayed assent to bills passed by the legislature. In July 2018, the National Assembly passed the Federal Audit Service Bill (FASB) for presidential assent. The FASB empowers the Auditor General of the Federation to penalise government agencies and officials who refuse to submit their financial statement for audit. The bill was unnecessary delayed by the president and extended beyond the 30-day window required for Presidential assent. This action of the President, apart from being unconstitutional, did not augur well for the fight against corruption of Buhari administration.

72 Olaniyan, K. (2014). *Corruption and Human Rights Law in Africa*. Oxford: Hart.
73 UNODC (2019). Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and trends. Second survey on corruption as experienced by the population.
74 Police officers constitute the category of officer that received bribes more than any other officers in 2019.
75 Business Day February 28, 2022.

The Auditor General of the Federation indicted the National Assembly for failing to account for N9.4 billion. Between 2013 and 2015, the Nigerian Police could not account for at least 44 assorted arms. Similarly, auditor-general's report of 2016 revealed how health officials at the Federal Medical Centre, Gusau in Zamfara State diverted N300 million meant for 'health equipment'. All these indictments ended without further investigation and prosecution by the anti-graft agencies.

The various records clearly show that President Buhari is partly responsible for the failure of the anti-corruption crusade he has created. Specifically, the 'witch-hunting' of the opposition parties and opponents, as well as double standard played by Buhari's administration have served as setbacks to the fight against corruption.

Impact of Anti-Corruption Crusade on Security, Economy, and Corruption under President Buhari Administration

The tripod vision of President Buhari's administration is security, economy and corruption. The president claimed that the three priorities of his administration have received significant attention with measurable results. The president observes that Nigeria's ranking has improved on the World Counter-Terrorism global Index from 4th to 6th position on the list of the most terrorised nations. Similarly, the President claimed that across the North-Central and North-West of the country, progress has been made with regard to stemming the tide of communal violence, farmer-herdsmen clashes, cattle rustling and kidnapping.[76] However, the present situations in the country counter the president's claims on the performance of his tripod vision. The overlapping functions of the twin institutions (the EFCC and the ICPC) undermine their efficiency and effectiveness.[77]

Barely 6 years to the administration of President Buhari, there is a mixed reaction in different quarters that his anti-corruption crusade is a 'fallacy', that is full of hypocrisy.[78] For example, his administration failed to appoint people of unquestionable character into important positions, his sentiment in conducting investigation on his acolytes, and inability to make concrete reforms in the Petroleum industry. The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) examined that Buhari's anti-corruption record has created rising insecurity, democratic backsliding, which have hindered anti-kleptocracy efforts and created new corruption opportunities for unscrupulous officials and their enablers.

In some quarters, it has been argued that despite various promises and commitments by the administration on anti-graft activities, corruption remains a menace crippling Nigeria socio-economic development including the fast falling educational standard, dilapidating healthcare, bad roads, rising unemployment that precariously breeds social vices like crimes, vandalism, banditry, armed robbery, kidnapping, and youth agitation, poorly motivated security personnel, youth under-development, bad governance, and the eroded public services.

The president who doubled as Petroleum Minister is still found wanting in the ministry he headed since 2015. It would be recalled that the president rhetorically posed

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76 Vanguard June 17, 2022.
77 Hassan, Idayat (2021). The EFCC and ICPC in Nigeria: Overlapping mandates and duplication of effort in the fight against corruption. Working Paper November 2021.
78 This Day December 31, 2021.

a question during his campaign: 'Who is subsidising who?' He categorically alleged the PDP administration was using fuel subsidy to fund corruption. Unfortunately, the same Buhari administration got the approval of the National Assembly of N4 trillion to fund subsidy.[79] Aside from this, the president complained that the then Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Mr Babachir Lawal was not given fair hearing after he had been invited by the National Assembly to defend himself of fraud allegation, and brought doubt into the president's anti-corruption war. Mr Babachir was alleged to have given contracts worth N200 million to the companies he owned thereby violating the procurement code and procedure.[80]

Following the allegations levelled against Babachir, series of corruption has occurred. For example, the former Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Mr Nsima Ekere, was taken to the custody of EFCC in connection with mishandling of N47 billion contracts awarded between 2017 and 2019.[81] Thereafter, the then Accountant Generation of the Federation (AGF), Ahmed Idris, was arrested by EFCC on allegation of N80 billion fraud. This act of corruption by the officer that was saddled with the responsibility of overseeing public expenditure showed that the administration of President Buhari was dented with corruption[82].

Several corrupt infractions reported by SERAP has been corroborated by the Auditor-General of the Federation in the 2019 Audit report. According to the audit report, federal MDAs failed to account for N323.5 billion in 2019. In several financial transactions, the report stated that the spending by public officers violated Paragraph 415 of the Financial Regulations Act, which states that 'The federal government requires all officers responsible for expenditure to exercise due diligence. In his submission, Agbu[83] highlights four serious implications of corruption as follows:

(1) It affects adversely the quality of governance and social structure in Nigeria;
(2) It has eroded government's ability to provide the needed social amenities like water, sanitation, healthcare, education;
(3) It retards economic development and precipitates deterioration of public infrastructure and amenities; and
(4) It untamed bad governance in Nigeria despite the various legislations enacted to check this despicable phenomenon.

The corrupt practices in the security architecture have greatly increased insecurity. The embezzlement of monies allocated for the military sector to combat insurgency, terrorism and banditry has been on since the last regime and has continued unabated. Evidences of cases of ex-military chiefs charged of diverting these monies abound.[84] For example, former security adviser, Dasuki Sambo has been facing charges bordering on embezzlement of 1.4bn pounds. Under the Buhari administration, the country's National Security Adviser to the President confirms that fund amounting

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79 Daily Trust May 19, 2022.
80 Daily Trust May 19, 2022.
81 The former Managing Director of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Mr. Nsima Ekere was arrested for allegedly diverting N47billion through registered contractors of the agency.
82   Daily Trust May 19, 2022.
83   Agbu (2003).
84 The Guardian December 14, 2015.

to several billions of naira allocated for procurement of ammunition and arms were unaccounted for under the leadership of the former service chiefs headed by Gabriel Olonishakin.[85] Billions allocated for the purchase of arms under Buhari were stolen. The implication of this is the inadequate arms and ammunitions to combat insecurity.

Also, the anti-corruption crusade has affected the health sector of the economy. The right to health is indeed an internationally recognised human right, which is reflected in several human rights treaties. For example, Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) to which Nigeria is a signatory, guarantees to everyone the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and impose obligations on states 'to achieve the full realisation of this right' including by ensuring the reduction of the stillbirth rate and of infant mortality, the healthy development of the child, and the improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene.[86]

The enjoyment of other fundamental human rights such as the right to life, right to own property, right to education, freedoms of association, religion, and movement rests on the right to health. In spite of this, successive governments have violated the right to good health of Nigerians due to the corruptive nature of the society. Thus, corruption has impacted on the right to health, both in the past and in the present. The reason is not unconnected to the poor facilities of the public hospitals and poor service delivery in the health sector. The administration of President Buhari is not an exception. Corruption impedes citizens' access to basic care and deprives the health sector of much needed resources to establish an environment to carry out a government's obligations regarding the right to health. Similarly, corruption in the health sector has increased the spate of inequality in an environment where inequality abounds. In this case, the poor who cannot afford the high cost of health care services become vulnerable. For example, pregnant women that are poor are forced to seek the services of unqualified health care providers for medical attention. Indeed, the available records show that the anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari failed to fight corruption.

Conclusion

The article has evaluated the anti-corruption crusade of Buhari's administration with a view to assessing whether the administration showed probity, transparency, and accountability in its anti-corruption drives. Furthermore, it investigated the impact of the anti-corruption crusade on security, economy, and corruption. An overview of the Nigerian society revealed that corruption is the 'cancer' that has eaten deep into the fabrics of human society right from the military regime to the civilian administration, and it has affected the economy, security, and aggravated corruption.

More importantly, President Buhari's administration witnessed allegations of several corrupt infractions, the politicisation of anti-corruption war, the poor performance as ranked by the Transparency International, and illicit financial flows. This is an indication that, on assuming the leadership position, the pursuit of his tripod

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85   Premium Times March 12, 2021.
86   Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (2006).

vision of security, economy, and corruption is neglected by the Buhari administration. The twin institutions (EFCC and ICPC) that were set up to fight corruption introduced sentiments to achieve their mandates. It is obvious that, despite the anti-corruption crusade, there are still rising insecurity, democratic backsliding which have hindered anti-kleptocracy efforts and created new corruption opportunities for unscrupulous officials and their enablers. Thus, President Buhari's administration is caught in the web of the same rhetoric question he posed against the People's Democratic Party during his campaign: 'Who is subsidising who?' Barely, a year to the expiration of his tenure, he has got approval of the National Assembly of N4 trillion to fund fuel subsidy. The approaches adopted by the government to fight corruption are politically motivated and maneuver to quiet the groaning public.

Recommendations

Based on the above, the article recommends that the anti-corruption crusade must be premised on the ability of the government to improve the standard of living of people above the poverty line. The improved well-being of the people will in no small way provide relief to the people whenever they are in need.

The anti-graft agency should be granted autonomy in order to discharge their constitutional assigned roles without fear or favour. The autonomy of the agency would free it from the excessive control of the executive, particularly in the appointment of the Chairman of the anti-graft agency. Furthermore, the EFCC and ICPC's budget should be increased in order for the institutions to recruit more personnel.

Aside from this, the institutions of the government need to be strengthened to keep abreast of the technological development. The use of technology would reduce physical contact with government officials who either receive or give bribes. In addition, the government must make internet facilities accessible to the people for ease of information. For example, access to social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, create opportunities to spread information relating to corruption.

The Nigerian civil society must publish its findings, and reports on corruption for public awareness. Such awareness tends to arouse the interests of the public on the threat posed by corruption. To avoid undue delay, the government should create specialised anti-corruption courts to hasten the trial of cases. Members of the judiciary serving in the specialised court should be properly motivated to prevent judiciary corruption.

A value re-orientation of Nigerian society is necessary. Both the leaders and the followers must undergo value re-orientation to change the perception of leaders and followers about public office holders.

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NARRATIVISATION OF SPACE IN *NERVOUS CONDITION* BY TSITSI DANGAREMBGA

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Abstract

The objective of this article was the narrativisation of space in Tsitsi Dangarembga's Nervous Condition. It consisted in the inscription of space in the story since the space has significant place in the narration. The concept of space for narratology is the physically existing environment in which characters live and move called commonly setting. This is defined in other words, as the general socio-historico-geographical environment in which all the actions take place and plays a major role in the meaning of the novel and affects characters' behaviour. As a matter of fact, Western values and traditional ones, represented in these respective spaces of colonialism and tradition, have impacted the African so that they become hybridised or alienated and colonialists racist.

Keywords: Space, Time, Colonialism, Racism, Hybridity, Alienation, Tradition.

Introduction

The story in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* is perceived as a journey through a narrative space. Marie-Laure Ryan and his fellows state that the narrative space is the setting in which the action takes place; a world serving as container for the characters and events; and a *narrative universe*. In addition, Katrin Dennerlein argues that it plays an important role in narrative as it is the environment in which characters move and live and in which the action takes place. It is the material condition and also the cultural frame for the narrated story (Dennerlein, 2009, p.2). Therefore, space is the generator of the meaning in the story. Gennette Gerard's perspective in his *Narrative Discourse,* space is not only passive, and signified but it is also signifying and representative (Lambert, 1998, p. 111).

Spaces Narrative in the Novel

In *Nervous Condition,* the environment in which characters move and live, and action takes place, revolves around four important spaces subdivided into subspaces. The main spaces of the narration are: England, the mission, the homestead of Tambudzai's parents (the village of the protagonist) and the Sacred Heart. The subspaces are respectively the house of Babamukuru, the school of sisters and their Convent. In fact, subspace is delineated as follow: 'they are hierarchically organised by relations of containment (a room is a subspace of a house) and their boundaries may be either clear cut (the bedroom is separated from the salon by hail way) or fuzzy (e.g., a landscape may slowly change as a character moves through it)'. These spaces are important signs and symbols in the meaning making of Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The discourse of this article was inserted in the narratological approach which consisted in the analysis of space narrative in Tsitsi Dangarembga's **Nervous Conditions**. The presentation of the narration can be perceived as a journey through a space narrative. It is the inscription of space in the story since the space has an important place in the narration. The concept of space for narratology is not limited to the representation of a world serving as a container for existents and as a location for events. The physical existing environment in which characters live and move called in other terms setting, help us to understand the characters behaviour shaped by these spaces. Therefore, the treatment of spaces is considered as a generator of the narrative form or producer of meaning.

In terms of time and space narrative, the following narrative technique has been used: 'As a rule, the more narrative time the narrator devotes to an element, the more important it is and the more it demands our attention' (https://pressbooks.palni.org/biblicalnarrative/chapter/3-narrative-time-and-space/#:~). It is more significant and signifying. In the case of the homestead, we have more details, while for England, we do not have many; the narrator slows down the unfolding of events and speeds up in the other.

Summary of the Novel

Dangarembga conveys two major themes in this literary work, the gender with the segregation of the female characters, on one hand, and the colonialism with its aftermath, such as alienation and racism, on the other. Tambudzai, the protagonist in the story, narrates the condition of her education; her parents often privileged and prioritised her brother to her. After his death, Tambu benefits from the support of Babamukuru for her studies in replacement of the latter, thus, she leaves homestead to the missionary. Later, she gains a scholarship to study in the white's convent school, where she is accommodated in a crowded room with other African girls. The story tells us only about Babamukuru's departure to England and his return home with his family, no other details about his sojourn there. These Beentos are alienated by the space of England.

Findings and Discussions

In *Nervous Conditions,* the narration is elaborated in partial spaces, which run progressively. The narrator begins the story with the homestead as a narrative space, where all important members of Babamukuru are living and he extends it to the mission, where he is working with white missionaries. England is remembered as a place where Babamukuru goes to further his education with all his family and ends with Sacred Heart; Convent of Catholic Sisters where Tambuzai, the main character goes to pursue her education. Some of the spaces, like the homestead are repetitive in the novel. The first-person narrator Tambuzai moves from the homestead to the mission and vice-versa, and to the mission to Sacred Heart Convent of Catholic Sisters. Babamukuru and his family move from the mission to the homestead for special occasions.

As a matter of fact, the repetition of spaces helps the reader to have particular insight about those places, the main themes of the story and also their implication in

the lives of characters of the novel. England as a narrative space does not have many details. There is an acceleration of the speed narrative; the narrator Tambu is absent in England, there are no details about Bakamukuru's family action from that space, the reader is simply aware of his departure to England for studies, his return, and the impact that England had on his family. Unlike clock time, narrative time refers to the time it takes to tell a story. The narrative can slow down the unfolding of events by describing things in great details or reporting events.

The absence of details of England in the novel is signifying and significant. The narrator is absent in England, it is evil; therefore, no interest is attached for giving details. The space of England is related to the past. It is a past which has affected the present. The absence of the details reveals the attitude of the writer. A psycho critical point of view infers that the novel is a semi-biographical one. It shows the disappointment of the writer about England and her attitudes toward it. It has been said that she spent part of her childhood in England. She began her education in England, but later attended Hartzell High School, a missionary school in the Rhodesian town of Umtali (now Mutare). She later studied medicine at Cambridge University, where she experienced racism and isolation. Dangarembga left Cambridge and returned to Zimbabwe a few months before the country officially declared its independence. In fact, this the main reason why the narrator has put more stress on homestead (https:// en.wikipedia.org>wiki> Nervous). The coming back of Babamukuru from England to homestead symbolises Dangarembga's return to Zimbabwe by escaping the discrimination and racism she underwent at University in England.

Alienation is one of the negative impacts that England as space has on Nyasha, Babamukuru's daughter with her Englishness; to the point that she has even forgotten her mother language Shona. This is evident when Tambu invites Nyasha to dance-dance is part of African culture every tribe has its own way of revealing its tradition, but she declines. However, her mother defends her for not participating in the dance under the pretext that she does not understand Shona very well because she spent many years in England where she only spoke English as means of communication. We can read this in the following:

> When we were dancing, I invited Nyasha, who took a long time to understand. They don't understand Shona very well any more', her mother explained: 'They have been speaking nothing but English so long that most of their Shona has gone (p.42).

Nyasha's refusal to dance and to speak the mother language symbolises the rejection of African culture. This fact is troublesome in the view of Tambudzai; as we can read in the following quotation:

> What Maiguru said was bewildering and offending. I had not expected my cousins to have changed, certainly not so radically, simply because they have been away for a while, besides, Shona was our language (p.42).

To abandon the mother tongue is what Chinua Achebe called 'a dreadful betrayal' in his essays: 'Morning Yet on Creation Day':

It is right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it (Achebe, 2012, p. 7).

Being away cannot be an excuse for Maiguru to say that the children have forgotten Shona. It is really an offence because they have mastered a foreign language and rejected their own language which enhances their identity or language which reflects their identity. Moreover, the ability to use a particular language enables one to feel a sense of belonging to a group.

Space has played an important role in Nyasha's Westernised behaviour, especially in her rebellion towards her father. It is stated that 'having spent five years in England, Nyasha is alarmingly Westernised. Most importantly, she lacks any sense of shame and behaves with a scandalous immodesty' (Parekh and Jagne, 1998: 120). Nyasha's attitude pushes 'Babamukuru, gathering himself within himself so that his whole weight was behind the blow, he dealt with Nyasha's face. Never! He hissed. Never, he repeated, striking her cheek with the back of his hand, speak to me like that. (…) Today I'm going to teach you a lesson he told her. How can you go about disgracing me? Me! Like that! No, you cannot do it', I am respected at this mission. I cannot have a daughter who behaves like a whore (p.114).

The challenge that Babamukuru faces is what the space of England has made of Nyasha. She is a rebel who does not heed his advice; but sometimes, she retorts impolitely. The paradox is that Babamukuru is perceived as a good African. From the book, we read: '*the authorities thought Babamukuru was a good African. It was generally believed good African bred good African children who also thought about nothing except serving their communities. So, Nyasha really didn't have to worry*' (p.107).

This is not the case with Nyasha who is ill-bred with the influence of the space of England. Even her friends have qualified her as snobbish. Consequently, Nyasha did not have many friends, the girls did not like the way she spoke. They were still imitating her behind her back when they went back to the mission… 'but Nyasha herself thinks she is white' (94). The way she dresses and acts leads her friend to conclude that she was proud and loose.

Furthermore, she smokes cigarettes, the manners she adopted in England which is not African for a woman but an indication of prestige and pride. In fact, the way she speaks and dresses, shows her disintegration in her community. That is why she does not have many friends. Many girls do not like her. Through her intonation of English, she wants to show the difference; to mock her, her friends say, 'she thinks she is white', meaning that her behavior does not conform to the standard of an African. In fact, one must also realise that Nyasha's action turns around the mission, the white men's space, contrary to Tambu who is seen active in the two opposed spaces; the one of Homestead and the ones of the missionaries and the sacred heart. The two opposed spaces represent, the tradition and the colonialism, respectively. Tambu incarnates the values of the two spaces, which gives equilibrium in her behaviour and

she learns to respect people. This can be seen in her attitude. While serving water to an old person, she had to kneel. From the book, we read that she had a special task: I had to carry the water-dish in which people would wash their hands' (p. 40).

Nyasha is a mimic character as her behaviour falls into the postcolonial theory of Homi Bhabha's mimicry. The way she behaves is simply an imitation of the whites that she considers as civilised: 'Under colonialism and in the context of immigration, mimicry is seen as an opportunistic pattern of behaviour: One copies the person in power; because one hopes to have access to that same power. Presumably, while copying the master, one has to intentionally suppress one's own cultural identity' (http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2009/05/-).

England as a space has made Babamukuru a God in his village because someone who goes abroad gets much esteem from his fellow Africans. Thanks to England, Babamukuru has raised his status and become a benefactor of his kinsmen. It is from this perspective that he takes Nhamo, Jeremiah's son, with him to the mission for his education at school. After the death of Nhamo, it was Tambudzai's turn to be taken by Babamukuru to get the opportunity of fulfilling her dream of furthering her education. One may remember that education was mostly concentrated on the boy child actually. Many people appreciated him because of his ability to help the family financially, his position in the family and his desire to see other members of the family educated.

> *Babamukuru was concerned about the way in which his family was developing and pointing out that as an individual, he had done what he could for the family's status by obtaining a master degree; that he hoped his children would do as much again, if not more; that he was pleased that he was in the position of providing a fine start in that direction. (...) Now that he has returned, it was time for the member of the family to put their heads together to think of means of ensuring the prosperity of each branch of the family* (p.44).

The homestead, a traditional space used for habitation and farming, is another important narrative space in the novel because many episodes of the story happen there. And Babamukuru likes this place because it reminds him of his childhood and African tradition. From the novel, it can be noticed he became emotional when he saw the place; thus, he calls the girls and points out some memories:

> *Do you see that river, girls? That's where I used to water the cattle as a herdboy on Mandigumbura'farm. Mandigumbura! His real name was Montgomery, but we called him Mandigumbura. And he really used to do that. Ha! The man was cruel, but it was good training. He was a good farmer. By the time I went to the mission, I already knew how to work hard. I was a responsible boy from the training I got from Mandigumbura! Ha-a-a Babamukuru chuckled remembering his childhood, and begun to hum a song, a hymn, one of his old favourites* (p.122).

The homestead is a very good place in the life of Babamukuru; it made him responsible as expressed in the above quotation. He experiences bliss to manifest the bliss in his heart at seeing this traditional milieu where he feels free from his dispute with Nyasha whom he feels incapable of handling though she is his daughter. The narrator

suggests that 'Babamukuru was happy free of tension and in the best of spirits he looked younger and more lovable than he ever did at the mission' (pp.122-3).

The homestead is a very significant narrative space and it is seemingly valuable to Babamukuru than the mission. That is why he leaves the mission where he is headmaster to spend his Christmas holidays with his family at the homestead. The following excerpt says more: 'As we drove home to the homestead, I repeated the comparison I had made on that first day that I went to the mission but this time in reverse' (p. 123). Not only does Babamukuru go there but so do other members of his family. The homestead embodies tradition and reflects tradition. Generally, it is a place where somebody was born and raised or a place where somebody feels that he belongs. Further, it is also a place where a family or a group lives together and feels united.

This is seen when Babamukuru comes back from England, and he is received in his village by all the members of the family who gather to welcome him with dances. This is an expression of solidarity at his home place, an occurrence reflected in the excerpt below:

> *Babamukuru came home in a calvados motor vehicle, sighted four miles away on the main road by three jubilant pairs of eyes. Netsai and I and little Shupikai, whose mother was one of the relatives gathered to celebrate the occasion of Babamukuru's return.(…). Ba-ba-mu-ku-ru! Ba-ba-mu-ku-ru! we chanted, running and waving our skinny arms…My aunt Gladys, the one who is my father's womb-sister, older than him but younger than Babamukuru, came first, her husband behind the wheel of a gallant if rickety old Austin… we waved and shouted and danced* (p. 35).

In fact, the ambiance of enthusiasm of Babamukuru is reinforced by the English saying that 'there is no place like home'. This is also emphasised by the narrator's recurrent use of the word home. The narrator states that 'Babamukuru came home'. In fact, in Daniel Kunene's theory, Journey as Metaphor in African Literature: 'Home is as sanctuary. Its offer of physical and spiritual sustenance is the gravitational pull that ensures that whatever leaves it, will ultimately lose its outward momentum and return. Harmony and happiness prevail. It is a paradise' (Kunene,1996: 190).

> *My father jumped out of Babamukuru's car and, brandishing a staff like a victory spear, bounded over the bumpy road, leaping into the air and landing on one knee, to get up and leap again and pose like a warrior inflicting a death wound. 'Hezvo! He cried 'Do you see him? Our returning prince. Do you see him? Observe him well. He has returned. Our father and benefactor, he has returned appeased…* (p. 36).

The return of Babamukuru to his village, a sanctuary symbolises the return to his tradition. We can see the way he is welcomed by his kinsmen, the use of the spear, which is a tool of a warrior expresses their victory by receiving their brother who went abroad. This the traditional way of expressing the joy at the homestead.

The singularity of this space (the homestead) is emphasised by the narrator's setting with specific characteristics, as we can read in the text describing the road leading to the homestead from the bus station:

The walk home from the bus terminus was not a long walk… the road wound down the fields where there were always some people to pass ten minutes of the day- enquiring about their health and the health of their family, admiring the broad leafed abundance of the maize crop when it was good predicting how many bags the field will yield or wondering whether the plant had tasseled too early or too earlier or too late (p. 2).

In this description, the narrator shows a route to the village which has specific landmarks: the abundance of maize crop. Generally, we can say that they are arranged in a linear perspective. We learn from the text that 'the stretch of road between the fields and the terminus was exposed to the sun and was, from September to April except when it rained, harsh and scorching so that the glare from the sand scratched at one's eyes. There was always a shade by the field where clumps of trees were deliberately left standing when meals were being eaten or rested between cultivating strips of the land (p. 4). Through the description of this landscape, we see a romantic view of the writer. People admire the beauty of the field which looks green with the broad leafed of the abundance of the maize.

The natural life of this place symbolises harmony. The narrator lets us know that people could not pass without greeting each other and enquire about the health of their respective family. The praise of this space is also evident in the following excerpt:

From the fields the road grew shadier with shrubs and trees, acacia, lantana, msasa and Mopani, clustered about on either side. If you have time, you could run off the road into more wooded areas to look for matamba and matunduru. Sweet and soar. Delicious' (p. 3).

The peculiarity of the homestead is the matamba and the matunduru with their distinctive sweet and sour taste and also different types of trees ranged along the road: acacia, lantana, masa and mopani. The fruits mentioned above are qualified as delicious. When we look at the structure of the adjective 'Delicious', it is a fragment in the above quotation. However, it is presented as an autonomous phrase; the word is bound by the two colons as if it were a complete sentence. In fact, this shows the completeness of his thought for the appreciation of this place. He just gives us the beauty of the landscape; this place attracts even the children who organise their games there. 'From this woody section the road rolled down into a shallow ravine, a river valley thoughtfully appointed along its floor with smooth, flat-topped boulders which made exciting equipment for all sorts of games' (p. 3).

The narrative constructs a figure of space around the forest to show that it is the only remaining natural place that has not been totally affected by the colonisation and it effects:

The river, the trees, the fruit and the fields. This is how it was in the beginning. This is how I remember it in my earliest memories, but it did not stay like that. While I was still quite young, to enable administration of our area, the government builds its District Council Houseless than a mile away from the place where we washed. Thus, it became necessary for all the inhabitants of the dozen or so homesteads that made up our village to cross Nyamarira, as our river is called, whenever we went to our business to the council houses (p. 3).

In fact, the statement, 'the river, the trees, the fruits and the fields, this is how it was in the beginning' insinuates the transformations undergone by this natural environment. They have to use an unusual way to reach the council buildings. For him, the ideal place is where we find the river, the trees, the fruits and the fields. The fragment structure signifies something significant; it highlights how perfect the spaces with natural elements are. The so-called urbanisation has destroyed the African natural environment. The narrator asserts that: 'This is how I remember it in my earliest memories, but it did not stay like that. While I was still quite young, to enable the government of our area, the government built its district council houses less than a mile away from the places where we washed' (p.3). From this assessment, we are aware of the menace of the destruction of this space which is the incarnation of traditions by the phenomenon of urbanisation. The space is no longer the way it used to be; it reminds the narrator that it is around the space they washed.

The homestead is a very significant space. It shows that it is the remaining place which is not completely contaminated by the colonial system. From the text, we read:

> Another thing that was different from the mission was that there were many white people there. The whites on the mission were a kind of white people, especially in the way that my grandmother had explained to me, for they were holy. They had come not to take but to give. They were about God's business here in darkest Africa (p.103).

The subspace of the missionary conveys another meaning; it is an exclusive place of whiteness. The construction of the houses expresses the discrimination of the latter towards the African and exception is made for Babamukuru. The colour of the houses is very meaningful as we can read in the following excerpt:

> White houses sprang up all over the mission. All those white houses must have been very uninspiring for people whose function was to inspire. Besides, natives were said to respond to colour, so after a while the missionaries began to believe that houses would not overheat, even when they were not painted white, as long as pastel shades were used (p. 63).

Moreover, the narrator also adds:

> At the time I arrived at the mission, missionaries were living in white houses and in the pale painted houses, but not in the red brick ones. My uncle was the only African living in a white house. We were all very proud of this fact. No, that it is not quite right. We were proud, except Nyasha who had an egalitarian nature and had taken seriously the lessons about oppression and discrimination that she had learned first-hand in England (p. 63).

The missionary's space denotes racial segregation, only the white persons deserve to live in decent houses. For the egalitarian, all people are equally important and should have the same rights and opportunities in life. In other words, since people are equal, they should enjoy equal social, political, and economical rights and opportunities.

Sacred Heart is another space similar to the mission because of the discrimination of whites against the blacks reigning there. Every race has its own space of accommodation. This is the context in which Tambu is received with Babamukuru and others who accompanied her. The sister directly informs and shows them the

accommodation in these words: 'All the first formers live on this corridor; she explained as she led the way. And the Africans live in here, she announced' (p.194). This difference in the accommodation pushes Tambu to wonder. From the novel, we read: 'the white students needed a careful study if they were different or similar to me, whether they were likeable or not and what their habits were' (p.195). It is really paradoxical because this space of Sacred Heart sounds like a holy place where there would be love and justice. This is shown by the first contact, when the nun who received Babamukuru and his team expresses joy in welcoming them. From the book we read: 'At the door a nun, smiling beautifully, made us welcome by shaking our hands and asking us 'which one is this? 'Before taking us up steps and down corridors' (p.194).

Shaking hands is a sign of cordiality, that is, friendliness and affection. However, their vocation and their actions are contradictory. This pushes the narrator to say that:

> There were nuns to be observed and classified according to whether they were humans or not, lay-teachers whose idiosyncrasies had to be identified so that you did not fall prey to them. The white students needed careful study to decide whether they were different or similar to me, whether they were likeable or not and what their habits were (p.195).

The space of England in *Nervous Condition* is very significant and signifying. It incarnates domination and dictatorship; violence is one of its aspects. Frantz Fanon asserts that:

> But it so happens that for the colonised people, this violence, because it constitutes their only work, invests their characters with positive and creative qualities. The practice of violence binds them together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upward in reaction to the settler's violence in the beginning. The groups recognise each other and the future nation is already indivisible (Fanon, 1963, p.94).

The quotation above depicts how the mind of the colonised is affected. He is contaminated by the coloniser's violence which becomes a part of him, since it is the only tool that the coloniser used to subjugate the latter to get his land. Consequently, as Ngugi Wa Thiong'O in the *Name of the Mother* has put it, 'National liberation then becomes the process of meeting one kind of violence, anti-violence with another, a pro-people violence. In addition, he concludes that violence is elevated to the level where it is seen as the midwife of the nation bringing the various groups together" (Ngugi,2014, p. 91).

The fact of being in England, Nyasha and Babamukuru have interiorised these qualities of the colonisers, which had completely affected their identity. Babamukuru becomes 'a god' in his family; *ipso facto,* he wants to impose his will. He pushes all his members of the family to improve life through study according to his own plan, which is, of course, a positive aspect, but he imposes his will instead of sharing his thought. Furthermore, for the improvement of their lives, Babamukuru asks Tambu's parent to make a religious marriage. This arrangement surprises and irritates even Tambu. She says:

> I did not think my uncle's plans for my parents were something to laugh about. To me, the question of that wedding was a serious one, so serious

that even my body reacted in a very alarming way. Whenever I thought about it, whenever images of my mother immaculate in virginal white satin or (horror of horrors) myself as the sweet, simpering maid fluttered through my mind, I suffered a horrible crawling over my skin, my chest contracted a breathless tension and even my bowels threatened to let me know their opinion (p. 49).

Babamukuru's plans have put Tambu in a nervous condition. She enters a dilemma, as she fears contradicting what he says considering he is a sponsor of her studies means hurting him. We read:

This also began to happen whenever I thought of Babamukuru and put me in a difficult situation. Naturally, I was angry with him for having devised this plot, which made such a joke of my parents, my home and myself. And just as angry with him since surely it was sinful to be angry with Babamukuru. Babamukuru who was my benefactor, my father for all practical purposes and who was also good deserving of all love and respect and obedience (p.149).

One may realise that Tambu is in an ambivalent situation. She cannot accept Babamukuru's proposal of her parents' religious marriage, on the other hand, she cannot be against him as he is her benefactor. This is, in fact, the characteristic of some of the Africans' attitude towards the coloniser; they consider the coloniser as the benefactor thus, struggling to be divergent or open to them. This view is not totally different from Ngugi's *Weep Not, Child*, where the African finds himself indecisive in revolting against the whites by going on strike since they realised that they were benefactors by giving them jobs through which they fed their children. This is the case of Ngotho; it is said, 'He could not quite make up his mind about the strike. He doubted if the strike would be a success. If it failed, he would lose his job and that would keep him away of from his land' (Ngugi,1964, p.52). This is exactly what we see with Tambudzai who is unable to object openly to Babamukuru when he tells her to be ready; he wants to take her for the preparation of the wedding that she does not like. Hence, Babamukuru tells her:

Er, Tambudzai, Babamukuru said to me at supper on the Thursday before the wedding, I shall take you home tomorrow, in the afternoon, with Lucia, so that you can help with the preparation over there. Do not take me at all. I don't want to be in your stupid wedding, I wanted to shout. Instead, I said quietly and politely. Very well Babamukuru. That will make things much easier for everybody. There was definitely something wrong with me, otherwise I would have something to say for myself. I knew I had not taken a stand on my issues since coming to the mission, but all along I had been thinking that it was because there had been no reason to, that when the time came, I would be able to do it. Coming to the mission, continuing education and doing well at it, these were the things that mattered (p.164).

In fact, Tambu is unable to unveil clearly what she thinks and her position about the marriage for her parents for fear of losing her primary objective, which is education taken charge of by Babamukuru. This is really quite strange for the Africans fearing to lose what they have already lost. Tambu has lost her freedom since her life is backed by Babamukuru whom she cannot give a contrary opinion on his will.

Nyasha's nervous condition pushes her to offend her father, she is late home; the father asks her why she is late, but she just snaps with assaulting words: 'should I worry about what people say when my own father calls me a whore? She looked at him with murder in her eyes'. In fact, she really lacks respect for her father. We learn from the narrator's words that 'you had to admit that Nyasha had no tact. You had to admit that she was altogether too volatile and strong willed. You couldn't ignore the fact that she had no respect for Babamukuru when she ought to have had lots of it' (p. 116). In short, Nyasha is the artefact of colonialism, she is mostly associated with the white persons with whom she was acquainted in England so that Babamukuru complains '… I have observed from my own daughter's behaviour that it is not a good thing for a young girl to associate too much with these white people, to have too much freedom. I have seen that girls who do that do not develop into descent women' (p. 180).

Contrary to Nyasha who is the product space of England, Tambu moves into two spaces: homestead and the mission, the former with tradition and the latter with modernism fruit of colonialism. The two spaces show that she symbolises the two values in her. For her self-realisation, she leaves the homestead to the mission; she says 'when I stepped into Babamukuru's car I was a peasant' (p.58). The car is a new subspace for her in which she has a feeling of a stranger, there is a discrepancy between her appearance and this subspace. In fact, she recognises one fact when she says: "this was the person I was leaving behind. And her view is that "At Babamukuru's I expected to find another self, a clean, well-groomed, genteel self who could not have been bred, could not have survived, on the homestead". In fact, the person she is living behind is the one of poverty and marginalisation; her father considered her just as a woman should be given for marriage, but not for education. It is only a man who is perceived to deserve education.

This new subspace inspires how she will live in this new world of Babamukuru. From the book we read:

> At Babamukuru's I would have the leisure, be encouraged to consider questions that had to do with the survival of the spirit, the creation of consciousness, rather than mere sustenance of the body. This new me would not be enervated by smoky kitchens that left eyes smarting and chests permanently bronchitic (p.59).

By leaving the homestead, Tambu realises that she becomes a new person who is going to be transformed by the Western influence with this new milieu, which is mostly characterised by education.

As a matter of fact, the past of Tambu with her condition is infused with the newness of her as a new person, that is, the old culture with tradition and the new culture with modernism. Homi Bhabha sustains, in *The Location of Culture* that:

> The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with the newness that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent. It renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent in between space that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The past-present becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living (p.7).

Tambu is different from Nyasha who has rejected her tradition for the sake of Western values. The past for Tambu is her tradition, which mingles with present Western culture and makes her a new person. In this case, we must speak in terms of hybridity. The past and the present are part of her person.

In fact, it is here that the title 'Nervous Condition' is achieved; colonisation has affected everybody. The colonial spaces have alienated characters like Nyasha and Babamukuru. However, Babamukuru has fused African culture and colonial cultures, which have made him a peculiar person fashioned by the two spaces - England and the homestead. England has made him a powerful person by getting him educated. He wants to colonise his extended family by imposing his will. However, the homestead has also shaped his personality; he considers himself hardworking, which he learned from this traditional milieu. Nyasha is a product of Western culture; her opposition to her father shows the difference between the Western culture and the tradition.

All the spaces analysed in this article can be summarised into two: one representing tradition and colonialism. Tambudzai's movement from homestead to mission and Sacred Heart forge her hybridised person. The transformations undergone through education and colonialism does not make her abandon cultural tradition; however, it is simply a new person that she has qualified of as 'a new me'. As Ngugi has put it in *Globalectics*: '*one* of the most important questions posed *vis à vis* the colonised was one of identity: because it is a systematic negation of the other person and the furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity. Colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: In reality who am I' (Ngugi, 2012, p.21). In fact, Nyasha's passage in English space makes her an alienated person who finds for model, the whites in her personality. Her traditional milieu becomes strange to her. Above all, he is marked by the moral violence which puts her in a nervous condition on the point she is being seen as a rebel even toward her own father. Babamukuru is a dictator who imposes the colonial system on his kinsmen. The colonised, among the missionaries and the nuns have created an environment in which they are separatist and segregationist.

Conclusion

All in all, in the narrative discourse of Dangarembga's *Nervous Condition*, two more important spaces have been outlined, England and the homestead, including some subspaces. The characters in the novels have lived and moved through this physical environment which have shaped their personalities. The insertion of these spaces was more significant. England symbolised the alienation of the characters, who had imitated the colonial values while the homestead is more representative with the traditional ones. The characters were rooted with the traditional values which involve them to live a split personality in the case of Babamukuru. Nyasha lived a Westernised life of the England's space whereas, Tambu is hybridised. She was influenced by the two spaces. From this perspective or based on what has been highlighted, the title of *Nervous Conditions* is befitting as it projects the challenge faced when characters are conflicted with embracing Western at the expense of traditional values.

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THE POLITICS AND PROSPECTS OF *AMOTEKUN* REGIONAL SECURITY NETWORK IN YORUBA SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria has grappled with several security challenges emanating from communal and religious conflicts, urban violence, arms smuggling, kidnapping, human trafficking, cybercrime, and armed robbery from independence. Recent Niger Delta militancy, Boko-Haram insurgency in the North-East, Fulani herdsmen, bandits attacks, kidnapping, and ritual killings have continued to wreak havoc on the country's security landscape. Efforts to curb security challenges have seen the deployment of both conventional and unconventional measures, including the police, military and other paramilitary organisations, militias and vigilante groups. However, all these interventions are yet to produce the necessary outcomes. Thus, as a way of curbing the persistent insecurities in their states, the governors of the South-West Yoruba speaking states inaugurated the Western Nigeria Security Network Code Amotekun. Using the historical and analytical approach, the article contends that the formation of the security network despite fierce opposition by some ethnic nationalities and federal government functionaries cannot be unconnected with the successful mobilisation of the Yoruba ethnic solidarity and renaissance of common attributes. This includes the myth of common ancestry, invincibility of traditional armies and tactics as displayed in Jalumi wars and Agbekoya uprising, survival instincts, and the elite consensus among others. The article concludes that proper synergy among the Amotekun security network and state machineries would bring about the needed success with minimal suspicion.

Keywords: Western Nigeria Security Network, Amotekun, Insecurity, Indigenous, Yoruba, and Nigeria.

Introduction

One of the primary responsibilities of government is safeguarding the lives and properties of its people. This is so, as the state possesses military capacity and threat of force, which other sections of the society are often incapable of.[1] The Nigerian state is getting more insecure by the day. More people are engaging in crimes and are getting more ruthless, desperate, and sophisticated. This has led to a threat to lives and properties, hindered business activities, discouraged local and foreign investors,

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1   Ibrahim, B., and Ibrahim, M. (2017) 'An Analysis of the Causes and Consequences of Kidnapping in Nigeria' African Research Review, 11, 134.

thus, affecting and retarding the socio-economic development of the country.[2] Many people had been maimed, raped, and killed in the deadly clash between farmers and herders in many parts of Nigeria. Recent banditry has also hindered inter and intrastate journeys. The national security system is weak to the extent that people can no longer sleep with their two eyes closed.[3] In this event, there have been local responses from state governors to safeguard the lives of their people. These responses are diverse and have included the establishment of armed groups to complement the effort of state security machineries.[4]

The state governors in the southwest region of Nigeria considered the possibility of re-enacting the old traditional security system known historically for the use of spiritual intelligence. In March 2020, a uniform security network named Amotekun was formed by the collaborative efforts of governors of Oyo, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ekiti, and Ondo to complement the efforts of the police and other conventional security networks in their states. Although this effort has met stiff opposition from the federal government on constitutional and political grounds, the Amotekun security network is a result of urgent intervention by southwest governors to save the region from banditry, terrorism, kidnaping, armed robbery, herders/farmers clash, and ritual killings.[5] To stem suspicion on the establishment of the Amotekun, the governors informed the populace about what the structure, purpose, and modalities of operations of Amotekun would be. Akeredolu, Ondo state governor assured the police of their involvement in the recruitment process of the Amotekun personnel.[6] Despite the preparedness of the governors to create professional synergy among the conventional security agencies and the Amotekun security network, the security initiative is struggling to find its foot amidst opposition from different parties, cabals, and federal.[7] Against this background, this article examines the politics, prospects, and challenges of the Amotekun regional security in Yoruba Southwest, Nigeria. This study adopts a qualitative method that utilises secondary sources such as newspapers, the internet, and extant scholarly works.

Conceptual Clarification

Explaining Security, Insecurity, and Amotekun

Understanding the concept of insecurity necessitates knowing what security means first. What constitutes security in modern times is a question that has never been answered satisfactorily by scholars. Its perception, even within one community,

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2 Godly, O. and Wilfred, U. (2012). 'National Security and Development in Nigeria' *African Journal of Business Management*. 6(23):6765-6770.

3   Ojo J., Oyewole S., Aina, F (2023). 'Forces of Terror: Armed Banditry and Insecurity in North-West Nigeria' Democracy and Security, 19:4, 319-346.

4 Obado-Joel, J. (2020). 'The Challenge of State-Backed Internal Security in Nigeria: Considerations for Amotekun' Resolve Network Policy Note.

5 Deepa, N. (2000). 'Voices of the Poor Can Anyone Hear Us?' <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/131441468779067441/pdf/multi0page.pdf>.

6 Abimbola, A., Ayodeji, O., and Oluyato, A. (2018). *Security Challenges and Management in Modern Nigeria* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing).

7   Feyisipo, R., and Iwok, I. (2020). 'Controversy Trails Attorney-General's Pronouncement of "Amotekun" as Illegal' (*Businessday NG*16 January 2020) https://businessday.ng/politics/article/controversy-trails-attorney-generals-pronouncement-of-amotekun-as-illegal/.

varies in time.[8] For example, until recently, most mainstream security studies characterised it in terms of a state's ability to protect its territorial integrity against real and imagined threats, as well as acts of aggression by other possible adversaries.[9] To this end, states build and equip armed forces towards achieving this goal. The essential assumption of this viewpoint is that the threat of violence, as well as a state's actual ability to use violence against an adversary, successfully deters threats and aggression.[10] At the domestic level, the belief is that internal law-enforcement agencies and other domestic intelligence instruments are required for a state to be secured. It encompasses all steps intended to protect and preserve the populace and the assets of persons, communities, enterprises, and the country from vandalism or destructive occurrences.[11]

Security necessitates protection from long-term threats and protection from disruptive events. It can be conceptualised as the assurance or knowledge that one is wanted, accepted, loved, and protected in one's community. It also conceptualises everyday predictability (knowing what to expect), safety (feeling safe), and escape from psychological injury (safety or protection from emotional stress) that results from the assurance or knowledge that one is wanted, accepted, loved, and protected in one's community or neighbourhood and by the people around. It is concerned with one's emotional and psychological sense of belonging to a social group that might provide protection. Security as a concept was divided into four components in this definition. These components, however, can be woven together to generate a composite definition of security that includes protection from all types of harm, either bodily, economic, or psychological. However, there is widespread agreement that security is defined not by the absence of dangers or security difficulties but by the ability to respond quickly and expertly to the difficulties provided by these threats.[12]

On the other side, insecurity is the polar opposite of security. However, due to the numerous means by which insecurity impacts humanity, multiple interpretations of the idea of insecurity have been assigned to the numerous ways it impacts people. Insecurity is defined as a lack of safety, risk, hazard, uncertainty, lack of confidence, insufficiently guarded or protected, lacking stability, troubledness, and lacking protection. Different people have used each of these to conceptualise insecurity; however, these various adjectives allude to a condition of vulnerability to damage and loss of life, property, or livelihood. Insecurity is a condition of worry or anxiety

8   Emerson, S. and Solomon, H. (2018). *African Security in the Twenty-First Century.* Manchester University Press.
9   Okwori, A. (1995). 'Security and Deterrence: Towards Alternative Deterrence Strategy for Nigeria in the 21st Century and Beyond' Defence Studies: *Journal of the Nigerian Defence Academy*, *Kaduna*, 5, 19-28.>.
10 Alabi, D and Alabi, O. (2013). Issues and Problem in Nigerian Defence Policy in the 1990s Acritical Review. *Nigeria Army Journal*, 3, 128-143. - References - Scientific Research Publishing' (*www.scirp.org*2013) https://www.scirp.org/(S(i43dyn45teexjx455qlt3d2q))/reference/referencespapers.aspx?referenceid=2528523.
11 Ogunleye, G., Adewale, O., Alese B., and Ogunde, A. (2011). 'A Computer-Based Security Framework for Crime Prevention in Nigeria'. *https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272818852_A_COMPUTER-BASED_SECURITY_FRAMEWORK_FOR_CRIME_PREVENTION_IN_NIGERIA*2011).
12 Igbuzor, O. (2011) 'Peace and Security Education: A Critical Factor for Sustainable Peace and National Development'. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 2(1), 1-7. http://www.academicjournals.org/IJPDS.

resulting from a physical or claimed absence of protection." It indicates a lack of or insufficient protection from danger. This conceptualisation reflects physical insecurity, which is the most prominent kind of insecurity, and it feeds into many other types of insecurity, including economic and social insecurity.[13]

Amotekun is also known as the Western Nigeria Security Network (WSN). It is an aggregation of cross-regional community-based armed groups (CBAGs) and community-based associations (CBAs) responsible for the security of rural and urban communities in Southwest Nigeria. Amotekun is an armed social movement backed up by sub-national governments in the southwest of Nigeria, which includes the following states: Ekiti, Lagos, Ondo Ogun, Osun and Oyo.[14]

Theoretical Framework

No single theory can explain the subject matter; therefore, the Elite Consensus, Securitisation, and Social Contract Theories have been selected for this study.

Elite Consensus Theory ('Eniyan perete ni n selu' a Yoruba proverb meaning 'few people/ elites rule any town/city')

Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923), Gaetano Mosca (1858–1941), and Robert Michels are major proponents of elite theory. To them, throughout history, the dispensation of wealth and privilege was the preserve of the few. This can be seen in most traditional societies and monarchic government systems, where the administration of the society and decision-making is the sole duty of the monarch, chiefs and those with considerable influence over them. Even in democracies, the radius of influence was always small. Societies are almost invariably organised in layers within a pyramidal structure, with power and decision-making concentrated at the top. That pyramid is established and in the first instance is political systems, governance structure, culture, social circumstance, and several other influences. In certain civilisations, the social hierarchy or pyramid is narrow, concentrating power in a few hands. In contrast, in others, such as democratic nations, the pyramid's summit is relatively flat.

These concerns are first analysed through the prism of religion and ethnicity; the enormity of ethnic and religious variety among Nigerian people makes it difficult for citizens to reach a consensus on national security matters.[15] Given Nigeria's split elites (from a purely political standpoint), ideological homogeneity among political elites appears to be non-existent. It is noteworthy to mention that Nigeria's slow (or non-existing) pace of development is not necessarily an outcome or proof of weak consensus among her elite. Several scholars have argued that there exists an

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13 Beland, D. (2005). *The Political Construction of Collective Insecurity: From Moral Panic to Blame Avoidance and Organized Irresponsibility* (Center for European Studies Working Paper Series 126).

14 Yahaya, J., and Bello, M. (2020). *An Analysis of the Constitutional Implication of South-West Regional Security Initiative: Amotekun.* African Scholar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 17(6), 161-192 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344302242_An_Analysis_of_the_Constitutional_Implication_of_South-_West_Regional_Security_Initiative_Amotekun.

15 Gaffey, C. (2015). 'What Is Biafra and Why Are Some Nigerians Calling for Independence?' (*Newsweek*) https://www.newsweek.com/what-biafra-and-why-are-some-nigerians-calling-independence-401164.

implicit consensus among Nigerian elites.[16] Nigerian elites have built a governance environment with positive loops around corruption in which decisions are made, promoting a corrupt system. The constitution of most African countries, which is then marketed as a document coming from the people, is a prime example of elite consensus.[17]

In Nigeria, elite consensus may have been based on adverse, anti-development, rent-seeking policies. However, having been faced with an alarming rate of insecurity in the southwest of Nigeria, the governors (elites) of the six southwest states decided to build elite consensus in a developmental context. This is achieved by; participation (providing a platform for contribution from all involved elites), collaboration (involving elites in the development of philosophies), cooperation (understanding individual preferences of elites and incorporating them into the elite's consensus), and agreement seeking (aiming for an agreement among involved elites).[18]

Like other rational agents, elites balance the costs and benefits of joining (or not joining) coalitions by looking at historical benefits, projected returns, and the penalties of refraining (or defection). Although this consensus-building approach may not appeal to all elites with vested interests, it assumes that obtaining elite consensus on an ideology is a better option for elite division. All the realisations mentioned above contributed to the formation of Amotekun in the Southwest.

Securitisation Theory

This theory became popular in security studies due to the end of the cold war between the USA and the former Soviet Union.[19] The state-centric conception of security, otherwise known as traditional security, became an area of severe academic interrogations and queries. Securitisation theory shows us that national security policy is not a natural given, but carefully designated by politicians and decision-makers.[20]

Securitisation theory asserts that political concerns are labeled as dangerous, menacing, threatening, alarming, and other terms by a securitising actor with the social and institutional capacity to push the issue 'beyond politics.' As a result, security issues must be articulated as problems by securitising actors rather than simply being 'out there'. Traditional approaches to security in international relations are challenged by securitisation theory, which contends that situations are not inherently dangerous; rather, it is by referring to them as 'security' issues that they become security concerns.

Securitisation theorists (Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, Jaap de Wilde) identified the economic, sociological, military, political, and environmental sectors. A distinct

16 Reno, W. (1993). Old Brigades, Money Bags, New Breeds, and the Ironies of Reform in Nigeria. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 27(1), 66–87.

17 Shopeju, J. and Ojukwu, C. (2010). 'Elite Corruption and the Culture of Primitive Accumulation in 21st Century Nigeria. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 1(2), 15–24. *http://www.academicjournals.org/IJPDS.*

18 Monday, E., and Gerald, E. (2023) 'National Security and the Resort to Unconventional Security Networks by Nigeria's Geo-Political Zones: Implications for National Integration.' African Renaissance, 20(2), pp. 117-134.

19 Burton, J. (1979). *Deviance, Terrorism & War: The Process of Solving Unsolved Social and Political Problems*. New York: St Martin's Press.

20 Buzan, B. (1991). *People, States et Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era : 25th Anniversary*. London: Longman Publishing.

threat is expressed as threatening a referent item in each sector. In each sector, a specific threat is articulated as threatening a referent object. We recognise that existential risks are not objective but rather connect to the varied properties of each referent object through sectorialising security.

The rhetorical framework of decision-makers when framing an issue and attempting to persuade an audience to elevate the subject beyond politics is central to securitisation theory. To persuade an audience to take extraordinary measures, the securitising actor must draw attention to the threat and frequently exaggerate the urgency and level of the threat, communicate a point of no return, that is if we do not address this problem, everything else will become irrelevant, and offer a possible way out (lifting the issue above politics).

In using this theory to explain the subject matter, it is important to note that the governors of the six southwest states decided to label the incessant attacks by the herders, bandits, kidnappers, ritualist as alarming, menacing and threatening and in a bid to secure their states, they came up with the idea of forming a security network (Amotekun) to combat insecurity.

Social Contract Theory

The Social Contract Theory was developed in the 16th and 17th centuries to establish political society by individual agreement. Appadorai attributes the first proper reference of the social contract theory to Hooker and others. They later refined the idea as a theory for developing their political doctrine, distinguishing between social contract as a governmental pact and social contract proper.[21] However, the most famous advocates of the social contract theory were Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The starting point treatises rests on a hypothetical state of nature against which the agreement between the ruler and the ruled was said to have taken place. The social contract theory asserts that individuals, by nature, are free and equal but choose to renounce some of their inherent liberty by entering civil society and creating a political authority to which they submit themselves for the sake of the benefits (security) given by civil society.[22]

It is important to note that since the people of the southwest have submitted their rights to the sovereign (governors), and going by the understanding of the social contract theory, the security of lives and property of the people automatically falls with the purview of the governors. In order to safeguard the people, the governors came together to form the security network that will, in turn, protect the people that have entrusted them with power.

Significance of the Elites theory, Securitisation and Social Contract Theory to Formation of Amotekun Security Network

A careful look at the dominant concept across the three theories in use is 'government' who are considered as the elites or the few persons who are privileged to rule others according to elite theory; and who make security decisions when they perceive threats against the state according to securitisation theory; and who by social contract

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21 Appadorai, A. (1975). *The Substance of Politics.* Oxford University Press.
22 Thomas M. (1999). *'Social Contract Theory'.* London: Penguin Books.

the citizens have surrendered their liberty and the power to make laws to them. This dominant concept gives credence to the primary function of government or state in securing both the lives and properties of citizens. This is what the south-west governors in collaboration have portrayed and are committed to. In this sense, the three theories are important in explaining the intervention, responsibility, and decisions of the governors in protecting their people.

Insecurity in Nigeria and its Sources

Nigeria has been plagued by insecurity which has assumed a formidable role.[23] Nigeria has been enmeshed in a firebox of clashes that have cost several civilian lives, including foreigners and members of the Nigerian security personnel. Unfortunately, this wave of unrest seemed to have defied all security precautions and made a mockery of law enforcement agents and the enormous resources dedicated to the fight against insecurity.[24] The different regions of Nigeria have experienced regional security threats such as insurgency by militia groups in the north, kidnappings, and rituals associated killings in the east and south of the country. Furthermore, the west has also witnessed political and non-political assassinations. It has even been submitted that Nigerians have accepted insecurity as part of their lives.[25] Other regions, such as the south that have experienced conflict as a result of resource control, Christian-Muslim divides in the middle of the country, the civil war that plagued the east and recently, the Fulani herdsman crises that forced the government to be more proactive in her fight against security all over the country. The southwest is only bedeviled by ritual killings and systemic kidnappings and has experienced less terror than other regions.[26] There are various sources of insecurity in Nigeria and some of these include the following:

Inadequate policy formulation and implementation: Poor policy formulation and implementation have contributed to insecurity in Nigeria. Many people in authority take advantage of their positions to force down policies that impoverish 'the many' in so much as it benefits them and a few others. Lack of human-centered policies in Nigeria has led to increased crimes resulting from a desperate need to survive. Insecurity is a result of a malignant environment dominated by man's insensitivity to man. The current discourse about petroleum subsidy is a case in point. All Nigerians (the rich and the poor) use petrol either for generators to power electricity for household uses, factories, or farms. All Nigerians travel or transport products, including food with fuel-powered engines.[27] Those who must drink clean water provide boreholes for themselves but with fuel. Even educational institutions need

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23 Onifade, C., Imhonopi, D., and Urim, U. (2013). Addressing the Insecurity Challenge in Nigeria: The Imperative of Moral Values and Virtue Ethics. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Political Science*, 2(1): 53-64.

24 Obarisagbon, I. and Akintoye, O. (2019). Insecurity Crisis in Nigeria: The Law Enforcement Agents a Panacea? *Journal of Sociology and Social Work*, 7(1): 44-51.

25 Onwuka, A. (2019). 'Nigerians Have Accepted Insecurity as Part of Life'. *Punch Newspapers* 3 September 2019) https://punchng.com/nigerians-have-accepted-insecurity-as-part-of-life/?amp

26 Nwagbosa, C. (2012). Security Challenges and Economy of the Nigerian State (2007-2011). *American International Journal of Contemporary Research,* 2(6), 244-258.

27 Gbenga, A. & Augoye, J. (2011). *'Ibru', Astute Businessman Takes a Bow'. The Punch, 21 November p. 3.*

power, which is more readily supplied through generators using diesel or fuel. As a result, fuel is a commodity that everyone in Nigeria uses (directly or indirectly). However, all the processing plants in the country are believed to be in a state of dilapidation and fuel derived from crude oil (Nigeria's main product) is imported. Raising the cost too high for a product like fuel will negatively impact the welfare of all Nigerians, particularly the poor.

Flawed justice delivery system: The system for delivering justice also does not encourage the fight against insecurity. Offenders of grievous cases may get very light sentences where they are not entirely let go. Many high-profile crimes usually end up in similar ways. In such a situation, criminals are emboldened to commit crimes, and the innocent are frequently imprisoned and punished.

Corruption and ethnicity: National security has been compromised with the heavy corruption in the Nigerian political system. The existence of two anti-graft agencies, Independent Corrupt Practices (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes (EFCC), since 1999 appears to have done little to eradicate corrupt practices in Nigeria totally. Former national security advisor Colonel Sambo Dasuki was arraigned for illegal diversion of $2.1 billion arms fund. The arms fund was meant to purchase sophisticated arms for soldiers in counter-insurgency operations. Unethical work behaviour among the security personnel has also weakened the security system. Some security personnel consider bribes and ethnicity more than their primary responsibility. Some are influenced by their religious sentiments and are swallowed up by their interests in serving their people rather than the nation.

Poverty and small arms proliferation have also been attributed; in Nigeria, around 70 per cent of the populace is abysmal, improvised in many other developing economies. The failure of successive administrations in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities is one of the major causes of insecurity in Nigeria.[28] This predisposes the poor to violence, which is also fueled by the ease of access to small arms. Arms could be accessed as low as £10.00. So, even the poor could access arms and use such arms to cause havoc. The import of weapons by developing countries has risen dramatically.[29]

Amotekun Regional Security in Yoruba Southwest, Nigeria

In 2019, with increasing incidents of violence and attacks on farmers and travellers, the governors of Southwestern Nigerian states initiated a campaign to establish Amotekun ('Leopard' in the Yoruba language), or the Western Nigeria Security Network (WSN). They cited concerns about the capacity of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) to provide security to rural and urban residents in the region.[30] Amotekun was to complement the operations of national security forces, such as the NPF. In March

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28 Nwagbosa, C. (2012). Security Challenges and Economy of the Nigerian State (2007-2011). *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 2(6), 244-258.

29 Todaro M., and Smith S. (2003). *Economic Development Persons Education.* 8th Edition, India: Pearson Education.

30 Ojelu, H. (2020). 'Constitutional Implication of Operation Amotekun,' *Vanguard Nigeria* https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/01/constitutional-implication-of-operation-amotekun.

2020, Amotekun was established by law, making state governments responsible for its funding and administration.

However, certain characteristics of Amotekun distinguish it from other similar security providers, such as the civilian joint task force (CJTF). First, unlike the CJTF, which operates as a single entity, Amotekun is designed to operate as a paramilitary force made up of a collection of existing community-based armed groups (CBAGs), such as, the hunters' association, Agbekoya farmers association, Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in Southwest Nigeria, socio-political groups such as the Pan-Yoruba socio-political group, Afenifere as well as units of newly recruited corps members. Given this distinction, for this policy note, Amotekun will be referred to as a state backed supra-CBAG (SBSC). Defining Amotekun as an SBSC underlines its unique character as part of an aggregation of cross-regional CBAGs and community-based associations (CBAs) responsible for the security of rural and urban communities in Southwest Nigeria.

The various groups that constituted the nucleus of Amotekun have a long history of security mobilisation in the Nigerian Southwest. Initially formed as a response to political contestation, these groups eventually expanded their mandate into security operations. From 1968 to 1969, the Agbekoya Farmers Group conducted a successful violent uprising against the military rule in Western Nigeria in reaction to a new tax policy on peasant farmers.[31] Similarly, in the run-up to the Fourth Republic in 1999, the Yoruba Council of Leaders established Afenifere, a formidable socio-cultural and political organisation. Afenifere leaders are considered stewards of the Yoruba ethnic group's socio-cultural and political agenda, one of Nigeria's three major ethnic groups.[32] The Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC) is also a socio-cultural group with a militia corps committed to defending and maintaining the Yoruba ethnic group's political interest. Although OPC and Afenifere had similar principles, their leadership and membership did not necessarily coincide.

These security groups are to serve as the base for the operation of Amotekun with the idea of mobilising around Yoruba ethnic solidarity, especially the common ancestry of various Yoruba groups and communities of common origin as descendants of Oduduwa. This mobilisation involved attempts to appease Yoruba gods and deities to protect their lands against the enemies. The means of achieving this include using time-tested and potent fortification by charms and other traditional means of members of various security for the adequate performance of their assignments. The story of the effectiveness of charms in defense of Yoruba course in the past has been well-documented by scholars, especially wars with Fulani and against the Nigerian security operatives during Agbekoya crisis, among others.[33]

Given their past, the groups' engagement in Amotekun raises concerns about what their political goals or ambitions might be or turn into if not restrained by the federal, state, or community security-related procedures. Second, unlike the CJTF, Amotekun does not have a central purpose against Boko Haram insurgents, despite having a comparable mandate. The clarity of the CJTF's objective and target opposition is a

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31 Adeniran, T. (1974). *'The Dynamics of Peasant Revolt: A Conceptual Analysis of the Agbekoya Parapo Uprising in the Western State of Nigeria'.* Journal of Black Studies 4 (4), 363-375.

32 Kumolu, C. (2020). 'Amotekun Is Tokenism, Struggle for Real Solution Continues,' *Vanguard Nigeria* https://wwwvanguardngr.com/2020/01/amotekun-is-tokenism.

33 Adeniran, T (1974). *'The Dynamics of Peasant Revolt: A Conceptual Analysis of the Agbekoya Parapo Uprising in the Western State of Nigeria.'Journal of Black Studies* 4 (4), 363-375.

significant aspect in its community acceptability and success. Amotekun's mandate, on the other hand, is vaguely defined as 'helping internal security forces'. This vagueness in mandate lends to fears of the potential for operational overreach and resultant abuses, especially targeting other ethnic groups. Third, unlike other state backed CBAGs and paramilitary corps that predate it across Nigeria, Amotekun is the first regional SBSC in the country. Moreover, unlike the CJTF, Amotekun is backed by governors of Nigerian states rather than the Nigerian federal government or NPF. There is currently no structure that defines the operational and administrative jurisdictions of the NPF and state governments to Amotekun.

There is no gainsaying the fact that policing is local, ditto security.[34] Therefore, it should be conducted from a local front, as against the current system that features a unified policing command under the authority of a federal appointed Inspector General. This position was supported by General Theophilus Danjuma (Rtd.), who charged Nigerians to defend themselves. The *Amotekun* development is a decision in response to the calls to legalise the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), promote regional security, which is already popular in the east and northern parts of the country, and eliminate the escalating terror concerns in the southwest.

Without obvious concern for political affiliation, the southwestern governors comprising of:
1. Governor Babajide Sanwo - Olu- Lagos State
2. Governor Dapo Abiodun - Ogun State
3. Governor Seyi Makinde - Oyo State
4. Governor Rotimi Akeredolu - Ondo State
5. Governor Gboyega Oyetola - Osun State
6. Governor Kayode Fayemi - Ekiti State

The governors above unanimously agreed to set up a regional security network because the mainstream police have not arrested the rising threats of terror in the region. Compared to the mainstream police, Eghagha opines that the presence of the Oodua People's Congress, a local paramilitary security organisation sends more threat to thieves in a society than the Nigerian Police and its cohorts, against this background.[35] Therefore, such a force with similar credibility should be welcomed to minimise the inevitable escalation of terror in the region due to the police's apparent incapacitation.

Another reason for establishing the *Amotekun* security network and the demand for its legalisation is inherent in the presence of *Hisbah*, the Joint Civilian Taskforce, and the most recently established Operation *Shege Ka Fasa* in the North. Abating the fear of barbaric practice, the governor of Ondo State, Rotimi Akeredolu, equally noted that those willing to work in the security network would be trained by security experts.

Prospects and Challenges of Amotekun in Yoruba Southwest, Nigeria.

The establishment of Amotekun as a regional security network was greeted with many uproars. The Attorney General of the Federation immediately declared *Amotekun*

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34 Eghagha, H. (2020). Amotekun and the Future of Our Republic.' *Guardianng.* https://m.guardian.ng/opinion/amotekun-and-the-future-of-our-republic.

35 Eghagha, H. (2020). 'Amotekun and the Future of Our Republic.' *Guardianng.* (3 February 2020) https://m.guardian.ng/opinion/amotekun-and-the-future-of-our-republic Accessed on 26 May 2021.

illegal after its inauguration in Ibadan, without following the legal, due process. The Amotekun, on the other hand, had already begun to gain some credibility and acceptability, as spiritual and traditional elders quickly accepted its establishment. APC national leader Asiwaju Ahmed Tinubu also called for a peaceful resolution of the conflict and its emergence generated with some functionaries of the federal government. He called for negotiation between the federal government and governors of the southwestern states on the continuous existence of Amotekun. Tinubu's call is interesting since it is in keeping with the ideas of alternative dispute resolution, which is based on the peaceful resolution of disagreements.

Since the formation of the Amotekun corps, it has been intervening in security-related cases in the states of the southwest, especially in assisting the police in curbing illegal miners and petty thieves. They arrested four suspected kidnappers in Eda Oniyo, Ilejemeje local government. They rescued a businessman, Happiness Ajayi, kidnapped on Christmas day on the Isan-Iludun-Ekiti road in Oye local government.[36] In Ondo state, Amotekun has been able to resolve cases of destruction of farmlands and threats to life in rural communities. Few months after the security network was launched, it championed 'operation clean up,' in which suspected criminals who are about to act or caught in the act were apprehended.[37] Ayotunde and Kazeem noted that these achievements within little time indicate what Amotekun could achieve in the future. By this, Amotekun would serve as a security template for other regions in combatting crimes.[38]

Amotekun would give the traditional rulers a chance to monitor the security situation in their localities better. If adequately managed, traditional leaders can count on the security network for urgent intervention. They would also serve as a watchdog in watching the excesses of other conventional security institutions in the southwest region.

Although the Amotekun has been effective, it suffers from a lack of support from the federal government. There has also been little or no collaboration with the police because they think the Amotekun officers are overzealous. Some people have argued that the initial idea of mobilising Amotekun operatives around invincibility of the Yoruba warriors through the engagement of Hunters, Agbekoyas, and similar groups are not being pursued by some states. This is reflected in the recruitment of graduates who do not subscribe to such strategic spiritual intelligence for security purposes, into Amotekun corps.[39]

Also, there have been accusations of some governors' ambivalent attitude and paying lip service to the idea due to political correctness of not antagonising the federal government that has shown its opposition to the regional security network. There is the challenge of funding as the states are limited financially compared to the federal government and against the fact that security is still primarily a federal government affair in Nigeria. They (Amotekun officers) are not well-equipped to

36 'Thisday (2021).Https://Www.thisdaylive.com/Index.php/2019/06/29/Gunmen-Kill-Farmer-In-Ekiti/Amp/'.

37 *The Hope Newspaper (2020). Www.thehopenewspaper.com*.

38 Abimbola A., Ayodeji, O. and Oluyato, A. (2019). *Security Challenges and Management in Modern Nigeria*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

39 Nwagbosa, C. (2012). Security Challenges and Economy of the Nigerian State *(2007-2011). American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 2(6), 244-258.

deal with insecurity in the region. Also, the Amotekun is limited in its capacity to use arms and ammunition by the federal government. This constitutes a constraint in facing criminal groups with more sophisticated and dangerous arms and ammunition.

Conclusion

Amotekun regional security network has come to stay in Nigerian security architecture due to some governors and the people of the Southwest's commitment to the idea. Recently Governor Akeredolu of Ondo state has stated in response to the recent remark of President Muhammadu Buhari that the states should defend their lands against any form of attacks, that Amotekun would form the nucleus of state police in the Southwest of Nigeria. Prospects exist for the security network to succeed primarily based on familiarity with the terrain, among other factors. However, to make the activities of the corps more robust to tackle the various security issues, there is a need for more equipment. The corps must also use modern technologies, train and re-train its operatives and create an efficient feedback mechanism. It also needs a proper synergy with other security outfits to avoid unnecessary suspicion, conflicts, and deployment for sectarian purposes. Lastly, the idea of Amotekun and their core operational principles has further confirmed that we cannot do away with our indigenous knowledge in the fight against insecurity.

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COMPARING CORRELATES OF READING COMPREHENSION BETWEEN TRANSPARENT AND OPAQUE ORTHOGRAPHIES: A CASE OF CHINYANJA-ENGLISH BILINGUALS IN ZAMBIA

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Abstract

Orthographic transparency has a significant impact on reading and its development. Transparent orthographies are more beneficial for the reading process compared to opaque ones. This hypothesis was explored to examine the factors contributing to reading comprehension among bilingual children in Zambia. Two groups of fourth to sixth graders were administered equivalent measures of letter discrimination, phonological awareness, word reading, pseudo-word decoding, and reading comprehension skills in both Chinyanja and English languages. The results indicated that overall, reading proficiency is influenced by the writing system. Children tested in the transparent Chinyanja orthography performed better on all subtests compared to their counterparts tested in English, except for phonological awareness. The predictive power of the four variables on comprehension was specific to each orthography, with high correlations within each orthography. Word reading significantly predicted English reading comprehension, while pseudo-word decoding better predicted Chinyanja comprehension. The data from the English language aligned better with the conceptualised model of reading comprehension. This finding supports Share's (2008) argument that reading models centred on the English language cannot be universally applied across orthographies with varying levels of transparency, as the English writing system is considered an exception.

Keywords: Decoding, English, Chinyanja, Orthographic Depth, Reading Comprehension

Until recently, it was widely believed by researchers that letter discrimination (LTD), phonological awareness (PAW), word recognition (WRD), decoding (non- and real-words), and rapid automatised naming (RAN) were universal predictors of reading comprehension in all writing systems, regardless of their orthographic complexity (Hogan, Catts, & Little, 2005; Milankov, Golubović, Krstić, & Golubović, 2021; Moats, 2003; Norton & Wolf, 2012; Share, Jorm, Maclean, & Matthews, 1984; Share, 2008; 2021). However, most of the early research supporting this idea was based on an Anglocentric perspective (Gentaz, Sprenger-Charolles, & Theurel, 2015; National Reading Panel, 2000; Raudszus, Segers, & Verhoeven, 2021; Snowling & Hulme, 2005, Stanovich, 2000), including the theoretical models that explain the development of reading comprehension (Coltheart, Rastle, Perry, Langdon, & Ziegler,

2001; Seidenberg & McClelland, 1989). Now, empirical evidence is emerging that challenges this Anglocentric view and demonstrates that the English writing system has a unique spelling-sound correspondence that does not accurately represent the universal science of reading (Share, 2008, p. 584; Share, 2014). Therefore, as noted by Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2018), reading research should be balanced, informed by development, and based on a deep understanding of language and writing systems by incorporating diverse perspectives from cross-orthography research.

Cross-linguistic comparisons also raise questions about the universality of existing models of reading comprehension from an Anglocentric perspective (Caravolas et al., 2012; Caravolas, Lervag, Defior, Malkova, & Hulme, 2013; Furnes & Samuelsson, 2010, 2011; Holopainen, Ahonen, & Lyytinen, 2001; Müller & Brady, 2001; Oney & Durgunoglu, 1997; Seymour, Erskine, & Aro, 2003; Share, 1995; 2008; 2021). Karanth (2003, p. 19) argued that 'in order to be a universal model of reading and brain, these models need to be tested with data from different writing systems around the world'. This study aims at contributing to this debate by examining common predictors of reading comprehension across diverse orthographies among Nyanja-English bilinguals in Zambia.

There is very limited empirical knowledge about how existing theories and models of reading, in general, and comprehension, in particular, perform in transparent orthographies (Goswami, 2003; Share, 2008, 2014, 2021), taking into account the cognitive demands associated with orthographic complexity (Goswami, 2005; Share, 1995). Specifically, we need to consider the following questions: (a) To what extent are traditional theories and models of reading development applicable across orthographies? If they are not applicable, what are the main differences that explain reading development? This study seeks to explore answers to these questions in the context of Chinyanja and English languages because bilingual learners in Zambia 'provide a unique opportunity to study the impact of orthography on reading" (Karanth, 2003, p. 5). Answers to these questions are likely to offer alternative explanations to traditional assumptions about reading and, ultimately, inform reading instruction for beginning readers, especially in resource-poor learning environments.

Development of Reading Skills and Orthographic Depth: Models and Theories

Gough and Tunmer's (1986) Simple View of Reading (SVR) is a well-established theoretical framework that aims at explaining reading comprehension. According to this framework, reading comprehension is the result of two factors: decoding and listening comprehension proficiency, which are multiplied together (Catts, 2018). While listening comprehension is acquired naturally, decoding is not an innate skill. It needs to be explicitly taught to beginners in order for them to achieve proficient text comprehension (Reid, 1998). Unfortunately, many learners encounter difficulties in acquiring decoding skills, unlike those who effortlessly acquire them (Kaani & Joshi, 2013; National Reading Panel, 2000).

Several theories and models have been proposed to explain the development of decoding and the conceptualisation of reading difficulties (Stanovich, 1990). However, these models often take a one-size-fits-all approach and base their assumptions on findings from the English language (Share, 2008; 2021). Two prominent models of reading development are the Dual Route Cascaded (DRC) (Coltheart et al., 2001)

and the Connectionist Triangle models (Seidenberg & McClelland, 1989). Although both models focus on word identification, they represent different perspectives. The DRC model on one hand, explores whether word identification is guided by linguistic rules used to access a word's pronunciation and/or meaning from its written form. On the other hand, the Connectionist Triangle model investigates whether this process can be better described as one in which different types of lexical information provide mutual soft constraints on the generated pronunciations and/or meanings during word identification (Rayner & Reichle, 2010, p. 789).

The DRC model assumes that successful word pronunciation involves two alternative routes or pathways in word processing modules (Castles, 2006; Coltheart, 2005). The sublexical route involves applying grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) rules to map letter-sound conventions in words. The second route relies on the reader's memory store to recall previously encountered and familiar words. Although both routes rely on prior knowledge, they differ significantly in the level at which words are processed. The sublexical path relies on small grain knowledge of letter-sounds to decode both regularly spelled and unfamiliar words. In contrast, the lexical route focuses on large grains, allowing children to read familiar and 'irregular words that do not conform to typical correspondence rules' (Castles, 2006, p. 50) based on previously encountered word patterns or syllables.

In contrast, the Connectionist Triangle model does not differentiate between the processes used to read irregularly and regularly spelled words and letter strings. However, like the DRC models, it supports the idea of a dual pathway system in reading. The main assumption is that 'reading involves the computation of three codes: orthographic, phonological, and semantic' (Seidenberg & McClelland, 1989, p. 526). According to the Connectionist Triangle models, decoding occurs through direct mapping from orthography to phonology and from orthography to phonology through the semantics pathway. This is achieved through three sets of simple processing units: a bank of grapheme units representing orthography, a bank of phoneme units representing phonology, and a bank of semantic units (Powell, Plaut, & Funnell, 2006, p. 230).

Influence of Orthographic Differences on Reading Performance

Unfortunately, according to Share (2008), both the DRC and connectionist triangle models of reading development;

> arose largely in response to English spelling-sound obtuseness. The model accounts for a range of English-language findings, but it is ill-equipped to serve the interests of a universal science of reading chiefly because it overlooks a fundamental unfamiliar-to-familiar/novice-to-expert dualism applicable to all words and readers in all orthographies (p. 584).

Furthermore, ideally 'these models are largely based on the interpretation of average data from normal or impaired readers, mainly from English-speaking individuals' (Marinelli, Horne, McGeown, Ziccolotti, & Martelli, 2014, p. 1), and may, therefore, not be extended to languages whose writing systems are orthographically different from English. The English orthography is notoriously idiosyncratic; an almost antithesis of most of the alphabetic writing systems (Goswami, 2003; 2005). Its writing system varies considerably regarding phonology to orthography mapping,

whereas most alphabetic orthographies, such as Finnish, Italian, and Spanish, are highly consistent (Borleffs, Maassen, Lyytinen, & Zwarts, 2018; Ellis et al., 2004; Ziegler & Goswami, 2005).

Seymour et al., (2003) classified the orthographic transparency of European languages based on two dimensions. The first dimension relates to syllable complexity, which distributes orthographies on a continuum ranging from simple to complex consonant-vowel (CV) syllable clusters. The orthographic depth is the second dimension that approximates the consistency of grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) from simple one-on-one letter-to-sound ratio to multi-letter grapheme-to-phoneme conventions. Unlike the orthographies of Finnish, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, and Turkish, which predominantly exhibit CV syllable types, in English, syllables can range from 'V [a], CV [go], CVC [cat], CVCC [hold], CCVCC [stamp], CCCVC [spread], and CCCVCC [sprained]' (Goswami, 2010, p. 27 emphasis supplied). This enables beginning readers immersed in consistent languages to master the art of reading with minimal classroom instruction, while children taught struggle significantly to acquire basic reading skills (Goswami, 2005).

Therefore, observed achievement gaps across orthographies are due, in part, to variations in GPC ratios and the multiplicity of CV permutations under consideration (Goswami, 2003; 2005). For example, the Spanish orthography has a GPC ratio of one-to-one because the 29 graphemes in its alphabet correspond and directly map into the 29 phonemes in the language. In the English orthography, this ratio is significantly higher at 1.7, with 44 (20 vowels and 24 consonants) phonemes mapping into 26 graphemes (Joshi, 2010). Thus, navigating and mastering such a wide range of syllable strata and complexity exerts significant cognitive demands on beginning readers in English compared to Spanish.

Consequently, Seymour et al. (2003) classified the 14 main European orthographies (Austrian, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Icelandic, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Scottish, Spanish, Swedish) based on syllabic structure and orthographic depth continuum from the more transparent orthography to the opaquest writing system. At one extreme end of this spectrum is Finnish, characterised by a simple open syllable structure and shallow orthography, whereas English orthography lies on the other end of the continuum. GPC variations have significant implications for children's ability to acquire reading skills (Share, 1995; 2008; 2021). Research has shown that these variations affect developmental trajectories, prevalence, and the nature of reading, writing, and spelling abilities among beginning readers (Aro & Wimmer, 2003; Hanley, Masterson, Spencer, & Evans, 2004; Kaani, 2021; Kaani, Mulubale, & Mufalo, 2022; Kaani & Joshi, 2013; Seymour et al., 2003; Wimmer, 1999).

Seymour and colleagues assessed the development and nature of reading among first graders in 14 European orthographies and reported that English children took a minimum of three years of formal instruction to reach the reading ceiling, levels that their Finnish counterparts attained by the end of their first school year. Thus, Spencer and Hanley (2003) stated that bridging this orthography depth-induced achievement gap between English and most European languages may take up to six years of formal reading instruction. Similar cross-language studies reveal similar word-level processing variations. For example, the non-word reading process in English is slower and prone to real-word errors than in German (Frith, Wimmer, & Landerl,

1998; Wimmer & Goswami, 1994), Spanish, French (Goswami, Gombert, & de Barrera, 1998), and Greek children (Goswami, Porpodas, & Wheelwright, 1997). Typically, reading disabilities are more prevalent and severe in opaque orthographies (Landerl, Wimmer, & Frith, 1997; Rapcsak et al., 2007).

The psycholinguistic grain size theory (PGST) theoretical framework attributes cross-orthography variations in word processing to differential strategies used (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005). According to Goswami (2008), 'the kinds of internal representations (the psycholinguistic units) that will develop in a child exposed to a consistent orthography will differ from the kinds of internal representations that will develop if the same child is exposed to an inconsistent orthography' (p. 34). This theoretical framework posits that due to the ubiquity of both regularly spelled words (e.g., hat, sit, bit, hit) and irregularly spelled words (such as choir or cite/site/sight) in the English lexicon, readers tend to switch between large (syllable and word-level processing) and small grain (GPC) sizes to account for varying lexical characterisations in its vocabulary (Goswami, Ziegler, & Richardson, 2008; Kaani, 2014; Kaani et al., 2016; Kaani et al., 2022). In consistent orthographies, the reading development process bypasses the lexical route, and reading relies primarily on the phonologically-mediated lexical route (Milankov et al., 2021).

Dynamics of Predictors of Reading Comprehension

Several studies show marked cross-language discrepancies in dynamics of predictors in comprehension (Caravolas et al., 2012; Caravolas et al., 2013; Furnes & Samuelsson, 2010, 2011; Holopainen et al., 2001; Landerl et al., 2019; Müller & Brady, 2001; Vaessen et al., 2010), as postulated by the SVR (Gough & Tunmer, 1986) and the more comprehensive componential model of reading (Joshi & Aaron, 2000; Nation, 2019). The decoding component of the SVR model consists primarily of skills related to PAW [the ability to identify and manipulate sounds in words into respective phonemes, syllables, etc.], decoding [ability to apply letter-sound relationships to pronounce written words correctly at the sublexical level], and sight recognition [instant recognition of familiar words at the lexical level] (Joshi, 2010; Scarborough, 2001).

Due to variations in orthographic transparency, it is envisaged that the dynamics of the components of the SVR may differ significantly across writing systems. Having been critically tested, the SVR model has been very important in explaining reading development but has been subjected to critical cross-language scrutiny, especially in bilingual populations (Adolf, Catts, & Little, 2006; Bast & Reitsma, 1998; Catts, 2018). Caravolas and colleagues argued that there are 'universal cognitive prerequisites for learning to read in all alphabetic orthographies' (2012, p. 1398), but their predictive influence may vary as a function of orthographic depth. For instance, although PAW is a universal ingredient of all alphabetic writing systems, it has long-term effects in opaque orthographies, while its effects in transparent writing systems are time-limited. Conversely, although RAN has similar effects regardless of the nature of orthography in the long-term, it is more effective in transparent orthographies.

These inter-orthography variations have also been well replicated at the word processing level (Frith et al., 1998). Landerl (1998) compared English- and German-speaking dyslexics' ability to read one-, two-, and three-syllable words with similar

orthographic structure in the two languages and found that the latter managed 'to acquire considerable though not sufficient knowledge about the relationship between spoken and written words' (p. 121) than their English counterparts. Furthermore, the reading speed of German dyslexics was slower but more accurate, whereas their English counterparts read more laboriously with low accuracy.

Similarly, when compared to children immersed in transparent orthographies, English-taught children are prone to commit more word recognition (decoding) errors. Several studies report that English first graders commit as many as 40 per cent to 80 per cent real-word and non-word errors (Jorm, Share, MacLaren, & Matthews, 1984; Juel, Griffith, & Gough, 1986; Treiman, Goswami, & Bruck, 1990). In contrast, below 10 per cent of such errors were registered in transparent Greek (Porpodas, 1989) and German (Wimmer & Hummer, 1990), and 20 per cent in Italian (Cossu, Gugliotta, & Marshall, 1995). Analyses of reading and spelling errors in transparent orthographies reveal more susceptibility to non-word substitutions of target words. On the other hand, English readers tend to substitute target words with other real words; for example, there for their and site for sight (Wimmer & Goswami, 1994).

The Current Study

Cross-national studies provide limited insights into the factors that influence reading comprehension across different writing systems. This study examined a model of reading comprehension based on decoding components (phonemic awareness, letter discrimination, single word reading, and pseudo-word decoding) using data from matched measures in transparent (Chinyanja) and opaque (English) writing systems. This study focused on answering the following questions: (a) How does the variation in orthographic depth between the Chinyanja and English languages affect the reading abilities of students in grades 4, 5, and 6? (b) To what extent does the reading data in Chinyanja and English fit with the conceptual model of reading comprehension? (c) Which data set between Chinyanja and English fits the conceptualised reading comprehension model better?

Our hypothesis was that the predictors of reading comprehension would differ significantly between the two writing systems (Holopainen et al., 2001; Landerl, Castles, & Parrila, 2022; Milankov et al., 2021; Müller & Brady, 2001; Furnes & Samuelsson, 2010, 2011). We also considered that the transferability of cross-linguistic skills between the Chinyanja and English languages may influence the differences between the systems (Durgunoglu & Oney, 1999). Therefore, these factors could both positively and negatively impact the outcomes of reading comprehension.

Additionally, the effects of orthographic depth on reading comprehension may be attenuated depending on the linguistic diversity among learners (e.g., bilingual versus multilingual) and socio-economic circumstances, as is the case in Zambia. For example, the influence of reading skills and comprehension acquired in the first language may contribute to some variation in the second language. Previous research has shown that first language word reading and comprehension skills (Jiang, 2011) and metalinguistic awareness skills (Durgunoglu & Oney, 1999) explain variations in phonological recoding, syntactic awareness (Joy, 2011), and reading comprehension across diverse writing systems. However, the degree of transferability depends on the orthographic distance between the first language (L1) and second language (L2). When the distances are small, cross-language transferability is more seamless, and

vice versa. Fortunately, although Chinyanja and English have substantial orthographic differences, the availability of reading materials in Zambian schools may help bridge the achievement gap through metacognitive cross-pollination between the two languages.

Education System in Zambia

Zambia, a sub-Saharan country, has a population of 19.6 million people (ZAMSTAT, 2022), with slightly over 46 per cent under the age of 14. In 2018, the per capita GDP was US$1,659 compared to US$59,939 for the United States. The country has a literacy rate of 86.7 per cent (male = 90.6%; female = 83.1%) of the general population, defined as the ability to read and write in English (Worldometer, n.d.). Zambia follows a three-tier education system, starting with seven years of compulsory primary schooling, followed by five years of secondary education. Tertiary education is also available, with the duration varying depending on the certification sought. Additionally, there is an emerging preschool sector, primarily led by fee-paying private institutions. However, the requirement of user-fees makes kindergarten and nursery school education inaccessible for most children from low-income households. Furthermore, there are significant age variations in Zambian schools, despite the education policy stating that children should be enrolled in first grade at seven years old (Stemler et al., 2009).

Unfortunately, Zambia's declining economy has compromised the quality of education in recent years (Kelly & Kanyika, 2000). Simply being enrolled in school does not guarantee a quality education, as classrooms are overcrowded and there is a shortage of teachers, textbooks, and instructional materials (Stemler et al., 2009, p. 161). The country's education quality indicators are concerning. In 2017, the pupil-teacher ratios were 42.1 and 30.2, transition rates were 67.5 per cent and 48.0 per cent, repetition rates were 6.5 per cent and 1.7 per cent, and dropout rates stood at 1.5 per cent and 1.0 per cent for primary and secondary school levels, respectively. Other factors contributing to poor education quality in Zambia include high teacher attrition rates, high student-book ratios, and low contact hours (MoE-Z, 2018). Consequently, Zambian students perform poorly on international literacy assessments, with fourth and sixth-grade students ranking near the bottom on reports such as the 1999 Monitoring Learning Achievement and 1998 Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality evaluations. Only a small percentage of students meet the minimum expected reading levels (Altinok, Angrist, & Patrinos, 2018; Kelly & Kanyika, 2000). Poor reading ability has a negative impact on students' achievement in other subject areas, especially when instruction is in the challenging English language (Chikalanga, 1991; Serpell, 1978; Williams, 1996).

In recent years, the Zambian Ministry of Education has made efforts to improve students' reading achievement. They replaced the dysfunctional Straight-for-English Zambia Primary Course (ZPC) programme with a Primary Reading Programme (PRP) that focused on grades 1 to 7 and used the local languages (Chinyanja, IciBemba, Chitonga, Silozi, Luvale, Lunda, and KiKaonde). The PRP had three components: Breakthrough to Literacy for first grade, Step-into-English for second grade, and Read-on-Course from third to seventh grade. Although it showed promise, transitioning to English was still challenging.

To address this issue, the authorities implemented a new Primary Literacy Programme (PLP), in 2013. The main difference was that the mother tongue-based instruction period was extended from one to three years, ensuring that students acquired basic literacy skills in their strong languages before introducing English instruction in fourth grade. In second grade, only oral English was taught, while the main focus of instruction was synthetic phonics-based methods. While many learners still struggle with zero word-reading scores, the PLP has shown progress in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension skills; however, the effect sizes have been small. One positive aspect of the PLP is that the transparency of Zambia's local languages' orthography seems to facilitate reading fluency in the less transparent English orthography.

Differences between Chinyanja and English Orthographies

The Chinyanja and English orthographies are based on the Roman alphabet and have shared features, but the Chinyanja orthography is highly transparent, with each letter consistently representing one sound. This regularity makes reading and spelling Chinyanja words relatively easier to master compared to the idiosyncrasies of the English orthography. Basic knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondence rules enables beginning readers to employ self-teaching mechanisms to learn to read in Chinyanja.

Despite the various ways in which CV syllables can be combined, the main characteristic of Chinyanja orthography is the consistency of grapheme-phoneme correspondences and the low ratio, which gives novice readers an advantage over English language learners. Several studies have compared the literacy achievement of Zambian language learners (Kaani, 2014; Kaani & Joshi, 2013; Kaani & Joshi, 2021; Sampa, 2005; Sampa et al., 2018; Stemler et al., 2009; Tambulukani et al., 1999) with English learners, and they have shown significant achievement gaps similar to comparisons between English and European languages (Cossu et al., 1995; Frith et al., 1998; Goswami et al., 1998; Goswami et al., 1997; Jorm et al., 1984; Juel et al., 1986; Porpodas, 1989; Seymour et al., 2003; Wimmer & Goswami, 1994; Wimmer & Hummer, 1990). These achievement gaps can partly be attributed to differences in the transparency of writing systems (Share, 2008).

Children who are exposed to transparent writing systems are more likely to learn to read, write, and spell more efficiently because they can use self-teaching mechanisms once they have mastered the basics of the alphabetic principle (Goswami, 2003; Share, 1995). Goswami (2003) observed significant differences in syllable types, which require different approaches to word processing in various writing systems. In transparent writing systems, synthetic phonics skills, which involve manipulating letter-sounds to build syllables, may be sufficient for decoding regular and fine-grained Chinyanja words. However, additional phonics techniques may be needed to handle the irregular and large-grained syllable structures of English. Williams (1998) argued that beginners who understand the alphabetic principle well can transition from manipulating letter-sounds to building syllables using the syllabication approach, which is a self-teaching mechanism based on consonant-vowel patterns (Share, 1995). Based on the evidence presented above, our SVR model predicts that

there will be significant differences in the decoding-related predictors of reading comprehension between Chinyanja and English data. These predictors include letter discrimination, phonemic awareness, pseudo-word decoding, and real word reading.

Method

Participants: The study consisted of two samples totaling 240 students in grades fourth to sixth, selected from five primary schools in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. Of these participants, 190 were given the English language version of the Zambia Achievement Test (ZAT), while 121 received the Chinyanja version. Fifty per cent of the participants were female. The schools chosen for the study were strategically selected to represent the socioeconomic demographics of Zambia. Two schools were selected from lower socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds, two from higher SES backgrounds, and one predominantly from the middle class. According to school records, none of the participants reported having special education needs. Table 1 below shows the distribution of participants based on age, grade, and assessment language.

Table 1: Distribution of Participants by Grade Level and Language

Grade Level	Age $M(SD)$	Chinyanja	English	Total	%
4th	10.8(2.1)	41	40	81	33.75
5th	11.4(1.6)	39	40	79	32.92
6th	12.7(3.5)	41	39	80	33.33
Total	11.7(2.5)	121	119	240	100.00

Reading Measures and Procedures: The study used equivalent versions of Chinyanja and English language reading measures from the Zambia Achievement Test (ZAT) to assess reading skills in both languages (Stemler et al., 2009). The ZAT reading measures consist of five subtests, which are described below:

a. Letter discrimination (LTD): In this subtest, participants are asked to identify individual letters or letter clusters that are either presented alone or embedded in stimuli cards. Participants must choose the correct response from four possible answer choices.

b. Phonological Awareness (PAW): The PAW measures participants' ability to match sounds or discriminate the initial sounds of pictures' names that are presented as target stimuli.

c. Single Word Reading (SWR): In this subtest, participants are required to pronounce words that are presented to them to the best of their ability. The subtest focuses on the participants' word attack skills.

d. Pseudo-Word Decoding (PWD): This subtest is similar to the SWR subtest described above, but the target words are made up of legitimate combinations of letter strings or non-words.

e. Reading Comprehension (RDC): The reading comprehension test assesses participants' ability to comprehend written material. Participants silently read single words or statements and then perform the specified action accordingly.

Scores for subtests 1 to 4 (LTD, PAW, SWR, PWD) were assigned either a 0 or 1, indicating incorrect or correct answers, respectively. The reading comprehension assessment was scored as 0, 1, or 2, depending on how closely the participant's action aligned with the standardised expectations. Raw scores were determined by the number of correct responses on each subtest.

Results

The main objective of the study was to compare the predictive dynamics of LTD, PAW, WRD, PWD, and RDC variables between the two orthographically diverse writing systems in order to ascertain their influence on students' reading comprehension achievement. Specifically, the study endeavoured: (a) To investigate the impact of differences in the depth of spelling between Chinyanja and English on the reading skills of students in grades 4, 5, and 6; (b) To evaluate the extent to which the reading data in Chinyanja and English align with the theoretical framework of reading comprehension; (c) To determine which dataset, Chinyanja or English, aligns better with the conceptualised model of reading comprehension. These models were anticipated to be predicted independently in both Chinyanja and English languages by LTD, PAW, WRD, and PWD. The analyses involved generating descriptive statistics, conducting ANOVA, assessing bivariate correlations, performing path analysis, and evaluating model fit for the reading comprehension models.

Descriptive Statistics, Bivariate Correlations, and Multiple Regression Coefficients

The means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients of the five subtests are presented in Table 2. The reading performance in Chinyanja was notably superior. The mean differences between the two orthographies were statistically significant, $F(5, 230) = 19.09$, $p < 0.01$; Pillai-Bartlett's $V = 0.29$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.29$. Specifically, apart from PAW, the Chinyanja-tested participants outperformed their English counterparts on LTD, WRD, PWD, and RDC. However, only three out of the five cross-orthography mean differences were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). These were between NPAW ($M = 13.17$; $SD = 3.93$) and EPAW ($M = 16.20$; $SD = 3.53$), NWRD ($M = 45.65$; $SD = 28.09$) and EWRD ($M = 33.67$; $SD = 21.15$), and NPWD ($M = 21.17$; $SD = 11.33$) and EPWD ($M = 16.77$; $SD = 11.59$). The mean differences between NLTD ($M = 9.79$; $SD = 0.80$) and ELTD ($M = 9.58$; $SD = 1.04$) and NRDC ($M = 21.74$; $SD = 13.82$) and ERDC ($M = 21.33$; $SD = 12.81$) were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This finding is not only interesting, but also a notable indication of the inherent variations in skills required to process print across diverse orthographies, as reported by numerous studies (Holopainen et al., 2001; Muller & Brady, 2001).

To further understand how variations in comprehension dynamics across orthographic transparency affect the results, bivariate correlation analyses were performed to examine specific interactions between variables. The bivariate correlation coefficients are displayed in Table 2 below. The results of the correlation analyses indicate strong associations within each orthography; the Chinyanja variables correlated highly among themselves, while the English predictors showed similar correlational patterns. However, LTD did not show statistically significant correlations with any other variables, both within and across the two orthographies.

Similarly, the only statistically significant cross-orthography correlations were between NLTD and EPWD ($r(119) = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$) and EWRD ($r(119) = 23$, $p < 0.05$).

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine variations in the two reading comprehension models, and both analyses yielded statistically significant results: Chinyanja $F(4, 114) = 26.85$, $p < .01$, and English $F(4, 116) = 39.38$, $p < .01$. The regression coefficients for the multiple regression analyses are displayed in Table 2 below. The four predictors (LTD, PAW, WRD, and PWD) explained 58 per cent ($R^2 = 0.58$, Adjusted $R2 = 0.56$) of the variance in reading comprehension in the English model, compared to approximately 49 per cent ($R^2 = 0.49$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.47$) in the Chinyanja model. Therefore, if we use $R2$ as a measure of goodness of fit, the English data fit the reading comprehension model relatively better than the Chinyanja data.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients, Descriptive Statistics, and Unstandardised, Beta Weights, and Structure Coefficients

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	b	β	r_s
1. NLTD	1										-.2.86*	-0.17*	-0.22*
2. NPAW	0.03	1									0.43	0.12	0.59**
3. NWRD	0.03	0.42**	1								0.20*	0.41*	0.93**
4. NPWD	-0.01	0.53**	0.87**	1							0.28	0.23	0.93**
5. NRDC	-0.15	0.41**	0.65**	0.65**	1								
6. ELTD	-0.05	-0.10	0.10	0.12	010	1					0.34	0.03	0.17
7. EPAW	0.07	-0.09	-0.03	0.06	-0.01	0.10	1				0.32	0.09	0.50**
8. EWRD	0.23*	-0.11	-0.01	-0.02	-0.14	0.13	0.40**	1			0.42*	0.69*	0.99**
9. EPWD	0.22*	-0.07	0.05	0.04	-0.06	0.03	0.34**	0.85**	1		0.03	0.03	0.85**
10. ERDC	0.07	-0.12	0.02	0.05	-0.06	0.13	0.38**	0.75**	0.65**	1			
M	9.79	13.17	45.65	21.17	21.74	9.58	16.20	33.67	16.77	21.33			
SD	0.80	3.93	28.09	11.33	13.82	1.04	3.53	21.15	11.59	12.81			

Note: NLTD = Chinyanja Letter Discrimination; NPAW = Chinyanja Phonological Awareness; NPWD = Chinyanja Pseudoword Decoding; NWRD = Chinyanja Word Reading; NRDC = Chinyanja Reading Comprehension; ELTD = English Letter Discrimination; EPAW = English Phonological Awareness; EPWD = English Pseudoword Decoding; EWRD = English Word Reading; ERDC = English Reading Comprehension. * $p<0.05$. ** $p<0.01$.

    The dependent variable for Multiple Linear Regression was reading comprehension. $R^2 = 0.49$ and 0.58; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.47$ and 0.56 in Chinyanja and English orthographies respectively.

More specifically, the Chinyanja model suggests that word reading ($b = 0.41$, $p < 0.05$) and letter discrimination ($b = -0.17$, $p < 0.05$) skills contribute the most to comprehension. In the English model, only EWRD ($b = 0.69$, $p < 0.05$) has a larger impact on reading comprehension. This finding suggests that EWRD is a better predictor of reading comprehension in English compared to Chinyanja. While the regression coefficients indicate that EPAW and EPWD do not significantly contribute to comprehension, the structure coefficients show that all variables, except ELTD, strongly predict comprehension in both models. The patterns of structure coefficients seem to be the opposite of the beta weights; smaller beta weights correspond to larger structure coefficients. These dynamics may suggest suppression effects or collinearity among predictors.

Comparison of Path Coefficients between Reading Comprehension Models

Independent path analyses were conducted to compare the causal effects among variables in the two models, as depicted in the path diagram in Figure 1. The direct standardised and unstandardised path coefficients (similar to multiple regression weights) are presented in Figure 1 and Table 2. Since our aim was to compare the models in two different orthographies, only standardised path coefficients were interpreted 'so that the weights can be compared with each other apples-to-apples' (Thompson, 2006, p. 283).
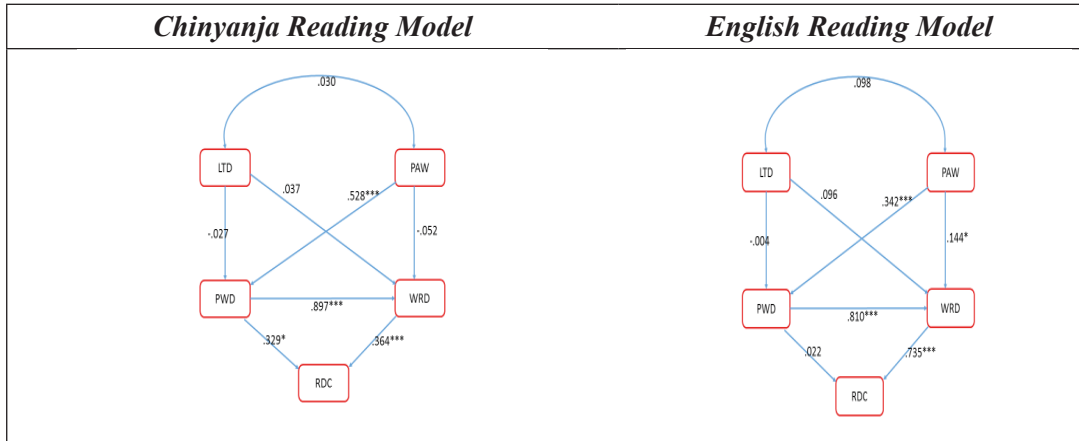

Table 3 below displays the statistically significant path coefficients between PAW and PWD, as well as between PWD and WRD in both orthographies. Moreover, the direct effects of WRD on comprehension were statistically significant in both Chinyanja and English, with English showing a stronger effect. Certain variables had language-specific effects. Specifically, the direct effects of letter discrimination on pseudo-word decoding were only statistically significant in English, as were the direct effects of word reading on PAW.

Table 3: Path Analysis: Path Coefficients in Chinyanja and English Orthographies

Path			Chinyanja				English			
			b	*ß*	*SE*	*P*	*b*	*ß*	*SE*	*p*
PWD	<---	LTD	-0.38	-0.03	1.11	0.73	-0.05	-0.00	0.96	0.96
WRD	<---	LTD	1.31	0.04	1.59	0.41	**1.96**	**0.10**	0.95	0.04*
PWD	<---	PAW	**1.52**	**0.53**	0.23	***	**1.12**	**0.34**	0.28	***
WRD	<---	PAW	-0.37	-0.05	0.38	0.33	**0.69**	**0.11**	0.29	0.02*
WRD	<---	PWD	**2.22**	**0.90**	0.13	***	**1.48**	**0.81**	0.09	***
RDC	<---	PWD	**0.40**	**0.33**	0.17	0.02*	0.02	0.02	0.13	0.85
RDC	<---	WRD	**0.18**	**0.36**	0.07	0.01**	**0.45**	**0.74**	0.07	***

Note: LTD = letter discrimination; PAW = phonological awareness; PWD = pseudoword decoding; WRD = word reading; RDC = reading comprehension

Contrastingly, pseudo-word decoding was only statistically significant on comprehension in Chinyanja, which probably suggests that the Chinyanja reading comprehension model is more parsimonious than English. Table 4 shows the Sobel

statistics of the mediated effects of each predictive path on reading comprehension. The effects of pseudo-word decoding, when mediated by word reading, were statistically significant in both orthographies: Chinyanja (0.40, $z = 2.60$, $p < 0.01$) and English (0.66, $z = 6.01$, $p < 0.01$). In Chinyanja orthography, only pseudo-word decoding mediated by PAW was statistically significant (0.61, $z = 2.23$, $p < 0.05$). In English, on the other hand, both letter discrimination and PAW on reading comprehension, when mediated by word reading, were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$): 0.87, $z = 1.99$, and 0.31, $z = 2.20$, respectively.

Table 4: Sobel Test Statistics for Mediated Effects on Reading Comprehension

	IV		Med.	CHINYANJA			ENGLISH		
				Ind. Effect	Test Stat.	*P*	Ind. Effect	Test Stat.	*p*
1.	LTD	®	PWD	-0.15	-0.35	0.73	-0.00	-0.05	0.96
2.	LTD	®	WRD	0.24	0.78	0.46	**0.87**	**1.99**	**0.05***
3.	PAW	®	PWD	**0.61**	**2.23**	**0.02***	0.02	0.19	0.85
4.	PAW	®	WRD	-0.37	-0.91	0.36	**0.31**	**2.20**	**0.03***
5.	PWD	®	WRD	**0.40**	**2.60**	**0.01***	**0.66**	**6.01**	**0.01***

Note: IV = independent variable; Med. = mediating variable; Test Stat. = Test Statistics; Ind. Effect= indirect effect. *. $p < 0.05$.

There were two major differences between the Chinyanja and English reading comprehension models. First, in the Chinyanja model, the mediated effects of pseudo-word decoding (PWD) on word reading (WRD) were statistically significant (p<0.05). Second, in the English model, the indirect effects of PAW on WRD were also statistically significant (p<0.05). This means that PAW skills are important for understanding text in both transparent and opaque orthographies, but they are mediated by different skills. In Chinyanja, pseudo-word decoding plays a key role, while in English, word reading proficiency depends more on letter discrimination and phonological processing. Another interesting finding, although expected, was that PWD positively influenced WRD proficiency in both orthographies (Sánchez-Vincitore et al., 2022). This is interesting because despite the variations among predictors in the two orthographies, comprehension seems to depend on decoding (PWD) and word recognition (WRD) skills.

Model Fit Evaluation for Chinyanja and English Reading Data

The two models of reading comprehension underwent model fit analyses to assess their applicability to the science of reading. The results of these analyses can be found in Table 5 below. The English data seemed to fit the model relatively well, $X^2 = 2.13$ ($df = 2$, $p < .35$, RMSEA = 0.02, NFI = 0.99, and CFI = 1.00). In comparison, the Chinyanja data had a chi-square value of 8.05 ($df = 2$, $p = 0.05$, RMSEA = 0.16, NFI = 0.97, and CFI = 0.98). The English data satisfied all the recommended fit index thresholds according to Mellard, Fall, and Woods (2010), including a non-significant chi-square value (p > 0.05), RMSEA less than 0.05, and NFI and CFI values greater than 0.95. On the other hand, the Chinyanja data only met the NFI and CFI requirements. This finding is not surprising, as Share (2008) argued that most reading models are developed from an Anglocentric perspective.

Table 5: Model Fit Indices for Chinyanja and English Orthographies

Index		Chinyanja	English
Chi-square			
	χ^2-Value	8.05	2.13
	Df	2.00	2.00
	P	0.05	**0.35**[*]
RMSEA		0.16	**0.02**[*]
CFI		**0.97**[*]	**1.00**[*]
NFI		**0.98**[*]	**0.99**[*]

Note. χ^2 = chi-square; *df* = degrees of freedom for the model; *p* = p-value; NFI = normed fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

       [*] Met criteria for model fit

Discussion

The primary aim of this study was to compare the dynamics of certain factors—specifically, LTD, PAW, WRD, and PWD—in predicting reading comprehension (RDC) among Zambian bilinguals in two distinct orthographic systems: Chinyanja, which employs a transparent orthography, and English, which employs an opaque orthography. In relation to our main objective, the results demonstrate that the depth of orthography significantly influences the dynamics of variables that facilitate the reading process being examined. This finding not only aligns with the principles outlined in the psycholinguistic grain size theory (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005), but also suggests the need for differentiated approaches to teaching reading for beginning bilingual readers (Goswami, 2005).

Despite anticipating substantial variations in the dynamics of reading processes between Chinyanja and English due to differences in orthographic transparency, these two languages also share certain characteristics. This can be attributed, at least in part, to the fact that both orthographies are based on the Latin alphabet and, therefore, adhere to the same grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) rules (Kaani & Joshi, 2013; Chimuka, 1978). Similar findings have been reported in numerous studies comparing aspects of the reading process between English and other alphabetic European orthographies, such as Finnish (Aro & Wimmer, 2003), German (Landerl et al., 1997), Italian (Thorstad, 1991), Turkish (Oney & Durgunoglu, 1999), and Welsh (Spencer & Hanley, 2003). Furthermore, in the case of Zambia, where children learn to read in both languages, they may be integrating various types of linguistic knowledge in their quest for accurate reading (Alcock & Ngorosho, 2003, p. 635).

Overall, transparent orthographies appear to support reading development and eventual proficiency more effectively than opaque orthographies. This conclusion is based on the superior performance of Chinyanja participants compared to their English counterparts across all reading variables, including LTD, PWD, WRD, and RDC (with the exception of PAW). This finding is supported by studies conducted by Holopainen et al., (2001) and Muller and Brady (2001), who noted that phonological processing skills are crucial for learning English, but not necessary in transparent orthographies like Finnish and Spanish. Similar results were observed among Kiswahili-speaking children in Tanzania (Alcock & Ngorosho, 2003). These writing systems reflect the simple grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) features of Zambian languages (Chimuka, 1978). Holopainen and colleagues found that while

phonological awareness played a significant role in differentiating children at various stages of reading development, it did not predict delayed progression in children with learning disabilities in the Finnish orthography. The complexity of the English orthographic structure necessitates novice readers to employ a wide range of sub-skills to navigate its inherent idiosyncrasies (Goswami, 2003; 2005; Share, 1995; 2008; 2022).

One objective of this study was to investigate whether there is transfer of basic literacy skills across orthographies of differing transparency. Traditionally, novice readers are expected to transfer skills acquired in Chinyanja to the English orthography in Zambian schools, as observed among Turkish children (Oney & Durgunoglu, 1999). This is why initial literacy instruction and schooling, in general, are conducted in the children's mother tongue before introducing English language teaching (Sampa, 2005; Sampa et al., 2018; Tambulukani et al., 1999). Unfortunately, our findings did not fully support this hypothesis, as bivariate correlation analyses revealed significant associations within each orthography but weak associations across orthographies. Consequently, it can be concluded that there is limited transfer of skills between the two orthographies, at least in the Zambian context. These findings are supported by Kaani and Joshi (2013) in the context of spelling. This phenomenon may explain why Zambia continues to report low levels of reading and writing proficiency in the English language, despite efforts by stakeholders to improve literacy outcomes through policy changes (Kaani, 2018; Kaani et al., 2016; Jere-Folotiya, 2018; Sampa, 2005; 2016; Tambulukani & Bus, 2012).

The dynamics of skills predicting reading comprehension in Chinyanja and English, as revealed by multiple regression models, also support the argument that orthographic transparency has different effects. This study introduces slight variations in the predictive dynamics of variables that traditionally support reading comprehension. These variables include letter detection (LTD), word detection (WRD), phonological awareness (PAW), and phonological decoding (PWD). Previous studies have emphasised the importance of these variables (Caravolas et al., 2012; Caravolas et al., 2013; Furnes & Samuelsson, 2010; 2011; Holopainen et al., 2001; Landerl et al., 2019, Landerl et al., 2022; Müller & Brady, 2001; Vaessen et al., 2010). This study found that only two of these variables played significant roles in predicting reading comprehension. In the Chinyanja model, comprehension was found to be a function of LTD and WRD skills, while in the English model, only WRD skills showed similar effects. This finding deviates from the current available reading comprehension models (Share, 2008; 2021).

Additionally, a comparison of the idealised path analysis models supports the notion that reading comprehension in these models relies on different reading processes, as noted in previous studies (Holopainen et al., 2001; Landerl et al., 2019; Landerl et al., 2022; Muller & Brady, 2001). Although the path analyses of both models reveal that PAW serves as a fundamental facilitator of reading comprehension in both Chinyanja and English orthographies, it is mediated by different variables. In Chinyanja, PAW is indirectly mediated by PWD through WRD, while in the English model, PAW is mediated by PWD to WRD and also shows a direct link through WRD. Thus, achieving good comprehension in the English language does not necessarily require mastery of PAW. On the other hand, mastering word recognition without phonological recoding poses significant challenges and necessitates

systematic instruction and extended teaching periods (Hanley et al., 2004; Seymour et al., 2003; Share, 2001). This is evident in the observed differences in literacy achievement (Kaani, 2014; Kaani & Joshi, 2013; Sampa, 2005; 2018; Sampa et al., 2018; Tambulukani et al., 1999). It is not surprising to see variations in literacy achievement, as each orthography exerts different influences on novice readers and requires distinct word-level processing skills (Goswami, 2003; 2005). This is partly because the idiosyncrasies of the English orthography demand more than just synthetic phonics knowledge (Bowers & Bowers, 2017; Drew, 2020).

The study provides compelling evidence regarding the impact of variations in orthographic transparency on the reading process. The evaluation aimed at assessing the universality of an idealised generic model of comprehension, which was developed based on existing theories of reading. When data from measures of LTD, PWD, PAW, and WRD were applied to the model, it was found that the English data fit better than the Chinyanja data. This outcome challenges traditional explanations and suggests the need to consider alternative models or theories of reading. This finding has significant implications for models aiming at explaining the science of reading, which have been predominantly influenced by an Anglocentric perspective.

In summary, three key findings emerged from the study. Firstly, the presence of orthography-specific correlations among variables contradicts the notion that predictors and cognitive precursors of the reading process are universal. This finding is particularly surprising considering the similarities between the orthographies under investigation. It suggests that there may be cross-orthography transfer of basic literacy skills from one language to another. Previous research has shown that skills acquired in one language can predict reading proficiency in another, especially when the languages share orthographic characteristics. In this case, it was expected that there would be a strong association between the two languages given that early reading instruction in Zambian schools aims at facilitating skills transfer from the mother tongue to English. However, the results indicate a larger gap in cognitive demands between Chinyanja and English, which has important implications for the teaching and learning process of Zambian bilingual beginning readers.

Secondly, reading comprehension in English requires a systematic integration of various interconnected skills that differ from those needed for Chinyanja. English comprehension primarily relies on word recognition (WRD) through intricate and interconnected networks that involve skills such as letter-to-sound decoding (LTD), phonological awareness (PAW), and phonological working memory (PWD). Conversely, in Chinyanja orthography, comprehension is facilitated primarily by PWD skills instead of word reading. Similar findings have been observed in comparisons between French-English (Bruck et al., 1997) and Dutch-English (van den Bosch et al., 1995). Clinton, Quiñones, and Christo (2011) attribute these differences to variations in word processing strategies, suggesting that opaque orthographies heavily depend on onset-rime skills, while transparent orthographies rely more on phonological recoding-based decoding. Furnes and Samuelsson (2011) and Holopainen et al. (2001) have also reported similar effects of PAW, arguing that phonological awareness becomes less crucial in transparent orthographies as beginning readers develop self-teaching mechanisms (Share, 1995) that enable decoding of legitimate letter combinations.

Lastly, our findings support the script-dependent theory of reading comprehension (Furnes & Samuelsson, 2010, 2011; Holopainen et al., 2001; Müller & Brady, 2001; Share, 1995, 2008). Model fit evaluations indicate that our conceptual model is more suitable for English data than for Chinyanja language data. Therefore, we can infer that our model may be an oversimplification of reality and may reflect an Anglocentric perspective (Share, 2008). Our results, in line with studies by Caravolas et al. (2012, 2013), Furnes and Samuelsson (2010, 2011), Holopainen et al. (2001), and Müller and Brady (2001), demonstrate that predictors of reading comprehension are relatively universal across orthographic depths. However, the dynamics of these predictors vary significantly. Differences in the nature and predictive power of variables suggest varying demands in the strategies required for decoding and comprehending text (Goswami, 2005; Ziegler & Goswami, 2006). Therefore, relying solely on the English orthography, which is deemed "ill-equipped to serve the interests of a universal science of reading" (Share, 2008, p. 584), when developing reading theories can lead to biased assumptions and models. Instead, reading theories and models should be informed by and developed from empirical evidence drawn from multiple perspectives that encompass writing systems with diverse orthographic depths.

Despite the presence of inherent methodological design weaknesses, this study has successfully yielded significant insights into the impact of orthographic depth on the dynamics of predictors of reading comprehension among bilingual individuals who are in the process of acquiring literacy skills in languages with varying orthographic characteristics. Nevertheless, we suggest that future research should not only aim at expanding the range of predictive variables but also incorporate a longitudinal approach by tracking cohorts of early readers over several years. This will provide a more accurate understanding of the true magnitude of the achievement gap and the duration required for the developmental delay to diminish, particularly in economically disadvantaged developing countries.

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