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MONETARY POLICY SHOCKS AS DETERMINANTS OF LIFE EXPECTANCY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
Life expectancy in Nigeria is quite low when compared with that of the developed nations of the world. Some health economists often attribute this low life expectancy to some factors, including stressful life situations occasioned by prevailing economic hardship, especially with respect to monetary policy shocks. The monetary policy shocks were real exchange rate depreciation and variations in interest rates. To either confirm or disprove this attribution, the study investigated the monetary policy shocks as determinants of life expectancy in Nigeria. The human development index was used as a proxy to measure life expectancy. The data for the study were sourced from the CBN Statistical Bulletin (2023), the National Bureau of Statistics (2023), and the United Nations (2023), Human Development Index report. Data collected were analyzed using vector error correction model (VECM), Co-integration, and Granger causality. The result of the study indicated that: (i) There is a significant negative impact of real exchange depreciation on life expectancy in Nigeria at lag 1. This showed that an increase in real exchange rate depreciation made life expectancy decrease. But no significant relationship between real exchange rate depreciation and life expectancy was observed at lag 2. (ii) There is no significant relationship between variation in interest rate and life expectancy in Nigeria at lag 1 and lag 2. It was recommended inter alia that the government should create an enabling environment and incentives that will attract investors and tourists from the Western world into the country. This will improve the demand for the naira, leading to the appreciation of the naira against the dollar.

Keywords: Monetary Policy Shocks, Life expectancy, Nigeria.

Introduction

According to Esteban (2017), life expectancy (i.e., human life expectancy) is a statistical measure of the estimate of the average remaining years of life at a given age. It is the average number of years that a person can expect to live if he or she experiences the age-specific mortality rates prevalent in a particular year. Modig, Rau, and Ahibom (2020) stated that life expectancy is considered a straightforward summary measure of mortality that comes with an implicit age standardization. Life expectancy at birth is an indicator of mortality conditions and, by proxy, of health conditions. It is an alternative summary measure of the mortality experience of a population. The average life expectancy globally is seventy (70) years for men and seventy-five (75) years for women in mid-2023. In comparison, the average life expectancy at birth across Africa was sixty-one (61) years for men and sixty-five years for women. (Weitensfelder, Moshammer&Ataniyazova, 2024). Life expectancy in Africa is the lowest globally. Within Africa, Nigeria and Lesotho had the lowest life expectancy for men and women born in 2023, respectively. As of 2021, the life expectancy of some West African countries was relatively low. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2022), life expectancy in Nigeria was around 54.4 years and in Ghana was approximately 64.4 years, and Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire) was around 57.5 years old, in 2021. In Nigeria, Life expectancy at birth for males grew from 53.2 years in 2015 to 55.1 years in 2022, while life expectancy for females increased from 55.3 years in 2015 to 57.2 years in 2022.(National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Over the years; most economic observers, especially health economists believe that malnutrition, health related crisis and stress constitute the determinants of human life expectancy in Nigeria and these factors, that is malnutrition, health related crisis and stress, manifested because of people's inability to respond, tackle and control them as a result of paucity of funds caused by real exchange rate depreciation and variations in interest rate. While the real exchange rate depreciation increased inflation and reduced the disposable income of the people, variations in interest rates (increasing interest rates) further reduced income. According to Sun and Kim (2018), exchange rate depreciation appears inflationary, as consumer price, producer price, import price, and export price increase, leading to a fall in personal consumption, consumer confidence, stock price, and housing in the U.S.A. Since inflation can reduce the propensity to consume, access to certain food items and quality healthcare services will be adversely affected, leading to malnutrition and low life expectancy. To interest rate variations, Rasool, Adil, and Tarique (2025) discovered that interest rate negatively affects real income. This real income, according to Jetter, Laundage, and Stadelmann (2019), has a positive relationship with life expectancy. Exchange rate refers to the rate at which one currency will be exchanged for another currency (Frieden, Lake & Schultz, 2019), while interest rate, according to Homer and Sylla (1996) means the amount of interest due per period, as a proportion of the amount lent, deposited or borrowed (called the principal sum). Exchange rate depreciation means a fall in the value of a country's currency for one or more foreign reference currencies, typically in a floating exchange rate system in which no official currency value is maintained. (Krugman&Obstfeld, 2025). This study therefore investigates monetary policy shocks as determinants of life expectancy. The monetary policy shocks are the real exchange rate depreciation and variations in the interest rate.

Objectives of the study

The broad objective of the study is to investigate monetary policy shocks as determinants of life expectancy in Nigeria. Specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the impact of real exchange rate depreciation on life expectancy in Nigeria.
2. Determine the impact of interest rate variations on life expectancy in Nigeria.
3. Investigate the causal relationship among real exchange rate depreciation, interest rate variation, and life expectancy in

Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The operational hypotheses are stated as follows:

H0: There is no significant impact of real exchange rate depreciation on life expectancy in Nigeria.

H1: There is a significant impact of real exchange rate depreciation on life expectancy in Nigeria.

H0: There is no significant impact of interest rate variation on life expectancy in Nigeria.

H1: There is a significant impact of interest rate variation on life expectancy in Nigeria.

H0: There is no significant causal relationship among real exchange rate depreciation, interest rate variation, and life expectancy in Nigeria.

H1: There is a significant causal relationship among real exchange rate depreciation, interest rate variation, and life expectancy in Nigeria.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study covers the period from 1986 to 2023. The choice of this time frame is based on the availability of a time series dataset. The limitation of the study is that the years before 1986 and after 2023 (i.e, 2024)are not covered in the study.

Empirical Literature

Exchange Rate Depreciation and Life Expectancy

Jebbin (2023) investigated macroeconomic variables and life expectancy in Nigeria using a time series dataset from 1981-2021, sourced from the Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin (2023).Data collected was analyzed using an autoregressive distributed lag model, bounds co-integration test, andStationarity test. The findings revealed that real exchange rate depreciation caused a decline in life expectancy in Nigeria in both the short run and long run. This is in addition to other findings in respect of other macroeconomic variables. The study has exchange rate policyimplications.

Abubaker, Mustapha, and Mallum (2023) conducted a study on the impact of macroeconomic variables on life expectancy in Nigeria using a time series dataset from 1991 to 2021. Analysis of data was carried out using Kwiatkowski-Philips-Schmidt-Shin (SPSS) techniques, and Stationarity tests using the augmentedDickey-Fuller (ADF) model. One of the macroeconomic variables, that is, inflation, which can be used as a proxy for exchange rate depreciation, hurts life expectancy in Nigeria. The study has inflation policy implications.

Onwube, Chukwu, Ahamba, Emenekwe, and Enyoghasim (2021) conducted a study on the determinants of life expectancy in Nigeria, with respect to the autoregressive distributed lag approach, using a time series dataset from 1981 to 2017. The ARDL model was adopted for data analysis. They discovered that real exchange rate depreciation and inflation rate, which were among the explanatory variables studied, had a negative and significant relationship with life expectancy in the short-run, but in the long-run, real exchange rate depreciation impacted positively on life expectancy, while inflation rate impacted negatively on life expectancy. The study has exchange rate and inflation policy implications.

Lawal, Osinusi, and Bisiriyu (2021) carried out a study on inflation and life expectancy in Nigeria: a causal analysis, using a time series dataset from 1980 to 2019. Analysis was done with Granger Causality, ADF unit root test, VAR, and ARDL models. The result indicated that the inflationary trend in Nigeria had no significant influence on life expectancy in Nigeria, while exchange rate depreciation had a significant positive influence on life expectancy in Nigeria.

Aigheyisi (2020) investigated the determinants of life expectancy in Nigeria, concerning the question: “Does agricultural productivity matter”? usinga time series dataset from 1981-2016. Data collected were analyzed using the ARDL model, the Error Correction Model, and Co-integration. Exchange rate or exchange rate depreciation, as one of the explanatory variables, had no

significant relationship with life expectancy, both in the short and long run, based on the findings.

Delavari, Zandian, Rezaei, Moradi-Mazar, Saber, and Fallah (2016) investigated life expectancy and its socioeconomic determinants, using an Iranian time series data set from 2003-2015 in Iran. Analysis of data collected was done with diagnostic tests of ADF, Banergy, Dolado, and Master (BDM) rests, Engel-Granger Causality, Co-integration, and Ordinary Least Squares model estimation. The result indicated, among others, that the inflation rate, which can serve as a proxy for exchange rate depreciation, had a negative and significant impact on life expectancy. The finding has inflation policy implications.

Finally, Ali and Ahmed (2014) carried out a study on the impact of socio-economic factors on life expectancy for the Sultanate of Oman: an empirical analysis using a time series dataset from 1970-2012. Data analysis was done with the ARDL model. Inflation, as one of the socioeconomic factors investigated, which serves as a proxy for exchange rate depreciation, had no significant relationship with life expectancy with respect to the findings of the study.

Variation in Interest Rate and Life Expectancy

Chinda (2025) investigated the effect of foreign trade financing and life expectancy in Nigeria using a time series dataset from 1981-2022, sourced from the CBN statistical bulletin & annual report, various issues, and world development indicators. Data was analyzed with E-view 10.5 software and the ARDL model. The findings of the study indicated, among other findings, that bank credit, as one of the explanatory variables that is associated with variations in interest rate, had a significant positive effect on life expectancy. This means that an increase in bank rate (i.e. reduction in interest rate) improves life expectancy. The study has bank credit/interest policy implications.

Shafiei, Nonejad, Zare, and Haghighat (2020) investigated the effect of financial development indicators on the life expectancy of men and women in selected developing countries using the generalized method of moments GMM. The study made use of a time series dataset from 2000 to 2016. The method of data analysis was by generalized method of moments (GMM) estimation. The result of the study indicated that the effect of private sector lending facilities (i.e, one of the financial development indicators), including a reduction in interest rate (increase in financial development), had a significant positive relationship with life expectancy. The study has financial development policy implications.

Haque (2024) conducted a study analyzing the determinants of life expectancy in Bangladesh using a vector error correction model (VECM) anda time series dataset from 1974 to 2019. A vector error correction model was adopted for data analysis. One of the explanatory variables, that is, financial development, which isconnected with a decrease in interest rate, had a significant positive impact on life expectancy. The study has financial development/ interest rate policy implications.

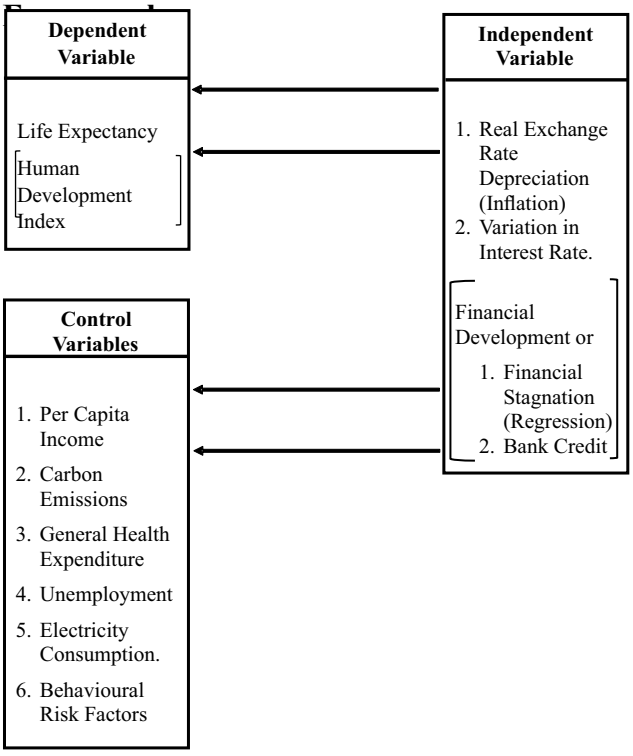
Finally, Ujuju and Vincent (2020) investigated the effect of macroeconomic variables on human capital development in Nigeria, using healthcare, which is associated with life expectancy, as a proxy for human capital development. One of the macroeconomic variables studied was the money supply, which can serve as a proxy for a very low interest rate. A time series dataset from 1986-2018, sourced from the CBN statistical bulletin and World Development Indicator, 2018, was used for the study. The data were analyzed with econometric techniques involving Descriptive statistics, the Augmented Dickey-Fuller model, the Philip Perron test for unit root, and the Autoregressive Distributed Lag model. The result of the study indicated that macroeconomic variables, including money supply (very low interest rate), exchange rate, government expenditure, and interest rate (low interest rate), have a significant long-run effects on healthcare, which serve as a proxy for life expectancy, and public health.

Conceptual Framework

Swaen and George (2022) stated that a conceptual framework expresses the expected relationships

between variables and defines the relevant objectives for the research process, and maps out how they come together to draw coherent conclusions. In this study, real exchange rate depreciation (one of the explanatory variables) can cause inflation, which can adversely affect the real disposable income of the people. When this happens, they will experience a paucity of funds and may not be able to access quality health care services, leading to low life expectancy. Therefore, sometimes inflation can be used as a proxy for real exchange rate depreciation. Also, variation in interest rate (another explanatory variable), which can either be increasing or decreasing, hasa connection with financial stagnation (regression) with respect to increasing interest rate and financial development with respect to decreasing interest rate. The commercial bank's interest rate varies depending on the current monetary policy of the Central Bank. So bank credit has a link or is associated with variation in the interest rate. This concerns people borrowing from banks. Therefore, an increase in interest rate can cause a paucity of funds for people who borrow to access basic needs of life, including quality healthcare services. Finally, life expectancy is an aspect of the human development index, which comprises quality healthcare access, education, and mortality rate. The human development index can be used to measure life expectancy. Control variables include per-capita income, carbon emission, general health expenditure, unemployment, electricity consumption, and behavioural risk factors. e.t.c.

Diagrammatic Representation of Conceptual



Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is anchored on the socioeconomic theory of life expectancy.

Socioeconomic Theory of Life Expectancy

This theory was propounded by Grossman in 1972. It stated that an individual's economic standing, including factors like income and access to healthcare, directly impacts their health, longevity, or life expectancy. It assumes that people with higher socioeconomic status generally live longer than those with lower socioeconomic status. This disparity is evident even in countries with universal healthcare, and it is influenced by factors like income, occupation, and education. The theory assumes that life expectancy depends on income and access to healthcare services. Here, life expectancy is the dependent variable while income and access to healthcare services are the independent variables. The strength of the theory is that it is quite true to a reasonable extent, in the sense that there was a lot

of evidence where people died in most developing nations as a result of poverty and inability to raise money to access quality healthcare services when they were sick. The weakness inherent in this study is that there was numerous evidence, especially in the developed world where people were very rich and could access quality healthcare services, but they still died from one sickness or the other. Applying this theory to the study, we can easily find out that exchange rate depreciation and an increase in interest rate are likely to deplete the real disposable income of people. For instance, exchange rate depreciation can cause inflation, which adversely affects the real disposable income of people. Also increase in interest rate can reduce the income of the people can depriving them of the financial resources or the money to access quality healthcare services when they are sick, and adversely affect their life expectancy.

Model Specification

The model specification expressed life expectancy as a function of real exchange rate depreciation and variation in interest rate.

LEXP= F (Bo+B1REXRD+B2VINTR=U.

Where: F Functional Relationship.

LEXP= Life expectancy

REXRD Real Exchange Rate Depreciation.

VINTR Variation in Interest Rate.

U= Error Term

LEXP represents the dependent variable, which is intended to be explained by the weighted linear combination of regression coefficients:B1,B2, and explanatory or independent variables: REXRD and VINTR.

Estimation Techniques

The evaluation of estimates is based on economic theoretical criteria, that is, whether the estimated coefficients are theoretically meaningful. Another criterion is whether the estimated coefficients are statistically satisfactory (i.e., First Order Test). The final criterion is whether the estimated coefficients conform tothe econometric criterion (Second Order Test).

Method and Sources of Data Collection

The method of data collection involves referencing the time series dataset contained in the secondary sources. The data on real exchange rate depreciation and variations in interest rate were sourced from the Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin (2024) and National Bureau of Statistics (2024). Human Development Index for Nigeria, which is used as a proxy to measure life expectancy, was sourced from the United Nations Human Development Index Report for Nigeria (2024).

Definition of Variables

Life Expectancy: This refers to the average number of years a person is expected to live based on statistical analysis of current mortality rates. It is often calculated from birth, but can also be determined at other ages. Life expectancy varies widely depending on factors such as geography, healthcare quality, income, lifestyle, and genetics (World Health Organization, 2023). The Human Development Index can be used to measure life expectancy and can serve as a proxy for life expectancy. The human development index is used as a proxy to measure life expectancy in this study and is shown in the time series dataset in percentage (%)

Real Exchange Rate Depreciation: This refers to a decrease in the value of a country's currency relative to another, after adjusting for price level differences between the two countries. According to Krugman and Obstfeld (2018), it means that domestic goods will become cheaper for foreigners,while foreign goods will become more expensive for domestic consumers. In this study, real exchange rate depreciation is shown in the time series dataset in percentages (%).

Variation in Interest Rate: Interest rate variation refers to the changes in interest rates over time due to multiple economic and financial factors. It can be described as an increase or decrease in the price of buying or borrowing money from the money market (i.e, commercial banks). It is a monetary

policy instrument used by the Central Bank to control the money supply and inflation, and according to Mankiw (2020), one of the primary drivers of interest rate variation is the monetary policy, where the Central Bank adjusts rates to control inflation and influence economic growth. In this study, the variation in interest rate is shown in the time series dataset in percentage (%).

Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of Results.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	LEXP	REXRD	VINTR
Mean	49.054	134.7361	18.293
Median	49.032	127.2299	17.569
Maximum	53.783	367.1921	31.6509
Minimum	45.487	1.754523	9.9591
Std. Dev.	2.88059	117.4472	4.0823
Skewness	0.09974	0.701105	0.8590
Kurtosis	1.43049	2.408043	4.7518
Jarque-Bera	3.96399	3.667962	9.5334
Probability	0.13778	0.159776	0.0085
Sum	1864.02	5119.97	695.17
Sum. Sq. Dev	306.966	510371.9	616.63
Observations	38	38	38

Note: LEXP is Life Expectancy, REXRD is Real Exchange Rate Depreciation, and VINTR is Variation in Interest Rate.

Source: Researcher's Computation using E-view 12.0.

Table 1, above, presents the descriptive statistics of the variables of life expectancy, real exchange rate depreciation, and variation in interest rate. From the evidence presented in the above, the mean values of all the variables showed the average values of the variables over the years and lie between the maximum and minimum values. From the table, the average life expectancy is 49.054, the average real exchange rate depreciation is 134.7361, and the average variation in interest rate is 18.293.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix Result.

	LEXP	REXRD	VINTR
LEXP	1	0.688097	0.505079
REXRD	0.688097	1	0.227941
VINTR	0.505079	0.227941	1

Source: Researcher's computation using E-view 12.0.

In Table 2 above, life expectancy (LEXP) shows a strong positive correlation with real exchange rate depreciation (REXRD) at a value of 0.6881. This may suggest that a stable or stronger Naira improves access to healthcare and imported medical goods, thereby enhancing life expectancy. Also, life expectancy revealsa moderate positive correlation with the variable of interest rate at a value of 0.5051. This implies that higher life expectancy is moderately associated with a higher interest rate.

Table 3: Stationarity or Unit Root Test

Variables	ADF Statistics	ADF Critical Value(at 5%)	Probability	Order of Integration
LEXP	-3.408000	-3.408	0.0172	1(1)
REXRD	-4.734030	-2.945842	0.0005	1(1)
VINTR	-6.97206	-2.945842	0.0000	1(1)

Source: Researcher's computation using E-view 12.0.

From the table above, the ADF statisticsare more negative than the ADF critical value at the 0.05 level of significance, and also the Probability values (P-values) are less than 0.05 with respect to all the variables. Therefore, we conclude that time series datasets in all study or model variables are all stationary at the first differencing.

Table 4: Summary of Vector Error Correction Model Short-Run Result

Variables	Coefficient	Std. Error	t- statistics
CointEq1	-0.61157	-0.1984	[-3.08247]
D(LEXP(-1))	0.372373	-0.21357	[1.74357]
D(LEXP(-2))	-0.1868	-0.21357	[1.74357]
D(REXRD(-1))	-0.0106	-0.00346	[-3.06694]
D(REXRD(-2))	0.000637	-0.00505	[0.12621]
D(VINTR(-1))	0.023093	-0.01797	[1.28507]
D(VINTR(-2))	0.010698	-0.01827	[0.58558]
C	-9.53955	-3.16874	[-3.01052]
R-Squared	0.781244	0.52621	0.66831
Adj. R- squared	0.562489	0.052419	0.33662
Sum. Sq. resids.	0.460489	6159.068	115.0359
S.E. equation	0.164583	19.03413	2.601311
F-statistics	3.571311	1.110638	2.014865

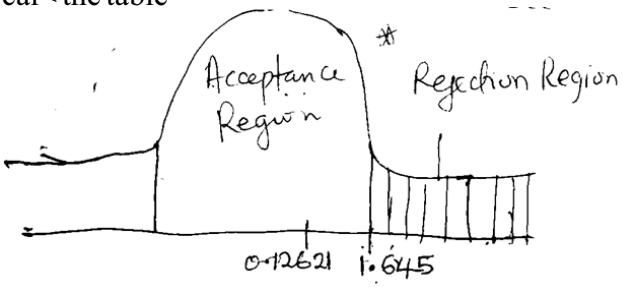
Source: Researcher's computation using E-views 12.0.

From table 4, above, there is a significant negative relationship between real exchange rate depreciation and life expectancy. At lag 1. That is – tcal< -t table



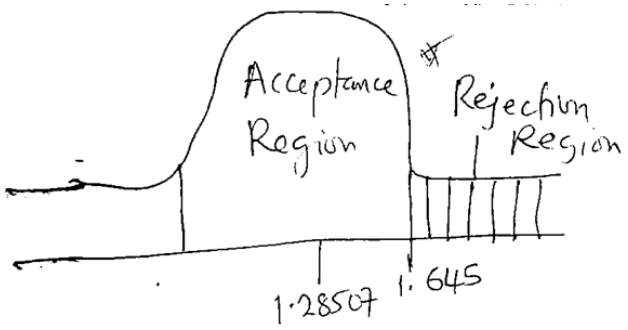
So we reject the null hypothesis.

Also, from Table 4, there is no significant relationship between real exchange rate depreciation and life expectancy at lag 2. That is t cal< the table



So we accept the null hypothesis.

In the same Table 4, there is no significant relationship between variation in interest rate and life expectancy at lag 1. That is t cal<the table



Finally, in the same Table 4, there is no significant relationship between variation in interest rate and life expectancy at lag 2. That is t cal<the table

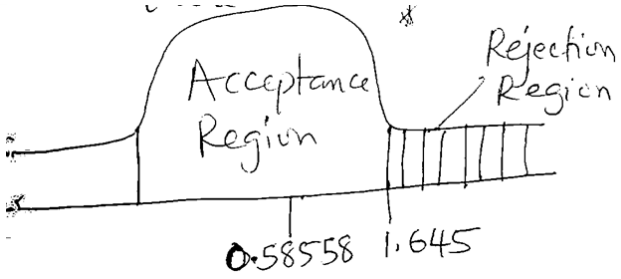


Table 5: Summary of Cointegration Test

Hypothesized No.of CE(S)	Eigen-value	Trace Statistics 0.05		Max-Eigen statistics 0.05		Probability values	
		Stat.Val	Critical value	Stat.val	Critical value	Trace	Max-Eigen
None*	0.807756	227.439	159.5297	59.36363	52.36261	0.0000	0.0083
At most 1*	0.738092	168.0754	125.6154	48.23138	46.23142	0.0000	0.0302
At most 2*	0.639087	119.844	95.75366	36.68828	40.07757	0.0004	0.1148

In Table 5, since the trace statistic is greater than the critical value at 5%, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no cointegrating equation (i.e. is the hypothesis that there is no long-run relationship among the variables

Table 6: VECM long-run Result

Cointegrating Eq:	LEXP (-1)	REXRD (-1)	VINTR (-1)
CointEq 1	1	-0.01594	0.068832
		0.00203	-0.01087
		-7.86152	[6.33382]

Source: Researcher's computation using E-view 12.0.

In the table above, the presence of a co-integrating vector shown by the co-integration tests indicates the existence of a long-run equilibrium relationship between the variables. Real exchange rate depreciation has a negative long-run relationship with life expectancy, while variation in interest rate has a positive long-run relationship with life expectancy.

Table 7.Summary Result of Granger Causality Test

Null Hypothesis	Obs.	F-Statistics	Prob.
REXRD does not Granger-cause LEXP	38	0.92907	0.4056
LEXP does not Granger-cause REXRD		0.88941	0.4211
VINTR does not Granger-cause LEXP	38	3.12334	0.0581
LEXP does not Granger-cause REXRD		5.7775	0.0074

Source: Researcher's computation using E-view 12.0

In Table 7, since all the probability values are less than the critical value at the 0.05 level of

significance, we conclude that there is a causal relationship among the variables. So we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Summary of Findings

The summary of findings is itemized as follows:

- There is a significant negative impact of real exchange rate depreciation on life expectancy in Nigeria. This indicates that an increase in exchange rate depreciation will decrease life expectancy. This is for lag 1. But concerning lag 2, there is no significant relationship between real exchange rate depreciation and life expectancy in Nigeria.
- There is no significant relationship between variation in interest rate and life expectancy in Nigeria with respect to lag 1 and lag 2.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study indicated that there is a significant negative impact of real exchange rate depreciation and life expectancy in Nigeria with respect to lag 1. This means that an increase in real exchange rate depreciation will make life expectancy decrease. This corroborates the findings of Jebbin (2023) and Onwube, Chukwu, Ahamba, Emenekwe, and Enyoghasim (2021). Jebbin(2023) discovered that exchange rate depreciation caused a decline in life expectancy in Nigeria in both the short run and the long run. Onwube, Chukwu, Ahamba, Emenekwe, and Enyoghasim (2021) also reported in their findings that exchange rate depreciation and inflation rate had a negative,significant relationship with life expectancy in the short run.

The study also indicated that there is no significant relationship between real exchange rate depreciation and life expectancy in Nigeria with respect to lag 2. This is quite in agreement with the findings of Aigheyisi (2020), who discovered that exchange rate depreciation had no significant relationship with life expectancy, both in the short and long run.

Finally, the study discovered that there is no significant relationship between interest rate variation and life expectancy in Nigeria, for lag 1 and lag 2. This deviated from the findings of Chinda (2025), Shafiei, Nonejad, Zare, and Haghighat (2020), Haque (2024), and Ujuju and Vincent (2020), who discovered contrary results.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusively, determinants of life expectancy in Nigeria cannot be restricted to depreciation in the exchange rate and inflation alone. Other likely determinants, including per capita income, general health expenditure, carbon emission, unemployment, and behavioural risk factors, need to be investigated as well. Therefore, this study is by no means exhaustive with respect to determining the influencing factors of life expectancy in Nigeria. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher strongly recommends that the government should create an enabling environment and incentives that will attract international investors into Nigeria and also develop our tourism sector to attract tourists, especially from the Western world. All those factors that prevent investors and tourists from coming to Nigeria should be checked. When investors and tourists from all over the world start coming to Nigeria, they will start converting their currency to naira, and the demand for naira will increase, leading to appreciation of naira against the dollar in the foreign exchange market. This will improve life expectancy in Nigeria in the long run.

Time Series Dataset on Human Development Index for Nigeria. (Proxy for Life Expectancy), Real Exchange Rate Depreciation and Variation of Interest Rate in Nigeria

YEAR	Human Development Index (Proxy for Life Expectancy) in (%)	Real Exchange Rate Depreciation in (%)	Interest Rate Variation in (%)
1986	0.3432	1.754523	9.959167
1987	0.3487	4.016037	13.96167
1988	0.3542	4.536967	16.61667
1989	0.3542	7.364735	20.44167
1990	0.3652	8.038285	25.3
1991	0.3707	9.909492	20.04167
1992	0.3762	17.29843	24.75833
1993	0.3817	22.0654	31.65
1994	0.3872	21.996	20.48333
1995	0.3927	21.89526	20.23333
1996	0.398	21.88443	19.83667
1997	0.404	21.88605	17.795
1998	0.41	21.886	18.18417
1999	0.413	92.3381	20.29
2000	0.421	101.6973	21.27417
2001	0.431	111.2313	23.43833
2002	0.44	120.5782	24.77083
2003	0.443	129.2224	20.71417
2004	0.462	132.888	19.18083
2005	0.465	131.2743	17.94833
2006	0.475	128.6517	16.89333
2007	0.479	125.8081	16.93917
2008	0.485	118.5667	15.13583
2009	0.49	148.88	18.99083
2010	0.484	150.2975	17.585
2011	0.494	153.8625	16.02
2012	0.512	157.5	16.79167
2013	0.519	157.3117	16.7225
2014	0.524	158.5526	16.54833
2015	0.527	192.4403	16.84917
2016	0.53	253.492	16.86802
2017	0.532	305.7901	17.55333
2018	0.53	306.0837	16.9039
2019	0.537	306.921	15.37659
2020	0.539	358.8108	13.64202
2021	0.542	360.7632	11.48313
2022	0.548	365.2849	14.89311
2023	0.560	367.1921	13.09711

Source: CBN Statistical Bulletin (2023)

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ADDRESSING SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

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Abstract
Sustainability implies fulfilling the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of upcoming generations; while ensuring a balance between social well-being, economic growth and environmental care. Based on the extant literature, the role of leadership and good governance in achieving sustainability cannot be overemphasized. It is argued that without effective leadership and good governance, the goal sustainable growth may be elusive. As evident in the existing studies, the goals of sustainability have not been adequately achieved in Nigeria. Carbon footprints, unsustainable water usage and energy consumption are increasing in the face of environmental regulatory frameworks and polices. These problems have been associated with leadership and governance failure. The aim of this paper is to examine the roles of leadership and good governance in driving and achieving sustainability goals. The paper considered how socio-economic developments and environmental protection can be achieved via effective leadership and good governance. The study anchored on two frameworks. The first one is leadership framework to determine appropriate leadership styles to achieve sustainability goals in Nigeria. The second one is good governance framework to suggest how governance should be structured to achieve the goals of sustainability. Secondary data were used to achieve the aim of this paper. Both academic and grey (official documents, newspaper reports among

others) literature were sourced, retrieved and analysed. The study concluded that to achieve sustainability goals, it is imperative for leadership framework to have elements of ethicality, connectedness, collaboration, creativity and courage. The paper combined both practical and theoretical relevancies. In terms of practical relevance, it suggests appropriate good governance framework and leadership styles to achieve the goals of sustainability in Nigeria. Additionally, it contributes to literature on good governance and leadership.

Keywords: Leadership; good governance; sustainability; sustainable development

Introduction

Nigeria is the most populous economy in Africa, and sixth in the world. Population growth in the country is largely geometric as its population increased from 32 million in 1950 to 232 million in 2023 (Oban International, 2023). Based on the projection, its population is likely to be more than 400 million in 2050 (Okafor, 2022). Also, Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa, and this could be associated with large volume of economic activities due to its large population. Unsurprising, the rapid population and economic growth have major implications for sustainability. Sustainability has been variously defined as achieving balance the environment, equity and economy. Based on the definition of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development, "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". From the above definition, it is observed that there are three major dimensions of sustainability: environmental (Planet), social (People) and economic (Profit) sustainability (Thiele, 2024). Thus, sustainability is measured by the extent to which the three dimensions are achieved without affecting each other. However, these three dimensions have been problematic in Nigeria as the country struggles to achieve adequately achieve the three components (Ruggerio, 2021).

For instance, environmental sustainability is still far from being achieved as its natural resources are already under strain, with rising carbon emissions and increasing deforestation. To feed its population, Nigeria builds its economy around fossil fuels (oil and gas). About 93 per cent of its export revenue comes from fossil fuels; and this also causes significant environmental disruptions. Due to large scale production, the country produced 129 metric tons of CO_2 in 2023, which is the 4th highest emission in Africa (Population Matters, 2023). The bulk of the emissions are reportedly come from the production of oil and gas especially the practice of 'gas vetting' where unwanted gases emerged during oil production – largely methane – are released into the environment. Like carbon dioxide, methane is a greenhouse gas; but it 28 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Also, gas flaring is a common practice of burning off surfaced gases. As reported by CSL Stockbrokers (2023), about 6.6 billion cubic metres of gas was flared in Nigeria in 2021, which made the country the 7th largest gas flarer in

the world. Also, many private companies operating in Nigeria are not complying with the environmental regulations as they release wastes indiscriminately. The study of Lala et al., (2022) revealed that increased rate of industrial and construction activities, transportation system and unregulated emissions from power plants are responsible for the problem of environmental sustainability in Nigeria.

Also, social sustainability is another major concern in Nigeria. This is about ensuring that communities and societies thrive and continue to exist in a healthy, fair and equal way. Social sustainability could be said to have been achieved when people's quality of life is improved and strong relationships are fostered. The country faces challenges relating to poverty, inequality, education, healthcare, and gender equality. These challenges have been associated with lack of social inclusivity. Based on the World Bank Group report (2023), poverty rate was estimated to be 38.9 per cent. The report also revealed that Nigeria is the second largest poor population – after India – with about 87 million Nigerians living below the poverty line. Similarly, Premium Times (2022) reported that 133 million of Nigerians are living in poverty – equivalent to 63 per cent of the country's population. Oxfam International (2024), the combined wealth of Nigeria's five richest men - $29.9 billion – could end extreme poverty at a national level. About 18.3 million children are out of school, which limits their opportunities in life. The aim of social sustainability is to improve access to education for everyone (Agwam, 2024). Also, health inequality is widening in Nigeria as poor spend about 9 times more on health costs than wealthy people due to income inequality and inadequate funding of the healthcare system (Dejusticia, 2024).

The third one is economic sustainability, which focuses on revenue. Based on the existing reports, Nigeria is performing in term of economic sustainability. International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2024) projected that Nigeria would be the fourth largest economy in Africa in 2024 after South Africa, Egypt and Algeria. As reported by Trading Economics (2024), revenues in Nigeria increased to NGN1693.02 billion in the third quarter of 2023 from NGN1510.09 billion in the second quarter of 2023. Also, National Bureau of Statistics (2023) reported that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 2.31 per cent (year-on-year) in real terms in the first quarter of 2023. IMF projected that the country's GDP would be $253 billion in 2024. The major source of government revenue is oil sector. Ademola (2024) reported that government revenue obtained from the oil sector increased from 11 per cent in 2023 to 30 per cent in the first half of 2024. Jaiyeola (2023) reported that oil revenue increased by 83 per cent, which is about NGN8.5 trillion. Also, the report revealed that oil production increased to about 1.7 million barrels per day. Between 2023 and 2024, the production increased from 1.1mbpd to 1.7mbpd (Jaiyeola, 2023).

However, based on the existing reports and findings, increased in the country's revenue and GDP are being at environmental costs. Intensity of

oil exploration and exploitation in Nigeria has caused serious environmental implications. Due to oil exploration and exploitation, oil spills and gas flaring have caused major destruction to the environment. For instance, oil spills have polluted the soil, water and air, and they have had devastating consequences on the people living in the region. Also, over 2.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas are flared every day in the Niger Delta region. Evidently, the destruction of ecosystem has deleterious implications on social sustainability as it has led to a cycle of poverty because depletion of resources means people cannot make living and environmental problems such as flooding and soil erosion destroy homes and crops. Also, increased revenue has not translated to improvements in access to education and healthcare services.

Consequently, there have been increasing calls for actions to transform unsustainable practices and systems. While successive Nigerian governments have formulated and implemented several policies and frameworks to achieve economic development without compromising environmental protection and social development. Environmental Impact Assessment Act (1992) and Harmful Waste (Special Criminal Provisions) Act 1988 among others have not been effective. Also, the establishments of agencies such as National Environmental Law Enforcement Agency (NESREA) and National Oil Spill Direction and Response Agency (NOSDRA) among others have not lived to the expectation as large-scale environmental disruptions are still ongoing especially in the exploration, exploitation and production of mineral resources such as crude oil. The perceived failure to achieve environmental and social sustainability could be linked to leadership failure and lack of good governance. Existing studies have shown that environmental and social sustainability can only be achieved through effective leadership. Despite the role of leadership and good governance in achieving sustainability, the role of leadership qualities and capabilities in achieving sustainability has not been given the needed attention by scholars and policy makers (University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, 2023). It is against this background that this paper examines how good governance and leadership could bring about sustainability in Nigeria.

This study is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the key concepts in this paper, where sustainability, leadership and good governance are discussed. The second section deals with the theoretical framework where leadership and good governance frameworks were applied and applied to the paper. The third section discusses the methodology of the paper. The third section discusses the intercourse among leadership, good governance and sustainability. The fourth section concludes and recommends what should be done to achieve sustainability goals in Nigeria.

Conceptual Discussions

In this section, key concepts relevant to this paper are conceptualized. These are as follows:

Sustainability:

Sustainability has been defined as the integration of environmental health, economic vitality and social equity to create thriving, healthy, diverse and resilient communities for the current generation and the coming generations (Hajian & Kashani, 2021). Practices can be said to be sustainable provided that they support economic, human and environmental health. Based on the idea of sustainability, resources are assumed to be finite, and consequently, should be used consciously and sustainably so that they can be used for long-terms in the interests of both current and future generations (Phillips, 2023). It is also defined as a practice of preventing the depletion of natural/physical resources to ensure that they remain available and useful for a long-term. Based on the existing studies, sustainability can be broken down into three components: economic, social and environmental (Hajian & Kashani, 2021; Borowy, 2021). In this paper, sustainability in Nigeria is defined as environmental protection, social and economic development. This is further explained under the Three-Bottom Line framework.

Based on the Triple Bottom Line framework, sustainability has three major dimensions: Environmental protection, social development and economic development (Brinkmann & Brinkmann, 2020; Bolton & Landells, 2020). Environmental protection deals with the reduction of carbon footprints, water usage, wasteful processes and non-decomposable packaging among others (Muñoz, 2020). Social development deals with addressing poverty, unequal access to education and healthcare services and ensuring community development through implementation of sustainable infrastructural projects (Brinkmann & Brinkmann, 2020). Economic development implies making enough revenue to invest and develop critical sectors and infrastructure. Sustainability is measured by assessing performance of the above three areas (Bolton & Landells, 2020).

Leadership:

Leadership has been defined differently. Drucker (2020) defined as a leader as someone who has followers. This definition is too simple because roles and positions could be delegated to anyone. In a situation where a role/position is delegated, it may be hard to distinguish who is actually a leader and followers. Bennis (2008) defined leadership as the capacity to translate vision into reality. Translating visions into reality is one of the functions/responsibilities of a leader. Bill Gates defined leadership as the act of empowering others (Clarke, 2008). This definition is incomplete as it does not explain the reasons for empowerment. In other words, the definition does not explain goals and visions of leadership; it is just limited to empowerment of others. Maxwell (2002) defined leadership as influence. However, the definition ignores the source of influence. It is evident that the above definitions of leadership have both strengths and shortcomings. To aggregate the above definitions, leadership could be seen as a process of social influence, which maximizes the

efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal (Kilag et al., 2023; Angtud et al., 2023). In the context of this paper, leadership is seen as the process of social influence to maximize the efforts of other towards achieving sustainability goals (Samimi et al., 2022). In other words, the goal of leadership is to achieve environmental protection, social and economic development.

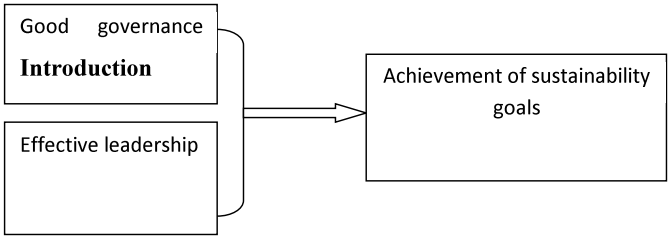
Good governance:

Like leadership, good governance has been defined differently. Before conceptualizing good governance, it is important to define governance (Brown & Marsden, 2023). Governance has been variously defined as how vested authority uses its power to achieve the institution's objectives such as powers to design, implement, and innovate policies, rules, systems and processes and to engage and involve its stakeholders (Beshi & Kaur, 2020). It implies how a country is managed such as economic, policy and legal aspects. In this context of this paper, it implies how a country design and implement policies and rules to achieve sustainability goals. Thus, good governance denotes that the exercise of the vested authority is accountable, transparent, predictable, participative and dynamic (Kjaer, 2023; Rosenau, 2021). As noted by World Bank, good governance is defined as a way in which power is used to regulate the economic and social resources of a country for development. Good governance typically leads to a country/organisation to achieve their goals ethically and in compliance with regulatory expectations and best practices (Erkkilä, 2020; Farazmand, 2023). In this paper, good governance is necessary to ensure the achievement of sustainability goals (environmental protection and socio-economic development).

Theoretical Framework: Leadership and Good Governance

Without effective leadership and good governance, it is largely impossible to achieve effective administration, achieve sustainability goals and deliver essential services (Mahmood & Baskaran, 2021). Good governance and effective leadership are fundamental. Persistent socio-economic and environmental challenges have necessitated the need for effective leadership (Zahoor et al., 2022). As mentioned earlier, leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organisation in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent (Sawmar & Mohammed, 2021)). This indicates that it is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. The effectiveness of leadership is measured in terms of good governance (Naomi & Akbar, 2020).

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: *Developed by the researchers*

To achieve sustainability goals in Nigeria, 6 major elements of good governance need to be prioritized during the formulation and implementation of sustainability goals (Ghorbanian et al., 2021). These are as follows (Pomeranz and Stedman, 2020):

i. Participation: When formulating and implementing sustainability policies, active participation of citizens should be encouraged, especially those that would be affected by the policy. For instance, people and communities should be involved in the formulation of economic, social and environmental policies, rules and regulations.
ii. Rule of Law: There is the need for a fair legal framework to establish the rule of law in society. Nobody should above the law. One importance of rule of law is that it ensures impartiality, which helps to protect human rights especially those people who are most marginal in society. When rule of law is effectively entrenched, the violators of environmental destructions would face the wrath of laws. Both government and private sectors contributing to environmental damages would be made to face the law. Entrenchment of rule of law is fundamental for achieving environmental protection and social development without compromising economic development.
iii. Transparency: Governance needs to transparency for the fair delivery of services to the citizens. Through this, citizens would be aware of existing economic, social and environmental policies. They would know what and why they are important, and why they must adhere to them. Most Nigerians are unaware of most of the government policies; and consequently, they are denied of the advantages of those policies. When they are aware of them, they would take advantages of them.
iv. Responsiveness: The essence of governance is responsibility. Government is expected to take responsibility for socio-economic and environmental challenges of the country. In other words, government is expected to be responsive to socio-economic and environmental challenges affecting citizens and communities. For instance, government is expected to respond favourably and actively to the issues of poverty, unemployment, widening income inequality, pollution, flooding among others.
v. Consensus oriented: This implies that government policies should reflect the interests and needs of the people and community. In other words, government should always adopt bottom-up approach rather top-down approach when formulating and implementing socio-economic policies. Socio-economic development and environmental protection goals can only be achieved when government carry along the

beneficiaries.

vi. Accountability: This means that government should take responsibility for their decisions and actions. Government needs to be more accountable to socio-economic and environmental conditions of the country. They should formulate and implement effective policies to address socio-economic situations of the country.

Figure 2: Good governance framework



Source: *Adopted Pomeranz and Stedman (2020).*

The paper argues that ethical and moral leadership could enhance the achievement of good governance required for achieving sustainability goals (Solinger et al., 2020; Hartarto et al., 2021). Thus, this paper is anchored on ethical leadership, which portrays a good leader as a moral person – a fair and honest person who behave morally both in personal and professional life – who influences moral conduct and ethical behaviour (Khan et al., 2020). The morality of a leader is determined by his/her sincerity and genuineness and competence (Wanta & Augustine, 2021). An ethical leader can get the most out of others and have awareness of what others can achieve. Also, a leader should be able to motivate others and have the ability to help others to develop a capability. Ethical leadership is vital for achieving good governance because it establishes and nurtures good relationships (Guet al., 2024). Ethical behaviour, and moral integrity are bedrock of building trusted and lasting relationships between leaders and followers. An ethical leader has a few roles and responsibilities he/she needs to meet in order for a country to run effectively (Argyropoulou & Spyridakis, 2022). These primary responsibilities are setting a good example, holding all people to the same standards, and ensuring their expectations are clear (Taryono et al., 2021). Ethical leadership is the practice of being honest and virtuous in whatever position they hold (Kim & Vandenberghe, 2020). It is argued that ethical leadership is required for achieving sustainability goals (Denters et al., 2023; Bekele & Ago, 2020).

Methodology

Secondary data were used in this paper. Towards this end, appropriate data were sourced from relevant sources. Secondary data is defined as any dataset collected by any person other than the one using it. Also, it is defined as the data collected for a purpose other than the task at hand. Based on the above, it is clear that secondary data are already available data even before the commencement of the study. This paper used secondary data because its collection is much faster and easier than

primary data (Newman et al., 2021). In addition, secondary research is generally cost-effective than primary research. Also, it generates clean and structured data compared with primary data. Furthermore, using secondary data, there would be large volume of data available to achieve research objectives (Taherdoost, 2021). Specifically, secondary data allowed the researchers to have clearer and broader understanding and analysis of the current sustainability, governance and leadership issues in Nigeria. Data were sourced from multiple sources such as databases, newspapers, books, conferences, published articles. This is necessary to ensure that there are adequate and relevant data to achieve the aim of the study. The data were analysed using content analysis.

Good Governance, Leadership and Sustainability Issues in Nigeria

Sustainability has three fundamental pillars: environmental protection, social development and economic development. Environmental protection entails reducing carbon footprints, water usage and non-decomposable packaging. Social development implies treating people and communities fairly and ethically. Economic development involves achieving sustainable economic growth through efficient utilization of resources. In the midst of regulatory and societal pressures to meet sustainability standards, effective and appropriate leadership styles and good governance are imperative.

In most countries, the emphasis is largely on achieving economic development with limited emphasis on environmental protection and social development. The Triple Bottom Line denotes that every country/organisation should prioritize economic development, environmental health and social-well-being. The current administration, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, has formulated several economic policies to achieve economic development in Nigeria. One of these policies is: targeting higher GDP growth and significant reduction in unemployment (Olaseinde, 2023). To achieve this goal, economic activities would be intensified. When economic activities increase, there would be increase in government revenue for public services. Another policy is: reviewing complaints about multiple taxations and anti-investment inhibitions, which had led to reduction in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by 80 per cent. It is expected that if these policies are implemented, it would attract domestic and foreign investors, which would lead to increase in government revenue (Olaseinde, 2023).

Another economic policy is: repatriation of profits and dividends through an improved FX market framework. This policy has the potential of attracting foreign investors, increasing capital inflows, strengthening economy, enhancing foreign reserves. These are necessary for achieving economic growth and development (Olaseinde, 2023). Another economic policy is: mandating the Central Bank to implement a unified exchange rate. This policy would lead to more stable and predictable exchange rates, which would benefit individuals and businesses involved

in international trade and those that depend on imported goods (Olaseinde, 2023). Also, another policy is: making electricity more accessible and affordable for businesses and homes, and this is vital for business growth as it leads to cost-reduction. Another one is: instituting budgetary reform to stimulate the economy without engendering inflation, which is necessary for achieving balanced economic growth. The major one is the removal of fuel subsidy to free up government finances (Olaseinde, 2023). However, while these policies are formulated and implemented to achieve economic sustainability, social sustainability is still far from being achieved. For instance, removal of subsidy has caused and brought serious hardship to many Nigerians.

Also, to achieve social sustainability, the National Social Investment Program – a social welfare initiative – was launched by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2015. The program is overseen by the National Social Investment Office with the aim of promoting equitable resource distribution to vulnerable populations such as children youth and women (Lamidi & Igbokwe, 2021). Under the previous administration – President Muhammadu Buhari, four key social investment programs were implemented to address the problem of persistent poverty and income inequality. The first one is the N-Power (Nigeria) program, which was used to develop both vocational and academic skills of young Nigerians with a monthly stipend of NGN30, 000 (Achimugu et al., 2024).

Another program was the Conditional Cash Transfer Program (CCT) to provide financial assistance for the poorest of the poor to support their basic needs and education. Another program is the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Program (GEEP), which was an investment programs targeting young and women entrepreneurs. These loans were provided to offset some of the startup costs (Adam, 2018). Also, the Home Grown School Feeding Program (HGSF) was launched to increase school enrollment as meals were provided for students (Ayuba et al., 2023). However, these programmes seemed to have failed to achieve the social sustainability goals as poverty and economic inequality continue to increase. Recently, current administration detected a major financial scandal in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, which housed the programs. Consequently, the administration suspended all the programs, and set up a six-person panel to reposition the country's social investment programs (Olaore, 2023).

With increasing global appeals and commitments towards achieving sustainability, Nigerian government is also making giant strides to ensure sustainable future (PwC Nigeria, 2023). One of these efforts is the launching of the Energy Transition Plan as well as the innovative financing options such as Debt for Climate Initiative. Also, Nigeria has adopted the International Sustainability Standards Board's (ISSB) IFRS sustainability disclosure standards (PwC Nigeria, 2023). Also, Nigerian government has formulated several environmental laws and regulations such

as Forestry Act 1958, Antiquities Act 1958, Territorial Waters Decree 1967, Oil in Navigable Waters Decree 1968, Petroleum Decree 1969, Quarries Decree 1969, Sea Fisheries Decree 1971, Land Use Decree 1978, National Environmental Protection (Management of Solid and Hazardous Waste) Regulations 1991, Guidelines and Standards for Environmental Impact Assessment Decree 1992, Water Resources Act 101 of 1993, and Minerals and Mining Act 1999 among others. Following the return of democracy to Nigeria in 1999, the Federal Ministry of Environment and State Ministries of Environment at the state levels were established. The aim was to ensure that all Local, State and Federal agencies as well as companies operating in Nigeria adhere to extant regulations. Also, the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) were established in 2007 to enforce environmental regulations. However, despite the above regulations and policies, environmental problems continue unabatedly in Nigeria. The goal of environmental sustainability is still far-fetched. Existing studies have showed that the problem could be linked to lack of a national database on environmental quality, lack of technical capacity among staff charged with the responsibility of enforcement, inadequate funding, overlapping regulatory agencies, corruption (Njar & Enagu, 2019; Oyebanji et al., 2017).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper posited that to achieve sustainability goals, it is imperative for leadership framework to have elements of ethicality, connectedness, collaboration, creativity and courage. Also, the importance of place and context should be emphasized for identifying leadership characteristics for a sustainable future. Leadership should no longer be seen as a set of capabilities possessed by an individual or a position held only. Rather it should be seen as a process, which means a dynamic, collective and creative process of influence, which shapes behaviours and organisational climate. Also, it should be seen as requiring a purpose, which indicates clear, meaningful goals, which inspires or motivates leaders and followers to organize and operate with clear intention to serve and achieve specific goals. In addition, it should be seen as place or context specific as it is embedded in and influenced by particular times and places. Also, there is the need for strategic partnerships and collaboration between the public and private sectors to have enough resources required to achieve sustainability goals. These partnerships and collaborations can only be achieved through pragmatic and effective leadership. Government needs to pay more attention to addressing the challenges of deforestation, desertification, pollution and climate change. Also, government needs make committed efforts to reducing poverty, inequality and promote education and healthcare access. Also, to achieve economic sustainability, there is the need for economic diversification and supporting SMEs.

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EFFECT OF COMMUNITY POLICING ON THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE AND EFFECTIVE SECURITY IN AWKA CAPITAL TERRITORY, ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

Security challenges have remained a significant concern in Anambra State particularly Awka, with various communities grappling with issues such as armed robbery, kidnapping, cultism, and other violent crimes. For these reasons, this study examined the effect of community policing on the provision of adequate and effective security in Awka Capital Territory, Anambra State from 2013-2023. The study was guided by three research questions and hypotheses. The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study were 2,500,000 residents in Awka Metropolis. The sample size was obtained using Taro Yamane's (1967) sample size determination formula. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. A face-to-face data collection method was employed to obtain information from respondents. The data collected from the demographic data of the respondents were analysed with simple percentage while the data from the copies of the questionnaire were analyzed using the mean scores and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested with simple linear regression analysis at 0.05 significant level. The study found that community policing has proven to be a highly effective strategy in reducing crime and enhancing security in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 and 2023. The findings demonstrate its substantial impact, with approximately 70.1% of the reduction in kidnapping, 67.9% in cult-related activities, 78.3% in the proliferation of small arms, and 73.7% in armed robbery linked to community policing efforts. The study concluded that through strengthened collaboration between

residents and law enforcement, enhanced intelligence gathering, and community engagement, significant progress has been made in minimizing criminal activities. The study recommended that efforts should be made between the police institutions and communities to further deepen the relationship between law enforcement and local communities. This is because regular community meetings, feedback sessions, and collaborative problem-solving initiatives can promote trust and ensure that residents feel empowered to actively participate in crime prevention. To sustain and improve crime reduction efforts, it is essential for the government to invest in advanced intelligence gathering technologies and strategies. This includes training law enforcement personnel and community members on effective reporting and surveillance techniques, as well as increasing the capacity of local police to act on real-time information.

Keywords: Community, Police, Community Policing, Security

Introduction

One of the fundamental needs of humans is to live in a safe and secure environment because security ensures stability, peace, and overall well-being. Without security, people experience fear, uncertainty, and limited opportunities for growth and development. As a result, many strategies are employed to safeguard communities, one of which is community policing. Community policing is a strategy that promotes a partnership between the police and the community in identifying, preventing, and solving crimes to enhance public safety and trust (Akinyemi & Okonkwo, 2020). This approach fosters proactive engagement, where law enforcement officers work closely with residents to address security concerns and develop long-term solutions.

According to Adewale and Uche (2021), community policing is a decentralized policing strategy that shifts the focus from traditional law enforcement methods to a more interactive and preventive model. It emphasizes collaboration, problem-solving, and community participation in crime control and public safety. Similarly, Eze and Ojo (2019) described community policing as a model of law enforcement that encourages police officers to build relationships with the community, understand local security needs, and involve citizens in maintaining order and safety. Community policing is a proactive approach that fosters collaboration between law enforcement agencies and community members to prevent crime and enhance safety. It emphasizes building trust, addressing local security concerns, and promoting shared responsibility in maintaining law and order.

The concept of community policing encompasses several key elements including the promotion of partnerships and collaborative relationships between the police and the community. These partnerships involve active engagement, information sharing, and joint problem-solving efforts to address crime and safety issues (Rosenbaum & Lurigio, 2017). Additionally, community policing aims to identify and tackle the underlying causes of crime and disorder. It

encourages a problem-solving approach that involves analyzing data, conducting community assessments, and developing targeted strategies to prevent and reduce crime (Skogan & Hartnett, 2017). Notably, community policing emphasizes proactive engagement with the community. This includes increasing police visibility through foot patrols, community meetings, and other forms of direct interaction to build trust, gather information, and foster positive relationships (Troshynski & Forde, 2020).

This community policing strategy of combating crimes within Nigeria has become imminent because the Nigeria police Force (2008) in charge of keeping peace and order within the communities in their annual report noted that the police is handicapped. This is because of combination of factors that plagued them, among which are; lack of resources, poor government support, poor condition of service, lack of appropriate and adequate training and ill-equipped workforce. Coupled with these, are the issue of police extortion and corruption and other vices common among the police system which contributes to their lack of efficiency (Troshynski and Forde, 2020). Police corruption is a serious issue because they are expected to be moral as law-enforcement agents. If the police which were employed and catered for with the people's money to protect and detect crimes are themselves corrupt and also a party to crimes, then the society is at the mercy and grace of the criminal (Onyenwenxia, 2013). The above among many others contribute to the challenges the police face in handling security challenges in the communities. As a result, many security challenges arise within the communities.

Nigeria faces a range of criminal activities affecting its communities. Kidnapping has become a significant concern, with 214 cases reported in just eight weeks, according to the Inspector-General of Police, Olukayode Egbetokun. Insecurity has led to numerous deaths, leaving many Nigerians in fear. A report highlighted that kidnapping ranked third among crimes, with 104 reported cases and 216 suspects arrested (Usman, 2025). Additionally, the rise in femicide is alarming; in 2022 alone, at least 401 women died from sexual and gender-based violence in Nigeria (Adejoro, 2024). These incidents underscore the pressing need for effective measures to combat crime and ensure the safety of Nigerian communities.

Unfortunately, communities in Anambra State are not spared of these crimes because according to Obianeri (2024) report, Awka, the capital of Anambra State has experienced various criminal incidents affecting its communities. In December 2024, unidentified gunmen attacked the Ifite-Awka area, resulting in the deaths of at least four individuals and the abduction of a hotel manager. The assailants targeted multiple locations, including Book Foundation Junction and Ukwu Aki Bus Stop, causing widespread panic. In another incident, Obianeri further reported that the

Anambra State Police Command arrested an 18-year-old suspected cultist in the Nibo community, Awka South Local Government Area. The suspect was apprehended with an AK-47 rifle and a magazine, allegedly planning to commit violence in the area. Additionally, David (2025) reported that two notorious cultists were arrested in Awka, leading to the recovery of a pump-action gun, four live cartridges, and other exhibits. These arrests are part of the police's efforts to combat cult-related activities in the region. These incidents highlight the ongoing security challenges in Awka and underscore the need for continued vigilance and effective law enforcement to ensure the state is safe.

The fact still remains that in Anambra State, community policing exists to enhancing security through collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local communities. A prominent model is the integration of local vigilante groups, such as the Anambra Vigilante Services (AVS), which work alongside the Nigerian Police Force to maintain law and order. These groups are legally recognized and operate within their respective communities to prevent and detect crimes, provide relevant information on criminal activities, and assist in preserving peace (Umeobika, 2012). Unfortunately, there is no much empirical studies on how the community policing has ensured curbing of the menace of kidnapping, increase in cultism, curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and curbing of armed robbery. But in real sense, community policing is expected to curb these menaces.

For instance, kidnapping which is described by Eze (2020) as the unlawful seizure, abduction, or detention of a person or persons against their will, often for ransom, coercion, or other criminal motives. It involves force, deception, or threats to restrain the victim, making it a serious crime under legal statutes worldwide. Okafor and Nwosu (2021) stated that through intelligence gathering, neighborhood watch programs, and proactive security strategies, community policing enhances early detection and prevention of kidnapping activities. Increased trust in law enforcement encourages residents to report suspicious movements, aiding security operations. Additionally, community policing promotes collaboration between vigilante groups and formal security agencies, resulting in swift rescue missions and arrests of kidnappers.

In another scenario, Adebayo (2021) have argued that community policing also helps in reducing the increase in cultism, curb the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and armed robbery. Okonkwo and Ibe (2022) added that by fostering trust between law enforcement and residents, community policing encourages intelligence gathering, early detection, and swift intervention in cult-related activities. Regular patrols and collaboration with youth organizations help deter recruitment into cult groups.

Additionally, Adebayo and Okonkwo (2021)

posited that community policing aids in curbing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons by enforcing stricter surveillance on illegal arms trafficking and identifying black-market sources. This reduces the accessibility of weapons used in violent crimes. Furthermore, enhanced police-community partnerships facilitate crime prevention strategies, discouraging armed robbery through intelligence-sharing and visible security presence.

Despite the expected role of community policing in curbing the menace of kidnapping, increase in cultism, curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and curbing of armed robbery, the understanding of community policing among residents vary. A study focusing on Ishielu Local Government Area in Ebonyi State, which shares similarities with Anambra, revealed that a significant portion of the population was unaware of police-community partnership strategies. Specifically, 71% of respondents indicated a lack of awareness regarding such initiatives (Onuoha et al., 2020). This suggests a potential gap in communication and engagement efforts between law enforcement and community members in regions like Anambra.

The literature on community policing in Anambra State highlights several challenges but also reveals gaps. While studies have examined the roles of vigilante groups and their collaboration with formal police structures, there is limited research on the effectiveness of these partnerships in reducing specific crime rates. Additionally, there is a paucity of data on community members' perceptions of these initiatives and the impact of socio-economic factors on the success of community policing. To build effective community support for community policing in Awka, Anambra State, this study was initiated to investigate the community policing and provision of security in Awka Capital Territory in Anambra State from 2023-2024.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Security challenges have remained a significant concern in Nigeria, with various communities grappling with issues such as armed robbery, kidnapping, cultism, and other violent crimes. Unfortunately, communities in Anambra State are not spared from these security threats. According to Obianeri (2024), Awka, the capital of Anambra State, has experienced several criminal incidents that have instilled fear among residents. In December 2024, unidentified gunmen attacked the Ifite-Awka area, killing at least four individuals and abducting a hotel manager. These gunmen struck multiple locations, including Book Foundation Junction and Ukwu Aki Bus Stop, creating panic and uncertainty in the community. Similarly, the Anambra State Police Command arrested an 18-year-old suspected cultist in the Nibo community, Awka South Local Government Area. The suspect was found in possession of an AK-47 rifle and a magazine, allegedly planning violent activities in the region (Obianeri, 2024).
Additionally, David (2025) reported that two

notorious cultists were arrested in Awka, leading to the recovery of a pump-action gun, four live cartridges, and other exhibits, further confirming the rising trend of cult-related crimes in the state.

Community policing is recognized as an effective strategy for addressing security issues by fostering collaboration between law enforcement agencies and community members. However, despite its implementation in Anambra State, security challenges persist, raising concerns about the effectiveness of community policing strategies in addressing these threats. The fundamental question remains: to what extent has community policing contributed to mitigating security challenges in Awka Capital Territory between 2023 and 2024? The persistence of violent crimes, such as those reported by Obianeri (2024) and David (2025), suggests potential gaps in the implementation of community policing. Issues such as inadequate community participation, limited resources, corruption, and distrust between residents and law enforcement agencies may hinder the effectiveness of community policing in the region.

Existing studies on community policing in Nigeria have predominantly focused on its theoretical framework, benefits, and challenges (Adebayo & Okonkwo, 2021). However, there is limited empirical research assessing the specific effectiveness of community policing in Awka Capital Territory, Anambra State, in addressing recent security challenges. While studies have examined the role of vigilante groups and the police in crime prevention, there is a paucity of research investigating how community engagement, public awareness, and government support influence the success of community policing in Awka. Additionally, the rising cases of cultism, gun violence, and targeted attacks in the state necessitate an in-depth exploration of the gaps in existing security strategies. Given the escalating security threats in Awka, there is an urgent need to investigate the effectiveness of community policing in addressing these challenges from 2013 to 2024.

Research Questions

Based on the problems highlighted in the statement of problem, the following research questions were raised;

1. How has the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023?
2. What is the effect of community policing in addressing the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023?
3. To what extent has the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023?

Research Hypotheses

In order to direct the flow of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated in a null form as thus:

H_{01}: Community policing has no significant positive effect in curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023.

H_{02}: Community policing has no positive significant contribution in curbing the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2024.

H_{03}: The existence of community policing has not significantly contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023.

Research Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study are residents in Awka Metropolis. The sample size for the study is three hundred and ninety-nine (399). The sample size was obtained using Taro Yamane's (1967) sample size determination formula. The data collection instrument is a structured questionnaire titled Community Policing and Provision of Security Questionnaire. It consists of five clusters: A, B, C, D, and E. Cluster A gathers demographic information about respondents. Cluster B contains 10 items aimed at assessing the impact of community policing on curbing kidnapping in Awka from 2013 to 2023. Cluster C includes 10 items focused on how community policing has mitigated the rise of cultism within the same period. Cluster D comprises 10 items examining the role of community policing in addressing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka. Cluster E explores the influence of community policing on reducing armed robbery between 2013 and 2023. Each cluster is structured on a 5-point rating scale: Strongly Agree (SA) – 5, Agree (A) – 4, Neutral (N) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1. Respondents are required to select the appropriate option to indicate their views. The reliability of the instrument was tested with 20 residents of Awka in Anambra State, outside the selected sample size and yielded an average reliability coefficient of 0.823. A face-to-face data collection method was employed to obtain information from respondents. The data collected from the demographic data of the respondents were analysed with simple percentage while the data from the copies of the questionnaire were analyzed using the mean scores and standard deviation.

RESULTS

The analyses of the questionnaire and respondents' characteristics are analyzed below:

Table 1: Questionnaire Distributions

Questionnaire Distributed	No. of Questionnaire Not Returned	No. of Questionnaire Returned	Invalid	Total Questionnaire used for Analysis
400(100%)	8(2.0%)	392(98.0%)	4(1.0%)	388(97.0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 1 showed that 400(100%) copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 8(2.0%) copies of the questionnaire were not returned. Also, 392(98.0%%) copies of the questionnaire were returned after the distribution. After strict monitoring of the filled copies of the questionnaire, 4(1.0%) were invalid while 388(97.0%) of the copies of the questionnaire were fully and properly filled and used for the study.

Table 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Categories	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	202	52.06
Female	186	47.94
Total	**388**	**100**
Age Interval		
18-30	54	13.92
31-40	89	22.94
41-50	98	25.26
51- 60	107	27.58
61 & Above	40	10.31
Total	**388**	**100**
Categories		
Single	75	19.33
Married	175	45.10
Separated	49	12.63
Widowed	46	11.86
Divorced	43	11.08
Total	**388**	**100**
Educational Level		
FSLC	24	6.19
WASC/GCE	54	13.92
OND/NCE	67	17.27
BSc/HND	75	19.33
MBA/MSc	85	21.90
PhD	83	21.39
Total	**388**	**100**

Table 2 showed the gender distribution of the respondents. The result revealed that 158(52.67%) were male and 142(47.33%) were female. This implies that majority of the respondents were male. The result also revealed that 54(13.92%) of the respondents were between the ages of 20-30 years, 89(22.94%) were between the ages of 31-40, 98(25.58%) of the respondents were between the ages of 41-50 years old, 107(27.58%) were between the ages of 51 - 60 years and 40(10.31%) were between 61years old and above. The results further revealed that 75(19.33%) were single, 175(45.10%) were married, 49(12.63%) were separated, 46(11.86%) were widowed and 43(11.08%) were divorced. Additionally, the results revealed that 24(6.19%) have FSLC, 54(13.93%) were WASC/GCE holders, 67(17.27%) were OND/NCE holders, 75(19.33%) have BSc. qualifications, 85(21.90%) have MBA/MSC degree and 83(21.39%) have PhD qualifications.

Analyses of Research Questions

Research Question One: How has the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023?

Table 6. Mean scores of the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023

S/N	Community Policing and Kidnapping (2013-2023)	$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Community policing has significantly reduced the rate of kidnapping in Awka.	3.30	1.075	Agreed
2	The collaboration between residents and the police has helped in identifying kidnappers.	3.14	1.040	Agreed
3	Regular patrols by security operatives have deterred kidnappers.	3.11	1.008	Agreed
4	Community policing has improved intelligence gathering to prevent kidnapping.	3.13	.956	Agreed
5	Community policing has led to more arrests and prosecution of kidnappers.	3.11	.990	Agreed
6	The existence of community policing has reduced ransom payments.	3.11	1.085	Agreed
7	Increased police-community trust has enhanced information sharing on kidnapping cases.	3.15	1.147	Agreed
8	Community policing has enhanced security awareness and vigilance among residents.	3.09	.929	Agreed
9	Local security initiatives under community policing have been effective in stopping kidnapping activities.	3.11	.839	Agreed
10	Community policing has helped in dismantling kidnapping syndicates in Awka.	3.32	.966	Agreed
	Average	**3.16**	**1.004**	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 6 showed mean scores and standard deviations of the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023. The results revealed that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,

9, and 10 have mean scores 3.30, 3.14, 3.11, 3.13, 3.11, 3.11, 3.15, 3.09, 3.11, 3.32 and 3.32 respectively with the corresponding standard deviation of 1.075, 1.040, 1.008, .956, .990, 1.085, 1.147, .929, .839 and .966. More so the average mean score and the standard deviation were 3.16 and 1.004. These results showed that all the mean scores of the items 1 to 10 were above the decision point of 2.50; hence, they agreed.

Research Question Two: What is the effect of community policing in addressing the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023?

Table 7. Mean scores of the effect of community policing in addressing the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023

S/N	Community Policing and Cultism (2013-2023)	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
11	Community policing has helped in reducing cult-related violence in Awka.	3.40	.947	Agreed
12	The collaboration between the police and local communities has led to the periodic arrest of cultists.	3.50	.869	Agreed
13	Community policing initiatives have discouraged youth involvement in cultism.	3.47	.864	Agreed
14	The presence of community policing has helped in disrupting cult meetings and activities.	3.49	.811	Agreed
15	Increased intelligence gathering through community policing has identified some cult leaders.	3.48	.850	Agreed
16	Community policing has played a role in preventing recruitment into cult groups.	3.48	.910	Agreed
17	Residents now feel more confident reporting cult -related activities due to community policing.	3.09	1.191	Agreed
18	Community policing has helped in addressing the root causes of cultism in Awka.	3.46	.815	Agreed
19	The existence of community policing has enhanced the safety of students and youths in Awka.	3.48	.737	Agreed
20	Community policing has improved the rehabilitation of former cult members.	3.19	1.099	Agreed
	Average	**3.40**	**.909**	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 7 showed the mean scores and standard deviations of the effect of community policing in addressing the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023. The results revealed that items 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 have mean scores 3.40, 3.50, 3.47, 3.49, 3.48, 3.48, 3.09, 3.46, 3.48 and 3.19 respectively with the corresponding standard deviation of .947, .869, .864, .811, .850, .910, 1.191, .815, .737 and 1.099. More so the average mean score and the standard deviation were 3.40 and .909. These results showed that all the mean scores of the items 11 to 20 were above the decision point of 2.50; hence, they agreed.

Research Question Three: To what extent has the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023?

Table 8. Mean scores and standard deviation of the extent the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023

S/N	Community Policing and Proliferation of Small Arms & Light Weapons (2013-2023)	T	$\overline{X}$	Decision
21	Community policing has reduced the illegal possession of small arms and light weapons in Awka.	3.19	1.143	Agreed
22	The presence of community policing has discouraged arms trafficking.	3.23	1.225	Agreed
23	Community policing initiatives have led to the recovery of illegal firearms.	3.22	1.251	Agreed
24	Local security collaborations have helped identify individuals included in illegal arms trade.	3.26	1.209	Agreed
25	Community policing has created awareness relating to the dangers of illegal arms.	3.28	1.220	Agreed
26	Law enforcement has become more effective in tracking illegal arms due to community policing.	3.32	1.193	Agreed
27	Community policing has facilitated the reporting of illegal arms storage locations.	2.96	1.230	Agreed
28	Community policing efforts have made it harder for criminals to access weapons.	3.26	1.232	Agreed
29	Local security volunteers have assisted in reducing arms-related crimes in Awka.	3.23	1.238	Agreed
30	Community policing has enhanced government efforts in controlling illegal possession of weapons.	3.05	1.193	Agreed
	Average	**3.20**	**1.213**	**Agree**

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 8 showed the mean scores and standard deviations of the extent the existence of community policing contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023. The results revealed that items 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30 have mean scores 3.19, 3.23, 3.22, 3.26, 3.28, 3.32, 2.96, 3.26, 3.23 and 3.05 respectively with the corresponding standard deviations of 1.143, 1.225, 1.251, 1.209, 1.220, 1.193, 1.230, 1.232, 1.238 and 1.193. More so the average mean score and the standard deviation were 3.20 and 1.213. These results showed that all the mean scores of the items 21 to 30 were above the decision point of 2.50; hence, they agreed.

Test of Hypotheses

Test of Hypothesis One

$H0_1$: Community policing has no significant positive effect in curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023

H_1: Community policing has significant positive effect in curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023.

Table 10: Summary of the Results of Test of Hypothesis One

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	P-value
1	.838[a]	.702	.701	.51293	910.001	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Community policing

Table 10: Summary of the Results of Test of Hypothesis One

Table 10 shows the results of hypothesis one and it revealed that the R value was 0.838 while R Square value is 0.701. This means, the R square signifies that 70.1% of the existence of community policing has contributed to curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka between 2013 to 2023. More so the p-value is .000 < than .05, which signifies that the null hypothesis that states that community policing has no significant positive effect in curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023 was rejected. The alternative hypothesis was retained and thus, community policing has significant positive effect in curbing the menace of kidnapping in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023.

Test of Hypothesis Two

$H0_2$: Community policing has no positive

significant contribution in curbing the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2024

Table 11: Summary of the Results of Test of Hypothesis Two

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	P-value
1	.824[a]	.679	.678	.65677	815.176	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Community policing

Table 11 shows the results of the test of hypothesis two. The results revealed that the R value was 0.824 while R Square value is 0.679. More so, the p-value was .000 < .05 which means that the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was retained. This implies that community policing has positive significant contribution in curbing the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2024. Moreover, the R square revealed that 67.9% of community policing curb the increase in cultism in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023.

Test of Hypothesis Three

$H0_3$: The existence of community policing has not significantly contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023

Table 12: Summary of the Results of Test of Hypothesis Three

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	P-value
1	.885[a]	.783	.783	.45329	1396.358	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Community policing

Table 12 shows the results of the test of hypothesis three. The results revealed that the p-value is .000 < .05. This indicated that the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was retained. This implies that the existence of community policing has significantly contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 to 2023. More so, the R square value is 0.783 signifies that 78.3% of the existence of community policing has significantly contributed to curbing the menace of proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Conclusion

In conclusion, community policing has proven to be a highly effective strategy in reducing crime and enhancing security in Awka Capital Territory between 2013 and 2023. The findings demonstrate its substantial impact, with approximately 70.1% of the reduction in kidnapping, 67.9% in cult-related activities, 78.3% in the proliferation of small arms, and 73.7% in armed robbery linked to community policing efforts. Through strengthened collaboration between residents and law enforcement, enhanced intelligence gathering, and community engagement, significant progress has been made in minimizing

criminal activities. The approach has not only disrupted illegal operations but also fostered trust between the community and law enforcement, leading to improved crime prevention and public safety. These results highlight the critical role of community policing in achieving lasting security improvements.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following were recommended:

1. Efforts should be made between the police institutions and communities to further deepen the relationship between law enforcement and local communities. This is because regular community meetings, feedback sessions, and collaborative problem-solving initiatives can contribute to curbing the menace of kidnapping.
2. To sustain and improve crime reduction efforts, it is essential for the government to invest in advanced intelligence gathering technologies and strategies. This includes training law enforcement personnel and community members on effective reporting and surveillance techniques, as well as increasing the capacity of local police to act on real-time information to curb the increase in cultism.
3. Ongoing public awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate residents about the dangers of crime, particularly regarding the proliferation of small arms. These campaigns can help to deter involvement in criminal activities and encourage residents to report suspicious activities of proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

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