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HOW TO MAKE AN ENTREPRENEURIAL STATE: WHY INNOVATION NEEDS BUREAUCRACY

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Abstract. "How to Make an Entrepreneurial State: Why Innovation Needs Bureaucracy" by Rainer Kattel, Wolfgang Drechsler, and Erkki Karo offers an analytical approach to creating successful "innovation bureaucracies" with a wealth of exemplary policies, practices, and institutions observed throughout the post-Second World War era. The book defines the quality of "agile stability" that the public sector needs to create in order to solve next-generation problems. As its title speaks, its main argument is: "Innovation needs bureaucracy." Therefore, the authors give a detailed account of how public institutions create, do (perform), fund, intermediate, and rule (administer/coordinate). The book gives a detailed account of these typologies of innovation institutions, from the US's DARPA to Sweden's Vinnova. It is a reference source for students, scientists, practitioners, and anyone who cares about innovating successfully and developing prosperous societies while facing tomorrow's challenges.
Key words: agile stability, innovation bureaucracies, neo-Weberian innovation agencies.

Book review

How to Make an Entrepreneurial State: Why Innovation Needs Bureaucracy by Rainer Kattel, Wolfgang Drechsler and Erkki Karo is a book tackling "how" governments organize to create and nurture successful "innovation bureaucracies". From the outset, the book introduces the formula of successful "innovation bureaucracies" or institutions: "agile stability". This term refers to the quality that successful states needs to develop in order to solve next generation problems, e.g., global warming, pandemics and environmental crises.

The authors' main argument is that "innovations need bureaucracy" (Mazzucato M., 2013). Throughout the seven chapters, the book utilizes a wealth of notions, such as "bureaucracy hacking", "mission mystique", "capacity" and "capability" in its narration and dives into the development of "innovation bureaucracies" in the US, Europe, and Asia since the end of the Second World War.

The book's title includes "Entrepreneurial State", and its foreword is written by Mariana Mazzucato, the author of Entrepreneurial State. Moreover, one of the authors, Rainer Kattel, was Mazucato's colleague, and it appears that the book directly engages with the stream created by Mazzucato. But beyond this stream, the book furthers the wider literature promoting the idea that contrary to the conventional wisdom, the role of the state was significant in many innovations, and even in radical ones, from GPS to the internet (p. xiv). They argue that although we tend to attribute to innovations to Schumpeterian private companies and regard public institutions and Weber unrelated to this process, the reality is different. Promoting this idea, Kattel, Drechsler and Karo set out to understand "how", then, states create "innovation bureaucracies". From the beginning, the authors creatively wreck the false dichotomy between "bureaucracy" and "innovation". And, as the conventional wisdom unjustly attributes all the *pro*s to Joseph Schumpeter and innovation, while attributing the *con*s to Max Weber and bureaucracy, the authors successfully bring these two disciplines' eternal fathers -Weber and Schumpeter- together at the same table to prove how their works are in fact complementary regarding the ultimate objective of guiding societies in innovation not only for profitability but also realizing social objectives. Thus, throughout their fantastic analysis and narration, the authors truly reflect this holistic understanding. One tempts to argue that this book will be more inspiring in the varieties of countries where the role of the state is especially bigger than much of the liberal market economies. The role of state in the liberal market economies, e.g., US and UK, might be more

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"mission-oriented", such as the Apollo program "to put a man on the moon" or the Manhattan Project to create a power asymmetry based on nuclear weapons (Mazzucato M., 2013). Also, even though DARPA's investments also created dual-use innovations such as the Internet, GPS, Siri, and myriad others, its main purpose has been the US supremacy in technological leadership militarily. In this sense, this economic model's requirement seems to be more "agility" than "stability". However, the book argues that today's states don't have the luxury to choose between "agility" and "stability" and forgo one for the other. COVID-19 clearly demonstrated how both stable health infrastructures and long-term investments and mission-focused innovativeness, such as reorienting the production to supply "medicine, ventilators, protective equipment, and test kits," were equally required (Mazzucato M., 2013).

In fact, as the authors correctly put it, the US and the UK suffered due to their market-based model when it became clear how crucial stable health systems were in responding to the public health crisis (ibid). Comparably, Germany and South Korea were better equipped with these stable bureaucracies (ibid). Therefore, even though a model can have a competitive advantage in certain aspects, as in the US, it doesn't guarantee that its social system won't be disrupted by tomorrow's challenges. Therefore, developing "agile stability" is as crucial for the liberal market economies as the ones with a larger role for the state. Still, however, the countries with a larger role for the state need to focus particularly on developing "agile stability" as in those countries, the quality of the state literally defines the success or failure of the society. This is also valid for the developing countries in general.

Covering the period from the end of the Second World War to today, the authors demonstrate that innovation bureaucracies assume a variety of roles that the authors typologize in five: "creators", "doers", "funders", "intermediaries", and "rulers" (Mazzucato M., 2013). In these typologies, the authors bring a rich portfolio of innovation bureaucracies from the US to Germany and Sweden, and further to the East Asian innovation bureaucracies of South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and China. To give a glimpse of the authors' typologies, "creators" include the National Institutes of Health (NIH) of the US and the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft of Germany. Likewise, Brazil's Petrobras (a state-owned company), Singapore's public holding companies, the US's DARPA, and public universities taking part in the Estonian Genome Project are among the "doers". Furthermore, the National Science Foundation (NSF) of the US, the European Research Council, public development banks, e.g., Brazil's National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), and public-private venture capital partnerships, e.g., the US's In-Q-Tel assume the role of "funders". Similarly, "intermediaries" comprise from cluster organizations to business incubators and technology parks. Finally, the "rulers" are: "(h)igh-level public-private coordination bodies (national research and innovation councils, boards, etc.), offices of president/prime minister, ministries". Hence, the book offers rich content to understand leading innovation bureaucracies largely through a Weberian lens (Mazzucato M., 2013).

Regarding successful innovators, the authors demonstrate how the "stability" function as attributed to "*expert organizations" -"Weber I"- and "agility" function associated with "charismatic networks" -"Weber II"- are, in fact,* inseparable components of innovation bureaucracies. In this context, the authors warn against falling under the influence of dominant fashionable paradigms such as the Washington Consensus and its offshoots, such as the New Public Management (NPM). As the authors argue, NPM in the 1980s and 90s focused much on discrediting "Weber I" qualities (i.e., "stability" function), while overselling the "agility" of the private sector methods in public administrations. However, this biased focus resulted in destroying not only "long-term capacities" in bureaucracies but also "mismanaged" new challenges that truly required dynamism and agility. So, the NPM's extolment for cost efficiency in public administrations turned out to be destructive, and the followers of the NPM neither achieved cost efficiency nor effectiveness in their objectives and targets. Here, it is proper to emphasize the authors' interest in non-Western public administrations.

On the other hand, the authors do not explore why countries jumped on the Washington Consensus train, willingly or unwillingly. By analogy to Peter Grekovitch's "Policy requires politics", some also say "Politics needs policy" (Grekovitch P.A., 1986). In this sense, the collapse of the Soviet Union had revealed the dichotomy between the endowments of soft power between the Communist Bloc and the US-led "liberal" world. Capitalism was the winner, and neoliberalism was in its driving seat as the "only game in town". Disillusioned, frustrated, and feeling left behind, the Eastern Europeans swallowed the bitter pill because they needed a "policy" in the hope of catching up with the West in life standards, even though the developed West itself was not

necessarily implementing all of its own policy prescriptions (Robert H. Wade, 2003). According to Grekovitch, polities tend to try new policies in "hard times" (Grekovitch P.A., 1986). So did the Eastern Europeans. When it comes to countries such as Turkiye, fighting against bureaucracy was also a part of the democratization agenda of governments. Bureaucracy included military, judicial, and administrative bureaucracy, and these were important reserved domains of tutelage (M. Hüseyin Mercan and M. Tahir Kılavuz, 2017). Of course, there existed other causes to reform bureaucracy, including corruption and budget deficits. Therefore, decreasing the clout of bureaucracy by focusing on such principles as openness, transparency, and accountability was at least partially for the purpose of opening space for civilian politics by containing the political excesses of bureaucracy. Again, a liberalizing NPM was the only policy in town.

Regarding this paradigm failure, the authors demonstrate that, in the public sector, "both long-term capacities and dynamic capabilities" need to be created and sustained. In fact, towards the COVID-19 crisis, developed countries had already recognized this, and created Neo-Weberian "agile stability" or "Weber III", combining *both* the "stability" function of "Weber I" and the "agility" function of "Weber II", as exemplified in the long-term social commitments for green economies, reflecting a "normative" and "epistemic turn". The authors exemplify how the 21st-century innovation bureaucracies have successfully adopted Neo-Weberian qualities as seen in the Swedish innovation agency, Vinnova, and the UK's Government Digital Services (GDS). On the final page of the book, the authors suggest that it is necessary to focus on "creating agile organizations" with "a new emphasis on risk-taking, and contemporary and future challenges" but equally on maintaining stable bureaucracies. They finalize with a strong note: "It demands high-level judgment power, resolve, tenacity and funding to develop such an innovation bureaucracy – but if this sounds difficult and expensive, *the alternative is not meeting the challenges of our times*". So, it is a choice between to develop or not to develop. However, the authors don't consider funding to be the most difficult part of the ceremony. International funds often come with externalities in the form of conditionalities constraining developing countries' options to invest in national priorities, objectives and institutions. Creditors generally utilize the funding agreements to open markets for their companies, rather than normatively supporting countries' innovation capacities.

Some key takeaways and implications are:

1- "Agile stability," i.e., both "agile" and "stable" public infrastructures, should be developed to face tomorrow's challenges, such as pandemics and global heating, so as not to be caught desperate when faced with these challenges.

2- In this task, "innovation" and "bureaucracy" are mutually supportive, not contradictory.

3- Today's successful innovation agencies are Neo-Weberian. Put differently, they are both "agile" in facing unconventional challenges, and nurture "stability" capacities for the long term.

4- Fashionable paradigms are not necessarily helpful for states and societies, they might be utterly harmful, as the Washington Consensus and its offshoot NPM experiment showed. Countries should not fall into the trap of the popular paradigms under the influence of politics, they should calmly assess where they are going before jumping on a train.

5- There are a variety of successful "innovation bureaucracies" in all categories. So, there is no need to try to fit into a single size. Better, consider the successful typologies and develop your own according to your own way of eating yogurt.

In addition to being an important contribution to public administration and innovation studies, the exciting narrative of developmentalism is felt throughout the book. It has this aspect also because the book is a collective work by three generations of PhDs: Wolfgang Drechsler's first PhD was Rainer Kattel, and the latter's first was Erkki Karo, as such, reminding that universities are classical, indispensable "innovation bureaucracies" creating human capital, which is ultimately the true source of innovation. It is a reference for students, scientists, and practitioners to consider while creating their own innovative public capacities according to their own politico-economic models, constraints, and sources for the final purpose of facing tomorrow's challenges and creating prosperous societies.

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TAILORING FOREIGN HRM PRACTICES: A CASE-STUDY OF SOFT-SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WITH INTER-COUNTRY VARIABILITY

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Abstract. This study investigates the implementation of inter-country variability (ICV) in shaping human resource management (HRM) practices, specifically focusing on soft skills development within a legal entity in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Based on a thorough literature review, the research highlights the practical use of these inter-country differences and the importance of customized approaches in developing economies. The study involved a two-month case-study analysis with 30 participants. The Bochum Inventory of Personality and Competences (BIP) questionnaire and ICV-specific training techniques, including role-playing, case studies, presentations, and Design Jams, were used. The results showed significant improvement in participants' soft skills, particularly in social competencies, indicating the effectiveness of the ICV-based program. The study tested and confirmed two hypotheses: that ICV may influence organization-specific incentives for soft skills development and that incorporating ICV-based differences enhances the acceptance of foreign HRM practices. The study's methodology was validated using Cronbach's Alpha and statistical t-tests ($p<0.05$). Participants expressed a strong willingness to continue their involvement, suggesting the potential for ongoing positive impact. This research not only contributes to the understanding of HRM practices but also provides a valuable methodology for future works on utilizing ICV in foreign HRM implementation in diverse organizational settings.

Key words: inter-country variability, soft skills, legal entity, HRM practices, Bochum Inventory of Personality and Competences.

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of developing nations like Kazakhstan, leveraging international expertise to optimize the operational efficiency of local entities has become a prevalent strategy. This paper seeks to broaden the conventional approach of adapting foreign practices by introducing the concept of inter-country variation (ICV). With a focused case study on the human resource management (HRM) strategies employed by a legal entity in Almaty city, this study aims to offer a more nuanced understanding of implementing foreign HRM practices within a unique context, hoping to achieve a practical balance between generalization and over-specification in the methodology.

Built upon a robust literature foundation, the analysis delves into the intricacies of investigating foreign experiences and identifies pivotal soft skills crucial for success. The utilization of the Bochum Inventory of Personality and Competences (BIP) based questionnaire and interviews serves to assess the soft skills level and ICV-specific factors, respectively. The results of the studies were used to test the following hypothesis:

H_1: Inter-country variability in the chosen organization may define unconventional, organization-specific incentives for the development of soft skills.

H_2: Implementing ICV-based peculiarities into the soft-skill development practice will increase the acceptance rate of foreign HRM practices.

Obtained results were validated with Cronbach's Alpha and the statistical test, revealing significant correlations between ICV values and team building, social confidence, and other relevant soft skills. Beyond shedding light on HRM practices in Almaty, this study carries broader implications for the implementation of foreign practices in rapidly developing countries.

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Literature review

The literature review first underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of HRM methodology, drawing on studies highlighting variations in HR practices across different countries and introducing the concept of Inter-country Variation (ICV). The second section emphasizes the critical role of soft skills in successful labor market performance, particularly in emerging market economies, while noting potential biases and risks associated with the perceived innate nature of these skills.

While using foreign experience is still common in developing countries, the precise methodology for the field of consideration – thus, HRM – should be learned in greater detail before moving on to the actual case analysis in order to ensure a grasp of specific principles, tailored to the context at hand that not only enhance the effectiveness of the study but also contribute to the development of strategies and solutions that align seamlessly with the unique challenges and opportunities presented by the local environment. In essence, exploration of HRM methodologies lays the foundation for informed decision-making and successful implementation, fostering sustainable growth and positive outcomes within the evolving landscape of developing economies and allowing to broaden the implications of this paper for future studies.

Starting from the early 2000s, research work that was published by Sohel A. and Schroeder R.G. revealed the existence of differences in HR practices in enterprises operating in different countries, confirming hypotheses previously presented in the literature using an analysis of seven HRM practices in countries such as Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States. The results of this study show that there are differences in HR practices among businesses operating in different countries, however, most of the practices used in different sectors remain similar within countries. More recent research in this area, has complemented previous discoveries regarding the importance of studying and applying foreign HRM practices, but also expanded this concept by introducing a factor of inter-country variation. ICV implies that instead of comparing and generalizing analysis to an entire country, more attention should be paid to individual and regional differences in personnel and mentality. At the time of publication, the study statistically confirmed that addressing the concepts of happiness, the importance of free time and freedom of choice increases the success of implementing HRM practices by 2-4%, whereas overall understanding of the ICV accounts for the 85% of the work values variation. The authors note that although the index of increasing practical significance is not so high, this area, which is not focused on generally accepted socio-demographic parameters such as age and gender, has enormous potential for the development of HRM and can be used for better implementation of foreign practices. The concepts are highly relevant for this work since Kazakhstan is a multinational country with a large territory, different climatic conditions, and cultural preferences, and the listed factors may contain valuable information that will allow better adaptation of foreign HRM practices to the selected legal entity in the city of Almaty.

Based on the first section of the literature review, it is possible to derive the following conclusions that are important for the consecutive explorations of foreign studies:

• HRM techniques change between countries, demonstrating the significance of evaluating foreign experience rather than just one country to gain a more comprehensive picture of modern HR practices around the world.

• HRM practices used within a single country but in different industries have more similarities than differences, allowing us to consider foreign experience without focusing solely on the legal industry (the direction of the chosen enterprise) and instead focusing on identifying fundamental features within that country.

• HRM practices that will be selected as relevant may be more promising if developed based on the cultural and social characteristics of Almaty city employees, in other words, with the consideration of ICV.

Based on the conclusions revealed, the second section of the literature review was dedicated to identifying relevant HRM practices from abroad. In 2023, a comprehensive study was conducted in Thailand to reveal the most valuable job skill sets predicting success during the selection phase. The work was based on the collection of empirical data through interviews but additionally included the analysis of historical data and observations from HR workers. The authors of the study generalize the results to countries with developing economies, calling them emerging market economies (EMEs), which made the results applicable to this paper. According to their conclusion, the most important thing for employees is soft skills, which play a key role in the success of workers in the labor market. Similar studies conducted in France were aimed

at analyzing the importance of using soft skills in personnel management based on the collected empirical data from 46 interviews. It was revealed that in addition to the basic core ability of effective communication, soft skills include a variety of qualities that go beyond simply conveying information. They provide the ability to inspire, engage in social interactions, and empathize with clients. Often, employers believe that these skills are innate and cannot be developed through training. This position may be a strategy for avoiding the cost of developing staff skills by shifting responsibility to external factors such as educational institutions or families. However, it is worth noting that the idea of the innate nature of soft skills is not definitive. Research, especially in the field of psychology, indicates that these skills can be developed through training, socialization and other external factors.

Developing soft skills is critical, as studies consistently show that hard technical skills contribute only 15% to workplace success, with the remaining 85% relying on communication, creativity, and managerial attributes. Despite this, current HRM lacks effective mechanisms for identifying and cultivating these crucial characteristics. While some studies rank skills in recruitment, interviewing, and surveying, there is still a gap in tailored methodological approaches. Additionally, developing personal skills demands conscious effort and energy, often necessitating a conducive environment. This paper aims to bridge the literature gap by proposing a method to integrate ICV into HRM practices. The approach seeks a balance, preventing excessive adaptation of the program to individual organizations for the sake of reproducibility while avoiding overgeneralization to the entire country, thereby fostering a more nurturing environment.

Methodology

The case-study analysis took place in the legal entity "Pravozashchita", located in Almaty city of Kazakhstan. It is a Limited Liability Partnership established in 2015 with the workforce of 50-100 people. The primary goal of organization is to provide comprehensive and highly qualified legal services to a wide range of clients, including both legal entities and individuals. The agency's comprehensive range of services includes representation in judicial bodies, debt recovery, extending assistance to banks in debt collection and locating debtors, as well as active participation in enforcement proceedings – an area of specialization that distinguishes them among its peers. The organization maintains a moderately balanced gender representation across all secondary levels and departments, emphasizing diversity and inclusion, with leadership positions showing a preference towards male candidates. It offers structured career paths with opportunities for specialization and advancement to leadership positions. Regular training programs are conducted to keep employees abreast of the latest legal technologies and industry trends. The organization actively participates in diversity and inclusion programs, including mentorship initiatives and affinity groups. Employees enjoy a comprehensive benefits package, encompassing medical insurance, flexible work arrangements, and additional resources for professional development. Performance evaluations are based on legal expertise, client satisfaction, and contributions to the organization's strategic goals. "Pravozaschita" maintains regular feedback mechanisms, all-staff meetings, and employee surveys to foster a positive corporate culture.

A total of 30 people from legal, finance, and administration departments have participated in the study for the period of 2 months. At the beginning of the study, participants were provided with the Bochum Inventory of Personality and Competences questionnaire-based self-assessment aimed at the measurement of 14 traits in the following four domains: occupational orientation, social competencies, occupational behavior, and psychological constitution. The scale included 5 points from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree".

The survey was administered offline to ensure engagement and followed with an open-session interview aimed at identifying the possible variations on the cultural variations and whether the ICV factors derived in previous studies were shown to be valuable. The methods for the development of the soft skills were chosen based on the collected existing approaches and allowed to reveal the following common techniques: role-playing, case-study, and presentations along with more innovative Hackathons inspired approach of Design Jams which is focused on the development of 4Cs – critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication – in the playful interdisciplinary working on the global problems in the small groups (Figure 1).

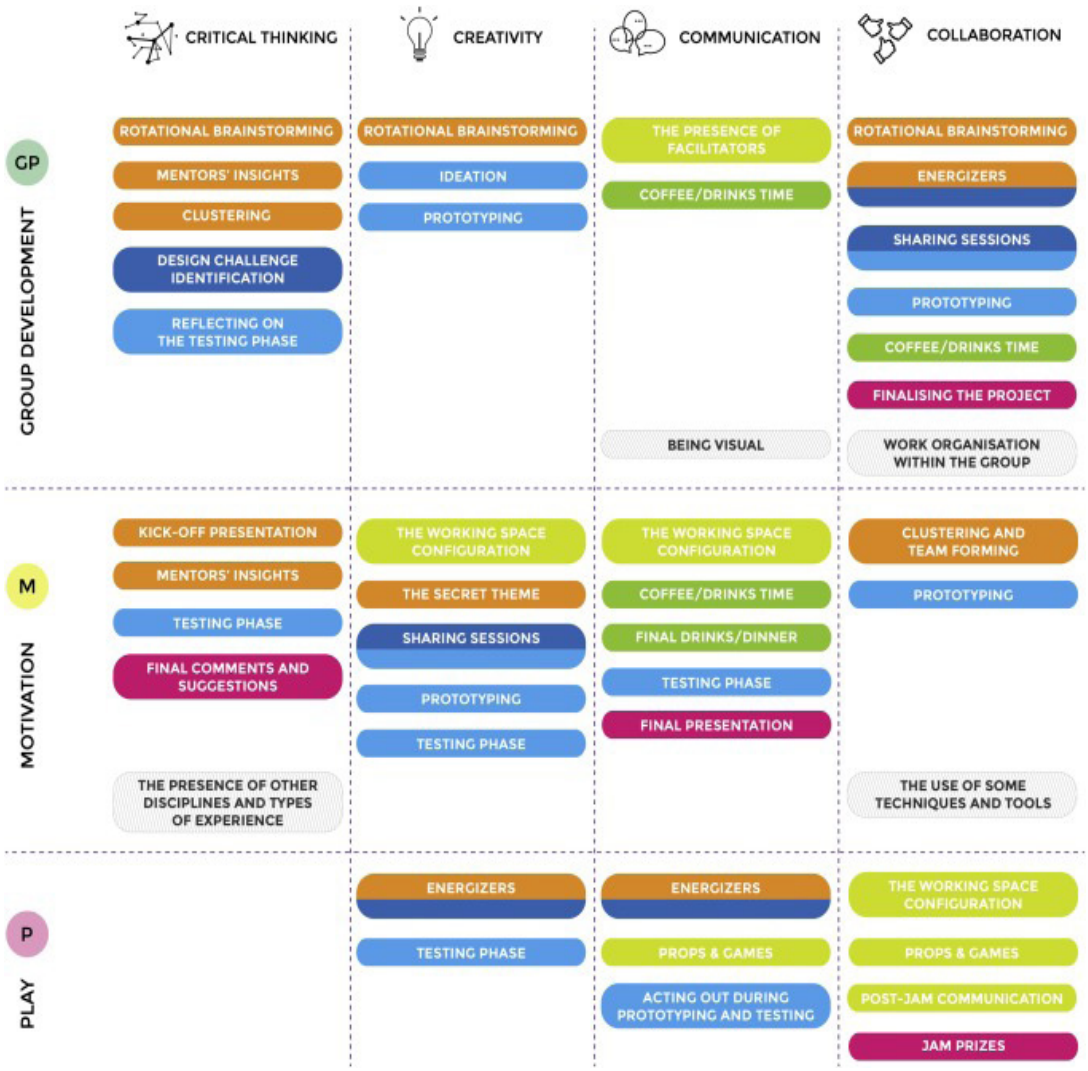

Figure 1 – The Design Jams' overview

By the end of 2 months period the BIP self-assessment questionnaire was conducted along with the 9 additional questions in the same scale: 4 of them asking to rate the effectiveness of each of the conducted sessions, 4 questions asking which skills domain out of four they think was targeted the most at each of the sessions type, 1 question defining their likeliness to continue with this type of sessions in the future. Additionally, an open-ended question for the additional comments was provided in the end. In the post-implementation evaluation, participants received detailed description of the 4 domains to ensure better self-assessment and understanding.

The questionnaire responses were tested for the Cronbach's values to identify the consistency of responses and overall results validity. The 28 BIP questions were compared pre and post sessions by averaging the scores of participants across 4 domains and testing the mean changes for significance using the t-test and with the assumption that the null hypothesis is that means are equal. The normalization of the scores from the "Strongly Agree | Strongly Disagree" metric was done by the corresponding conversion to "5 | 0".

Results and Discussion

Information from open-session interviews reinforced previously identified values such as free time, leisure activities, and happiness as key motivators for workers. Additional factors, rooted in shared experiences within the Almaty region, including traffic congestion, a proclivity for hiking, interest in outdoor activities, concern about air pollution, and seismic events, were also noted. Based

on this information it was possible to create a pilot version of the ICV-adopted soft-skills development plan, illustrated on the Figure 2. Overall, trainings took place on a weekly basis with each type of a training taking place twice in the specified time frame. It is possible to observe how the flexible implementation of ICV-factors complemented sessions by providing a suitable environment (e.g., outdoor activities), serving as a motivational element (e.g., days off), and fostering connections among employees from diverse specialties (e.g., addressing city traffic issues).

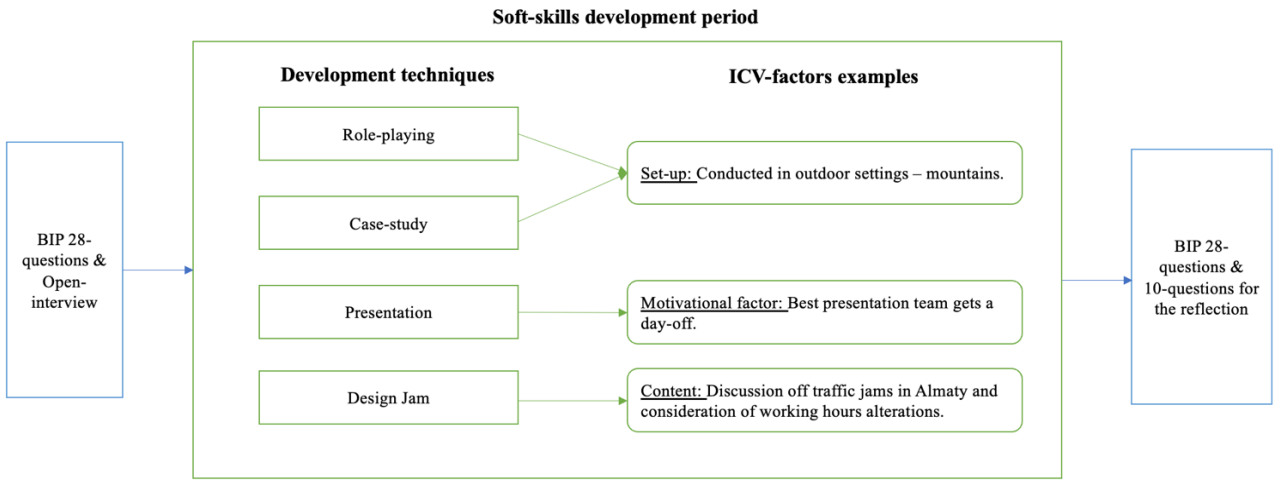

Figure 2 – Example of the inter-country variation based soft-skills development plan.

Based on the factors derived from the interview, it is possible to substantiate the hypothesis formulated at the outset of the study (H_1), asserting that inter-country variability in the chosen organization may define unconventional, organization-specific incentives for the development of soft skills as it was shown on the example of Almaty city-based entity.

When it comes to the quantitative data, the obtained information from the 28-question based BIP questionnaire, it was revealed that overall performance of the participants in terms of soft skills was average for categories such as occupational orientation and occupational behavior, and below average for social competencies and psychological constitution (Table 1). After 2 months period of the ICV-based program, the observed changes in soft skills among participants were substantial, indicating the effectiveness of the implemented training. Notably, the most progress was observed in the social competencies as the average score doubled with social sensitivity along with the team orientation being the most responsible for such dramatic alterations. The lowest amends were witnessed in the occupational behavior and occupational orientation which both started at the average score and by the end shifted to the most positive value of the same constrain. The difference of the mean values was tested for significance using t-test with the p-value below 0.05. All variables proved to reject the null hypothesis. The statistical reliability of the study was demonstrated through Cronbach's alpha values ranging between 0.79 and 0.90, indicating high internal consistency and reliability in capturing participants' responses. This underscored the effectiveness of the questionnaire and assessment methods in accurately measuring the intended constructs.

A more in-depth understanding of the program's effectiveness was obtained through the analysis of the post-implementation questions. In terms of program satisfaction, participants conveyed a notable level of contentment, as evidenced by an average score of 4 out of 5 for the likelihood of continuing the program. This positive "Agree" response reflects a favorable attitude towards sustained engagement in the ICV-tailored soft skills development initiative.

Table 1 – Comparative evaluation of soft skills (n=30)

Soft skills	Pre-Implementation Evaluation (0-5)	Post-Implementation Evaluation (0-5)	Significance level
Occupational orientation	2.76	3.22	$p < 0.05$
Achievement motivation	1.72	2.18	$p < 0.05$
Power motivation	4.23	4.69	$p < 0.05$
Leadership motivation	2.33	2.79	$p < 0.05$
Social competencies	1.98	4.01	$p < 0.05$
Social sensitivity	0.11	3.40	$p < 0.05$
Openness to contact	2.61	3.98	$p < 0.05$
Sociability	3.09	4.41	$p < 0.05$
Team orientation	0.72	3.75	$p < 0.05$
Assertiveness	3.37	4.51	$p < 0.05$
Occupational behavior	2.65	3.10	$p < 0.05$
Conscientiousness	1.61	2.06	$p < 0.05$
Flexibility	2.22	2.67	$p < 0.05$
Action orientation	4.12	4.57	$p < 0.05$
Psychological constitution	2.10	2.93	$p < 0.05$
Emotional stability	1.06	1.89	$p < 0.05$
Working under pressure	1.67	2.50	$p < 0.05$
Self-confidence	3.57	4.40	$p < 0.05$

Regarding session effectiveness (Table 2), participants identified Design Jam as the most impactful, citing its positive influence across various domains in the qualitative assessment, with the social competencies being perceived as the most targeted. Similar results were observed in other studies where participants were required to interact with each other in order to go through the speed-up creative process. The findings also revealed that people in such cases tend to "get out of the shell", accept learning as an affective process, and develop critical thinking. While the presentation skills seem to be reasonable in terms of the development of soft skills in the context of learning a different language or working in academia, in the chosen legal entity, presentations were supposedly deemed less effective, as they were observed to generate motivation primarily through the ICV-variable. More information on the effectiveness of the soft-skills development methods can be found in Table 2.

Table 2 – Evaluation of Soft Skills Development Techniques

Soft skills development techniques	Average effectiveness score (0-5)	Perceived the most targeted domain	Qualitative feedback for the technique	Qualitative feedback for the ICV-variable
Design Jam	4.7	Social Competencies	Commended for fostering various soft skills simultaneously and allowed the creative flow to nurture.	Participants noted the that working on the personally relevant problems helped them to be more engaged in the process.
Role-Playing	4.1	Social Competencies	Participants found it effective in enhancing interpersonal skills mainly as it allowed to see collogues in a new setting.	Role-playing was positively influenced by outdoor settings along with the integration of culture related situations which fostered the sense of unity.

Table continuation

Soft skills development techniques	Average effectiveness score (0-5)	Perceived the most targeted domain	Qualitative feedback for the technique	Qualitative feedback for the ICV-variable
Case Study	3.8	Occupational Behavior	Highlighted as beneficial for improving decision-making and action orientation.	Using of the regionally relevant cases for the analysis allowed to eliminate possible bias in leadership and helped to establish better discussions.
Presentations	2.5	Occupational orientation	Perceived as lacking in providing new soft skills.	Motivational factor was very helpful and provided additional boost to overcome public speaking fear and develop hard skills in preparation.

Importantly, these findings align with the established hypothesis (H_2), indicating that the incorporation of ICV-based peculiarities into the soft skills development practice significantly increased the acceptance rate of the foreign HRM practice. Even when participants found certain techniques less likable, the integrated ICV variable provided a motivational and conducive environment for active participation, affirming the hypothesis made in the introduction. Furthermore, it is possible to observe that the domains that were perceived to be most targeted by the participants in the most effective techniques showed the greatest level of improvement in terms of pre- and post-implementation assessment by BIP-based questionnaire (Table 1). Similarly, the least effective method showed lower performance in the 2-month timeframe. These results not only depict consistency of findings between self-reported and external evaluation but also support the ICV's importance in the implementation of foreign HRM practices because we can still observe some improvement even in the least accepted development technique.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the comprehensive exploration of HRM methodologies, with a focus on ICV, has revealed valuable insights for enhancing soft skills within the legal entity "Pravozashchita" in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The literature review emphasized the importance of understanding HR practices across different countries, acknowledging variations and introducing the concept of ICV. The study's methods involved a case-study analysis within the organization, employing the Bochum Inventory of Personality and Competences questionnaire and ICV-based soft skills development techniques.

The results indicated a significant improvement in soft skills among participants after the ICV-based program, with notable enhancements in social competencies. The statistical reliability of the study was validated through high Cronbach's alpha values, affirming the accuracy of the questionnaire and assessment methods. Participants expressed satisfaction with the program, demonstrating a positive attitude toward continued engagement. The effectiveness of different soft skills development techniques varied, with Design Jam receiving the highest average effectiveness score, aligning with participants' qualitative feedback and indicating the importance of tailored ICV integration.

The findings substantiate the initial hypothesis (H_1) that inter-country variability can define organization-specific incentives for soft skills development. The incorporation of ICV-based peculiarities significantly increased the acceptance of foreign HRM practices (H_2), showcasing the importance of considering local contextual factors. The study not only reinforces the importance of soft skills but also contributes to bridging the literature gap on tailored methodological approaches, particularly in the context of developing economies. In essence, the research underscores the practical applicability of ICV in implementing foreign HRM practices and highlights the significance of tailored soft skills development in diverse organizational settings.

The future directions of this work include conducting a long-term impact assessment to evaluate the sustainability of the implemented ICV-based soft skills development program, exploring cross-industry comparative analyses of HRM practices in Almaty, examining the adaptability of the ICV-based methodology to diverse cultural settings within Kazakhstan, and investigating the potential integration of technology-driven solutions to enhance HRM practices in similar multicultural environments.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INITIAL ESTIMATES AND FINAL OUTCOMES IN GLOBAL VS. LOCAL PROJECTS: SURVEY ANALYSIS

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Abstract. This study examines the differences between the initial project estimates and the final outcomes in both global and local projects, specifically focusing on Kazakhstan. The goal of this research is to address this gap in existing research by comparing the initial estimates and the final deliverables in global and local projects. The study used a survey methodology to collect data from project managers with experience in both global and local projects.
Significant differences were found in project management challenges and outcomes: global projects are more prone to cost overruns, schedule delays, and adverse impacts from scope changes compared to local projects. These findings highlight the complexity of managing global projects, emphasizing the need for enhanced planning, risk management, and communication strategies.
The methodology involved distributing a detailed questionnaire via Google Forms in Russian and English, targeting professionals through various online platforms. Statistical analysis of the quantitative data and thematic analysis of qualitative responses provided a comprehensive view of the project management landscape.
The key findings indicate that global projects encounter more challenges in sticking to their budgets and schedules and that changes in scope have a particularly strong negative impact. This research adds valuable insights that can help in developing customized project management practices for global settings. Future studies could broaden the scope to include various industries and regions in order to improve best practices for achieving project success on both a global and local level.
Key words: Comparative analysis, global projects, local projects, project estimates, project outcomes.

Introduction

The increasing globalization of business necessitates the effective management of projects across diverse national and cultural boundaries. As organizations expand their operations internationally, the complexity of project management intensifies, requiring strategies that accommodate varying global contexts. While there is extensive research in the field of project management, a significant gap exists in the comparative analysis of initial estimates and outcomes between global and local projects. This gap is critical, as understanding the differences between these types of projects can inform the development of more effective management strategies, ultimately enhancing project success.

Previous studies highlight that global projects are often more susceptible to cost overruns and schedule delays due to the unpredictable nature of the global environment. However, these studies frequently lack comprehensive, data-driven analyses that reflect the diverse experiences of project managers operating in different contexts. Moreover, there is a notable paucity of research specifically comparing the performance of global and local projects within Kazakhstan. Addressing this gap is essential for advancing both theoretical and practical knowledge in project management.

This study aims to fill this research gap by conducting a comparative analysis of initial estimates and final deliverables in global and local projects. Utilizing data from a survey of project managers with experience in both global and local projects, the study intends to provide insights that can enhance project planning and management practices.

The primary research question guiding this study is: How do the original estimations for project costs, schedule, and scope compare to the final outcomes in global versus local projects? To address this question, the study will test the following hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference between the originally estimated project

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costs, schedule, and scope, and the final outcomes in global projects and local projects.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant difference between the originally estimated project costs, schedule, and scope, and the final outcomes in global projects and local projects.

This research is justified by the increasing need for effective project management in a globalized economy. As organizations continue to expand across borders, understanding the distinct challenges and strategies for managing global versus local projects becomes crucial. By providing practical recommendations and contributing to both the theoretical and practical understanding of project management in diverse contexts, this study offers valuable insights for scholars and practitioners. Through an analysis of the experiences and outcomes of project managers, this research aims to enhance the overall effectiveness of project management practices.

Literature review

Project management has evolved significantly over the decades, adapting to the increasing complexity and scope of both global and local projects. Foundational principles of project management are well-established, with methodologies such as the PMBOK (Project Management Body of Knowledge) and PRINCE2 providing structured approaches to managing projects (PMI, 2021; OGC, 2017). However, the application of these methodologies can differ markedly between global projects (GP) and local projects (LP), particularly in terms of cost, schedule, scope, and stakeholder management.

Global projects often involve multiple countries, cultures, and time zones, introducing additional layers of complexity not typically present in local projects. According to Binder (2016), global projects require more sophisticated coordination and communication strategies due to their broader geographic spread and the diversity of the teams involved. This complexity can lead to higher risks and greater variability in project outcomes. Local projects, on the other hand, are usually confined to a single geographic area and are often subject to more predictable and stable conditions. This can result in more accurate initial estimates and fewer deviations from the planned cost and schedule (Aarseth et al., 2014). The relative simplicity of local projects allows for more straightforward application of traditional project management techniques.

The literature indicates that global projects are more susceptible to cost overruns and schedule delays compared to local projects. A study by Fossum et al. (2019) involving 450 respondents experienced in global projects and 57 respondents from local projects found that costs in global projects are more likely to exceed budgets. This is corroborated by the findings of Zwikael et al. (2014), who highlight that unforeseen costs and delays are more prevalent in global projects due to the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the global environment. Conversely, local projects benefit from a more controlled and familiar environment, which tends to result in better alignment with the original budget and schedule. This is supported by the work of Turner and Müller (2005), who emphasize that local projects often face fewer external disruptions, allowing for more precise planning and execution.

Scope changes are a common challenge in project management, and their impact can vary significantly between global and local projects. Research by Ika and Hodgson (2014) indicates that global projects are more prone to scope changes due to evolving stakeholder requirements and the need to adapt to diverse regulatory environments. These scope changes can lead to substantial delays and increased costs, complicating project delivery. In local projects, scope changes are usually less frequent and more manageable. This is largely because local projects operate within a single regulatory framework and cultural context, making it easier to anticipate and control changes (Müller & Jugdev, 2012).

Research also examines projects led by global companies, or multinational corporations (MNCs), which operate in multiple countries and face challenges related to different jurisdictions, cultural backgrounds, time zones, and bureaucracies that can affect business operations. Lazarus (2001) defined MNCs as corporations with operations in more than two countries, characterized by foreign direct investment. MNCs' global reach varies, with some operating in over 100 countries and employing hundreds of thousands of workers internationally. Economically, this highlights the ability of owners and managers in one country to control activities in others. Literature often reviews MNCs from a financial perspective in global projects. Goerg and Strobl (2003) noted that MNCs are becoming increasingly "footloose" with no strong national allegiance. Strategic leadership, management, and planning in MNCs are also significant topics, as discussed by Carpenter and Sanders (2008) and Kerzner (2014). Cullen and Parboteeah (2013) explored negotiations and cross-cultural communications in MNCs.

Project estimating involves forecasting the resources, time, and costs required to successfully

complete the project. Various methods such as expert judgment, analogous estimation, and parametric modeling are commonly used to estimate project parameters (Fleming & Koppelman, 2016). The accuracy of project estimates is influenced by several factors, including project complexity, uncertainty, stakeholder expectations, and external environmental factors (Flyvbjerg et al., 2003; Joslin & Müller, 2015). Global projects, characterized by diverse cultural contexts, geographic dispersion, and regulatory differences, present unique challenges that can affect the accuracy of estimates (Pinto & Prescott, 1990).

Research has demonstrated the inherent variability between initial estimates and final project outcomes in different contexts. Studies by Flyvbjerg et al. (2003) and Joslin and Müller (2015) highlight significant deviations between predicted and actual project parameters, indicating the presence of uncertainty and risk throughout the project life cycle. Global projects involve cross-border operations, the involvement of diverse stakeholders, and complex coordination across different geographic regions and cultures (Pinto & Prescott, 1990). In contrast, local projects are limited to a specific geographic region or community, often characterized by a more homogeneous stakeholder and regulatory environment (Müller & Turner, 2010).

Despite the extensive research on project management, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding the comparative analysis of initial estimates and final outcomes specifically between global and local projects. Most studies focus on either global or local projects in isolation, without directly comparing the two. This gap is significant because understanding the differences in project performance between these contexts can lead to more tailored and effective project management strategies. It is also worth noting that there is no literature that compares global and local projects based in Kazakhstan. Moreover, existing literature often relies on case studies or theoretical models without incorporating empirical data from surveys or real-world project outcomes. This limits the generalizability of the findings and underscores the need for more comprehensive, data-driven research.

Methodology

The methodology used in this study was aimed at obtaining a comprehensive understanding of project management among professionals who have had experience in global projects and those who have been involved exclusively in Kazakhstan. The research methodology included several key steps. First, a questionnaire was developed using Google Forms in Russian and English, considering the language preferences of the respondents. Then, the link to the questionnaire was distributed through various channels including Outlook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and other social media platforms to reach a diverse audience.

Data collection was conducted over a period of one month to ensure enough responses. A total of 40 respondents participated in the survey and provided valuable data for analysis. The survey questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section focused on collecting demographic information and profiles of the respondents such as age, work experience, project area and geographical coverage. The second section contained questions directly related to the objectives of the study, which explored various aspects of project management practices.

To facilitate comparative analysis, respondents were categorized into two groups based on their involvement in global or local projects. This grouping allowed for a structured exploration of the differences in perceptions and experiences between the two project contexts.

Quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and patterns in project outcomes across global and local projects. Qualitative responses were also explored to better understand respondents' views on various aspects of project management.

By adhering to this methodology, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the comparative analysis of initial evaluations and final results in global and local projects, as outlined in the subsequent Results section.

Results and discussion

The study involved 40 respondents from different countries. As a result of the survey, it was found that out of the 40 respondents, 25 had participated in global projects (GP), while 15 had experience in local projects (LP) within one country. The average age of the respondents was 35 years, with an average of 5 years of project management experience. If we examine the age and experience across the two groups, it appears that the average age of respondents who participated in global projects was 36, with 6 years of experience, whereas the average age and experience of respondents who participated in local projects were 32 and 4 years, respectively. Thus, it was evident that respondents who participated in

global projects were significantly older and more experienced.

Regarding the presence of project management certificates, it was found that 70% or 28 respondents did not have certificates. Among the group participating in GP, the proportion of those without certificates was higher, with 19 out of 25 respondents lacking certification, compared to 9 out of 15 in the LP group. Among the respondents of both groups, there were certifications in project management such as Chapter Lead, IPMA D, MBA, AMBA, PMP, PSM I, PPO I, SMCP, with PMP being the most common certification. Thus, despite the GP group having more experience, the LP group had a slightly higher proportion of respondents with certificates.

In response to the question about roles in the project, it was found that in the GP group, more than half were project managers, while the other half had roles such as Executive Management, Senior Product Manager, Business Manager, etc. In contrast, in the LP group, 13 respondents had project management roles, while only 2 had other roles such as Financial Analyst and Scrum Master.

Regarding the question about project locations, respondents indicated multiple countries since the question was open-ended. Table 1 below illustrates the countries mentioned by the respondents.

The survey revealed that the projects of the majority of respondents were located in Kazakhstan (27), Uzbekistan (5), the USA (4), and in 15 other countries worldwide, with 23 respondents indicating projects in multiple countries. Thus, it can be inferred that respondents have diverse experiences across various countries.

Regarding the duration of projects, the average project duration was found to be 6 years. When segmented by groups, it was observed that the duration of projects for the Participate in GP group was 8 years, while for the Participate in LP group, it was only 1 year. However, it is worth noting that for several respondents in the first group, the duration of projects ranged significantly from 100 to 13 years, which represents substantial deviation. Looking at the median, it appears that the duration for the first group is 2 years, while for the second group, it is 1 year. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that for the majority of respondents, the project duration is medium-term.

Regarding the size of project teams, it was found that 13 respondents had teams ranging from 5 to 10 members, 12 respondents indicated team sizes from 10 to 20, and 8 respondents had teams ranging from 1 to 5 members. When examining the responses by groups, it was found that respondents from the second group tended to have larger team sizes, primarily consisting of 10 to 20 members. In contrast, respondents from the first group included one respondent each with team sizes of 120, 150, and even 3000 members.

Table 1 – Location of project

Location of project (country /-s)	# responds
Kazakhstan	27
Uzbekistan	5
USA	4
Australia	3
United Kingdom	3
Kyrgyzstan	2
Russia	2
India	2
Canada	2
China	1
Korea	1
Ireland	1
UAE	1
Georgia	1
Azerbaijan	1
Germany	1
Bangladesh	1
Italy	1

It is noteworthy that these deviations are likely associated with the industry of the project. For instance, the respondent who indicated a team size of 150 works in the telecommunications sector, while respondents indicating team sizes of 120 and 3000 work in the oil and gas sector. Furthermore, these same respondents had the longest project durations, 100, 13, and 40 years, respectively.

Upon examining the industries of the projects in which our respondents participated, it was found that the majority worked in IT, Banking/Insurance, and Consulting. The figure 1 below illustrates the project sectors in which our respondents participated, and since respondents could participate in multiple projects, the question allowed for selecting multiple options and specifying other industries if they were not listed. The category of "other industries" includes sectors such as logistics, metal extraction, FMCG, education, the automotive market, and others.

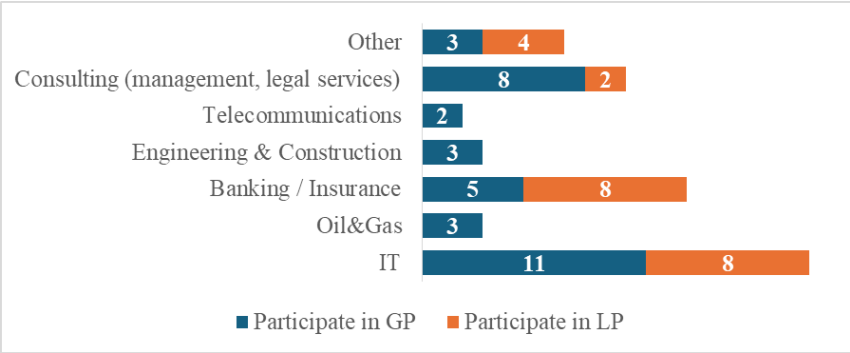

Figure 1 – Industry or industries of projects

To make a comparative analysis, the survey included questions about the cost, schedule and scope of the projects. For each aspect, 2 questions were compiled.

The first question addressed the extent to which unexpected cost overruns affect the overall success of projects. Analyzing the responses of the group participating in global projects (Participate in GP), 48% of respondents indicated that unexpected cost overruns moderately affect the overall success of their projects, while 40% stated that these overruns significantly impact success, and the remaining 12% reported minimal impact. The second group of respondents participating in local projects (Participate in LP) had 33% indicating moderate impact, 53% noting significant impact, and 13% reporting minimal impact.

A comparative analysis reveals noticeable differences in perception between the two groups. Specifically, a higher proportion of respondents in Participate in GP stated that cost overruns have a moderate impact compared to Participate in LP (48% vs. 33%). Conversely, a greater percentage of respondents in Participate in LP indicated a significant impact of cost overruns on project success compared to Participate in GP (53% vs. 40%).

These results suggest that practitioners participating in global projects may perceive unexpected cost overruns as having a somewhat less serious impact on project success compared to those involved in local projects. Figure 2 presents the respondents' answers.

When surveyed on the extent to which current project costs are in line with the original budget, Participate in GP 56% indicated that project costs are above the original budget, 4% reported costs below budget, and 40% stated that costs are in line with the original budget. Participate in LP 40% reported costs above the original budget, 7% reported costs below budget, and 53% matched the original budget.

A higher percentage of respondents in the global project group reported costs above the original budget compared to respondents in the local project group (56% vs. 40%).

These results indicate that practitioners involved in global projects may face greater challenges in managing project costs within the constraints of the original budget than those involved in local projects. Figure 3 summarizes the respondents' responses.

The next question pertained to the frequency of successful implementation of recovery plans in the event of project schedule delays. The results revealed that among respondents involved in global projects, 72% reported that recovery plans are always successfully implemented, 16% reported occasional success, and 12% reported rare success. As for respondents participating in local projects, 100% reported that recovery plans are always successfully implemented, with none indicating periodic or rare implementation.

Analysis indicates significant differences in the perception of successful recovery plan implementation between the two groups. It can be inferred that practitioners involved in global projects may encounter more significant challenges or obstacles in achieving successful recovery plan implementation in response to project schedule delays compared to those working on local projects. Figure 4 presents the responses.

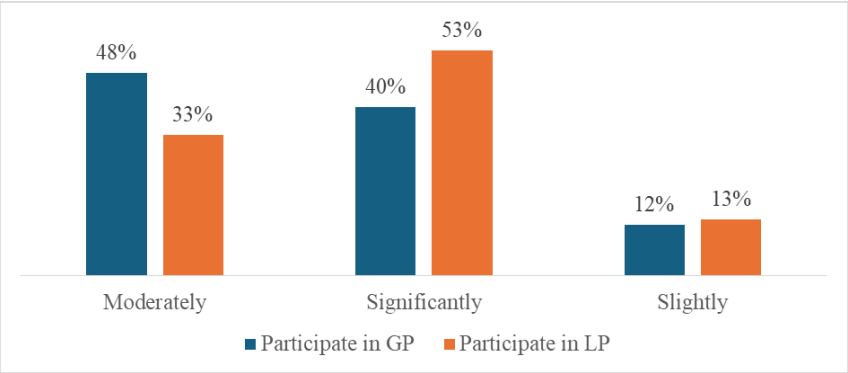

Figure 2 – To what extent do unexpected cost overruns impact the overall success of global projects?

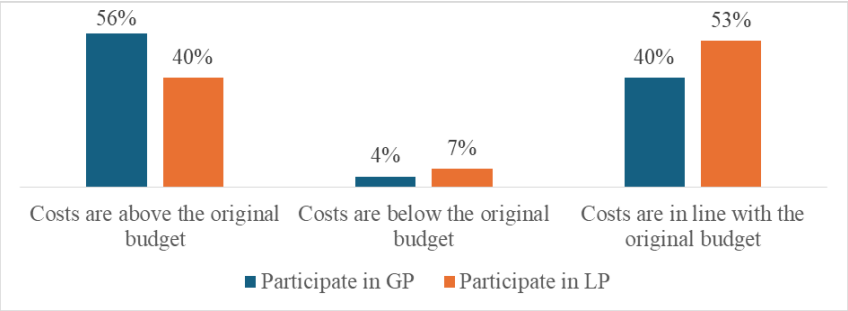

Figure 3 – How well do the current costs of your project align with the initial budget?

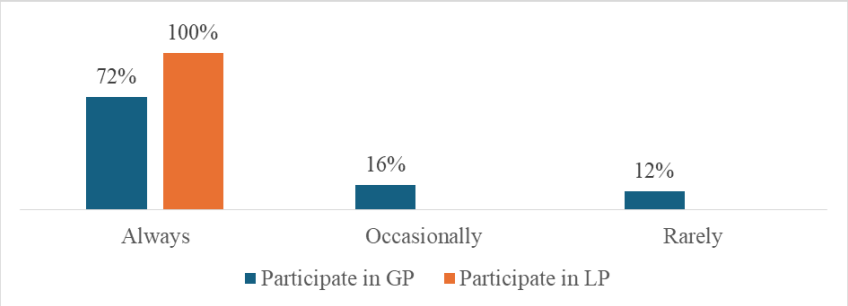

Figure 4 – In case of delays in the project schedule, how often are recovery plans successfully implemented?

Analysis of responses to the question regarding the extent to which the current project completion schedule aligns with the initial plan revealed that among respondents in the Participate in GP group, 20% indicated that the project is ahead of schedule, 8% noted a lag behind the schedule, and 72% stated that the project is on schedule. In the Participate in LP group, 7% reported the project being ahead of schedule, 7% indicated a lag behind the schedule, and 87% stated that the project is on schedule.

The analysis demonstrates notable differences in the perception of project completion schedule alignment with the initial plan between the two groups. Practitioners from the Participate in GP group may encounter more significant challenges or difficulties in ensuring project schedule adherence to the initial plan compared to the Participate in LP

group. Figure 5 presents the responses from both groups.

The survey results regarding the frequency of changes occurring in project scopes after the initial planning stage revealed that among respondents involved in global projects, as depicted in Figure 6, 36% reported changes occurring within their projects always, 56% indicated changes happening from time to time, and 8% stated changes occurring rarely. Among respondents participating in local projects, 47% reported changes always, 47% indicated changes happening from time to time, and 7% stated changes occurring rarely. It was found that both groups often encounter changes in project scopes, with the majority of respondents in both groups noting that changes occur from time to time.

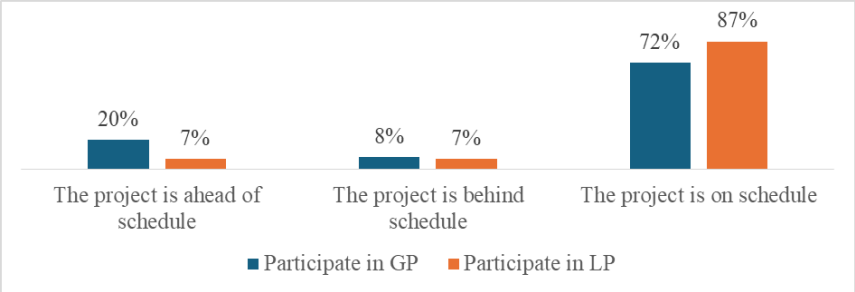

Figure 5 – In case of delays in the project schedule, how often are recovery plans successfully implemented?

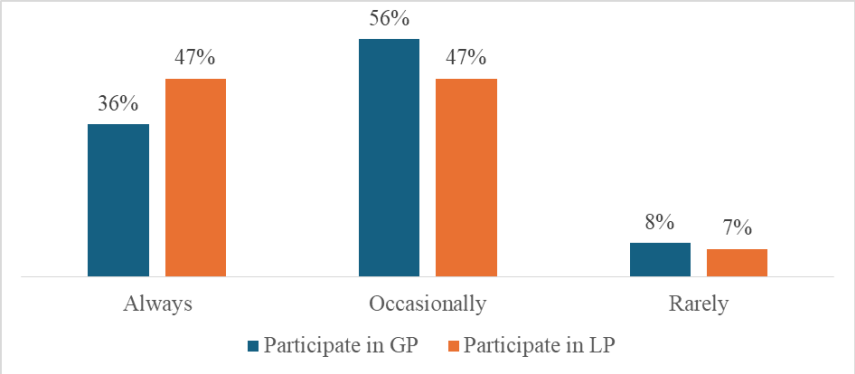

Figure 6 – How often do changes occur in the scope of your project after the initial planning phase?

The survey results presented in Figure 7 regarding the impact of changes in project scope on overall project implementation provide valuable insights into the perceptions of the respondents. It was found that among the group Participate in GP, 48% noted that changes in project scope negatively affect project implementation, leading to delays and issues, 16% reported a neutral impact with minimal effect, and 36% perceived changes positively, resulting in improved outcomes. Respondents from the group Participate in LP indicated that 40% experienced a negative impact, 47% reported a neutral impact, and 13% perceived changes positively.

A higher percentage of respondents in the group Participate in GP reported a negative impact compared to the group Participate in LP (48% vs. 40%). This suggests that specialists involved in global projects may encounter more serious problems or disruptions due to changes in project scope. Conversely, respondents from Participate in LP may experience relatively fewer disruptions and delays due to changes in project scope, which may be attributed to a more rational and localized project environment.

Throughout the investigation, key aspects of project management in global and local projects were

examined, including cost management, schedule adherence, scope change, the impact of scope change on project implementation, and the execution of recovery plans. The results revealed differences between global and local projects in these areas, indicating potential disparities in project assessments and outcomes. Regarding the research question on the variability of project estimates, the results confirm the alternative hypothesis that significant differences exist between initially estimated costs, schedules, and project scope and the final outcomes in global and local projects.

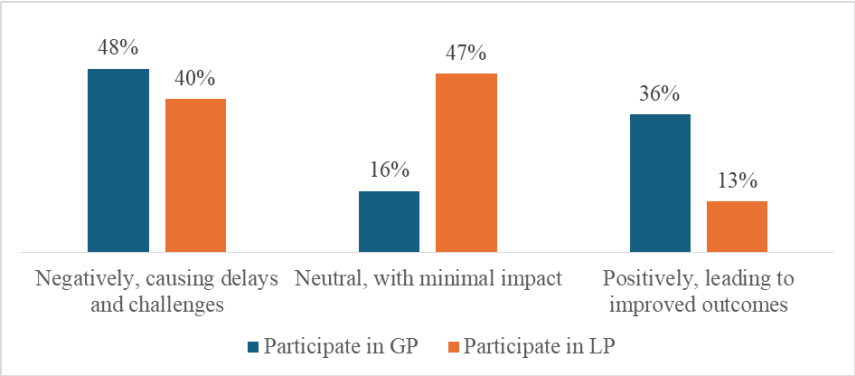

Figure 7 – How do changes in project scope impact the overall project delivery?

Comparing our results with a study by Knut R Fossum, Jean C. Binder, Tage K. Madsen, Wenche Aarseth, Bjorn Andersen (Success factors in Global Project Management - A study of practices in organizational support and the effects on cost and schedule, May 2019), which included 450 respondents with experience in global projects and 57 respondents who worked only on local projects, there are similarities in the findings. As in our study, their results indicate that costs in global projects are more likely to exceed budget, schedules in these projects are met or ahead of schedule, and changes in workload have a more negative impact on local projects.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to conduct a comparative analysis of the initial estimates and final outcomes of global projects (GP) versus local projects (LP) within Kazakhstan. By examining the discrepancies between projected and actual project parameters, this research sought to understand the key factors influencing cost, schedule, and scope variations in these two distinct contexts. The study utilized a survey methodology to gather data from professionals with experience in both global and local projects, allowing for a detailed comparison of their experiences and outcomes.

The findings reveal significant differences between global and local projects in terms of project management challenges and outcomes:

Cost Management: A higher percentage of respondents from global projects reported costs exceeding the original budget compared to local projects (56% vs. 40%). This indicates that managing project costs within budget constraints is more challenging in a global, possibly context due to factors such as exchange rates, international regulations, and logistical complexities.

Schedule Adherence: While a significant portion of both groups reported adhering to their schedules, the study found that 72% of global project respondents stated their projects were on schedule, compared to 87% in local projects. This suggests that global projects face more difficulties in maintaining their schedules, possibly due to the added complexity of coordinating across multiple time zones and cultures.

Scope Changes: Changes in project scope were frequent in both contexts, but global projects experienced more severe impacts from these changes. 48% of global project respondents indicated that scope changes negatively affected project implementation, compared to 40% of local project respondents. This underscores the additional challenges in managing scope changes in a global environment, where diverse stakeholder expectations and regulatory requirements can complicate project execution.

Based on these results, it is evident that global projects are more susceptible to cost overruns, schedule delays, and adverse impacts from scope changes compared to local projects. These findings

confirm the hypothesis that there are significant differences in the project management dynamics between global and local contexts. The increased complexity of global projects necessitates more robust planning, risk management, and communication strategies to mitigate these challenges.

The insights gained from this study highlight the need for developing tailored project management practices that address the unique challenges of global projects. Future research could focus on exploring specific strategies that have been successful in mitigating the identified issues, such as enhanced risk management frameworks, improved cross-cultural communication techniques, and advanced cost control mechanisms.

Additionally, expanding the scope of the study to include a larger and more diverse sample of projects across different industries and regions would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the global versus local project dynamics. This could further inform the development of best practices that enhance project success in both global and local contexts.

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ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA: THE CONFLICTS, PROBLEMS, AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract. This article investigates the electoral administration in Nigeria, focusing on conflicts and problems in the Fourth Republic. Nigeria's transition to democracy in 1999 involved the crucial role of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The study aims to highlight that both international and local electoral observers have reported deficiencies in the initial elections conducted by INEC, which have had negative impacts on democracy in Nigeria. Additionally, the article discusses how an incumbent political party may collaborate with INEC to manipulate election results in their favor. Consequently, INEC has faced accusations from opposition parties after announcing electoral outcomes. The article argues that INEC has not maintained political independence in managing elections in Nigeria and suggests that INEC should be more powerful than the incumbent government. The study utilized qualitative and primary documents as its research methods.
Key words: INEC, election, political party, electoral system, democratization, and conflicts.

Introduction

As a general rule, the transition process to democracy is often accomplished by the tasks of the electoral institution. Elections serve multi-dimensional purposes in democratization. This provides opportunities for the citizenry and ensures political participation, liberalization, organization, and a genuine electoral process. An election improves nation-building, particularly in Africa, which is ethnically divided. After independence, ethnicity and political conflicts caused a setback to the representative government in Nigeria (Jinadu, 2005). Over the years, the military regime has been condemned globally, especially by the leadership of the European powers (Bratton & Walle, 1997). Nigeria was identified in Africa as a country with several experiences in military intervention which spanned between 1960 and 1998. Within this period, the political elites clamored for a return to a democratic system, but they failed for several reasons. The establishment of a democratic system started with the establishment of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) by the 1999 Constitution. The institution is required to perform substantial tasks in the administration of elections in the country (Anifowosa & Babawale, 2003).

Huntington (1991) succinctly observed that elections are the ways by which democracy operates. In the third wave of democratization, the elections were also a way of weakening and terminating authoritarian regimes. Elections are the vehicles of democratization that drive democratic consolidation in the twenty-first century. The statutory responsibility of INEC contributed to the fall of authoritarian regimes (Jinadu, 2005). Democratization was brought about by authoritarian rulers who held elections and by opposition groups who pushed for elections and participated in the process. Consequently, the lesson from the third wave is that elections are not only the life of democracy; they also mark the end of dictatorship (Fukuyama, 1992). The joint effort in the transition is between those who hold or push the elections as a transformation toward political development. This occurs in different situations in Africa. For example, Nigeria's and Ghana's democratic transition experiences were obviously different from that of South Africa's, which was a negotiated settlement.

Following this transition, Carter Centre (1999) observed the Nigerian electoral process from the founding elections. The outcome of the 1998/1999 elections marked the end of a long reign of military dictatorship in Nigeria. Goddie (1999) avers that

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elections serve as congressional political participation as INEC, the electorates and politicians publicly engage in leadership selective processes. The electoral institution, politicians, and electorates are significant in the process of transition that underpins social justice in the multi-party system.

However, working towards credible elections in the future requires the input of institutions such as the National Assembly, INEC, and civil society groups. These institutions are to inject the ERC recommendations for conducting successful elections in Nigeria. Gerson and Berry (2010) explained that the responsibility of INEC involves directing, managing, controlling, and administering either a democratic or authoritarian democratic society. These electoral functions are significant as the principles are aimed at deepening democracy. The deepening of democracy protects civic rights, including the electorate's power, political protest, participation, recall of legislators, political debate, campaign, etc. These civic values are immunities of democracy and they could be implemented by the electoral institution in all ramifications.

Literature review

Political participation and competition usually receive a number of stakeholders distributing electoral power. The stakeholders are in varying degrees vis-à-vis electoral commission, political parties, voters, electoral observers, mass media, etc. Political participation and competition involve electoral activities for the selection of credible leadership in the state of Saka (2021). In explaining these concepts further, democratization was the mainstream of analysis which recognizes certain political situations that foster participation and competition in democracy. It indicates that the elite and the electorate interact in a way that conforms to the electoral principles of the state. The elites that deliberately fall from authoritarian regimes to democratic governments do it explicitly for the model of institutional arrangement. The issues which surround political participation and competition in a new democracy depend on individual political behavior Ganiyu & Hamzat (2020). The process of competition begins with the elites that are interested in the leadership of the country, and the electorate also participates in choosing credible candidates for the constituent offices Huntington (1991).

The regime transition was an institutional arrangement that took place from the shape of political participation. The concept of participation starts from the transition process of African countries and depends on the electoral behavior of the citizens. This electoral process starts from the registration of credible voters, and the campaign of each political party also contributes to participation and competition. In Africa, participation fluctuates based on individual political behavior for each election European Parliament (2020). That is, a presidential election could be different from the parliamentary or gubernatorial election. In these views, the political behavior of the people determines the voting pattern of each election in the country Partheymuller et al. (2022). In Nigeria, as a case study in Africa, political participation has been very high since the inauguration of democracy in 1999. Therefore, between 1999 and 2015, participation was high in the federation of the country. In this construction, the election is the determinant of African democratic governments after the third wave of democratization.

More so, the political competition, perhaps, relates to the democratization process, and it also has a bearing on political transitions. The process of the party system contributes to the participation of the elites and electorates in the selection of leadership vis-à-vis political parties, opposition parties, incumbent parties, electoral bodies, political campaigns, mass media, and elections Saka (2021). These elements recognize the institutional framework of a democratic state to function according to the consent of the electorate. The prime focus of political competition recognizes the proportional representation of the party in the legislative, and the party that leads has majority members in the legislative house. The legislature was more distinguished because the representation of the people makes sense in democracy when the community delegates members to participate in decision-making. The basic rule in the legislative house lies between the majority party and the minority party. The significance of party membership in the Freedom House is to make a broad decision as well as to regulate the power of the executive power which comes under the system of checks and balances Igiebor (2023).

Methodology

The research methodology is the process of gathering sources in this study. It also serves as procedural rules for the researchers to abide by in the examination and analysis of phenomena in order to accomplish the task of the research process. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the dynamics of electoral administration in Nigeria as the new democracy through its procedural elections. Using qualitative research methods, the

study explores the background framework of the electoral process, focusing on the areas such as conflicts, problems, and prospects after the initiation of democracy in the country. Primary and secondary sources are utilized to provide insights and support the analysis in English. The findings reveal that the INEC has not been politically independent in Nigeria due to the unethical process of conducting elections. Therefore, the study argues that the legal backing of INEC has not been defined adequately to guarantee its autonomy. The article submits that INEC should be stronger than the incumbent government in Nigeria

Statement of the Problem

Conducting elections in Nigeria has become a problem in the post-independence era. INEC has been dealing with past and present challenges. The electoral commission was created by the 1999 Constitution, its functions are specified in the Electoral Act. Apart from its statutory responsibilities, the institution is considered by international and national electoral observers. The outcome of elections is determined by the quality of democracy. Transparency and openness of elections drive the principles of democracy. In real sense, every successful government has always controlled the leadership of INEC. The executive and legislative arms of government have intervened in the internal programs of INEC. This situation has always affected the external engagement of the institution. Therefore, the ideology of the popular political party has regulated the administration of elections since the inauguration of democracy (Albin-Lacey, 2007). Therefore, the study argues that the legal backing of INEC has not been defined adequately to guarantee its autonomy. In Nigeria, post-election is always filled with the opposition political parties filing court suits against the incumbent political party (Ojo, 2008).

The misconduct in the electoral institution is in varying degrees. INEC staff have sometimes connived with the politicians to rig elections (Ojo, 2008). These electoral misconducts involved both the junior and senior staff. Some of them have been paraded for different allegations of electoral misconducts. Many staff have been tried internally, and disciplinary action has been taken against them while some have been tried in court (Awepoju, 2012).

Results and Discussion

Nigerian Electoral System

The etymology of electoral institution was a dramatic process in Nigeria. The process of election and its conduct in Nigeria is legally guaranteed under the Constitution of the country. Historically, participation in regional elections was organised through the Electoral Provision (EP) of 1958. The institution (EP) administered the first election which was conducted under the colonial government in 1959 (Ogbogbo, 2009). The political system is responsible for the changes after the political independence. The aim of this development was to equip the Electoral Commission of Nigeria [ECN] as an impartial institution to conduct free and fair elections and to announce electoral results. However, the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, being the head of government, established the Federation Electoral Commission (FEDECO) to replace the Electoral Provisions of Britain (Egwemi et al., 2014).

The political erosion of 1983 brought an end to the democratization of the Second Republic by military intervention, which saw Muhammadu Buhari ascending to power. Over the years, the political arrangement for the re-democratization of the civilian government was led by General Ibrahim Babangida's administration. Therefore, liberalization and re-democratization are civil rule processes and were involved in the establishment of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) in 1991. The electoral reform was initiated by the military to conduct various elections, such as the National Assembly and gubernatorial and presidential elections, between 1991 and 1993. The issue that surrounded the transition to democracy was the failure of the military to hand over power to democratically elected candidates. This scenario followed the annulment of the June 12 election, the mandate of Chief MKO Abiola. The General Babangida and General Abacha-led government were full of draconian policies that frustrated the electoral process. However, the sudden death of Abacha in 1998 paved the way for his second in command (General Abdulsalam) to fast-track the democratic processes. The National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON) was replaced with the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC). General Abdulsalam gave the Electoral Management Body (ETB) two weeks to draft a timetable for transitional/founding (first) elections and to present electoral policies that would lead to the handing over of power to a democratically elected government on May 29, 1999.

E-Electoral Registration and Voting

The Electoral Magazine (1999) examined the roles of INEC on technical aspects of modern development. This incorporates the use of electronic voting machines for generating electoral results. The

incorporation of electronic voting was truncated by the overwhelming opinions of the National Assembly members. Nevertheless, the importance of using a modern method in electioneering can influence and increase voters' registration and the capturing of necessary data, including the biometrics and photographs of all registered electorates by using the Direct Data Captured (DDC) machine. This electoral device promotes and improves the electoral process. First, it ensures and facilitates an adequate database of registered voters. Second, it detects multiple registration and voting in the field. The Electoral Institute of Nigeria (EIN) was established to train different capacities on the pattern of electoral voting within the INEC.

The national policy of the electoral institution supports various transformations and preparation for other elections in the country. INEC (2011) reported that the newly outlined policies were adopted in conformity with the Constitution. The readiness for the 2011 general elections heightened the transformation process in making the institution more independent under the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF), for the training and development of youths. Afterward, the ratification of these developments created effectiveness and improvement against any electoral odds and potential challenges. It was believed that the process would also resist the temptation of politicians who want power at all costs.

Over the years, particularly in 2011, elections have been managed and administered by INEC personnel based on the guidelines of the Electoral Act. The success of the 2011 general elections remained indelible because it served as a template for future elections and the maintenance of national unity. Therefore, the success of the election improves more on diversity in mobilizing the political groups for leadership selection. The success in electoral management has created a national network in the conduct of the 2015 general election. The Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (2015) advocated the involvement of the Permanent voter card and electronic card reader in the 2015 elections. This was projected to enhance the performance of electoral management and reduce electoral malpractices that happened in past elections. The electoral policy was a 2011 agenda and was ratified for successive elections. Going forward, the introduction of electronic devices will help to check fraud as the electorates will be identified and verified at the polling stations across Nigeria. The devices will identify and validate the original user of the PVC from the Electronic Reader Card (ERC) being configured for the smooth conduct of free and fair elections.

The justification for the card reader machine was actualized in the 2015 general elections. The improvement in this process helped the Returning Officers to converge in Abuja and defend the election results. It is the INEC Chairman who presents and announces presidential results. The outcome of the presidential election was successful with few instances of electoral malpractices in some states. The affected states included, inter alia, Lagos, Bayelsa, Kano, Nassarawa, and Port Harcourt. The Card Reader Machine (CRM) has been argued to have the potential to prevent rigging because of its success in Ghana and Kenya. The potential challenges that may occur during the exercise have been identified and solved with a backup battery in case there is an electricity failure during elections. In this process, first, the smartcard reader comes with its own battery which can be charged before the election. Second, it uses long-life power as the power can last for 12 hours. Lastly, these electoral arrangements were successful in the general elections conducted by INEC in 2015.

The question is: what made this electoral exercise successful? Firstly, using the card reader machine for administering election reflects a national interest. Initially, the adoption of the electoral machine was not accepted by the party members across the country. *The Punch* (2015) reported the statutory stand of the Federal High Court in Abuja on the application to stop INEC from using the electronic card reader machine for administering the 2015 general elections. The court suit was filed by four political parties. These are the United Democratic Party (UDP), Action Alliance (AC), Congress Party of Nigeria (CPN), and Alliance for Democracy (AD). These plaintiffs thought that the use of the electronic device was against the provision of the Constitution as well as the Electoral Act of 2010 as amended. Therefore, the judgment of the Federal High Court in Abuja was considered as a breach of the provision of section 5(1) of the Electoral Act which prohibits the use of electronic voting machines in electioneering.

The Organs of INEC

The Federal Constitution of Nigeria, in certain provisions, indicated the procedural power of INEC as derived from the Exclusive Power. In this statutory power, Section 157 (14) stated the position of the Chairman as the Chief Electoral Commissioner and twelve other members to be known as National Electoral Commissioners. The President of Nigeria

has the exclusive power to nominate a candidate and forward the name of the nominee to the National Assembly for approval. In view of this provision, the Constitution decentralises the power of each state of the Federation to maintain the electoral structure of INEC.

Table 1 – Past Electoral Commission Chairmen 1954-2015

Name	Tenure	Commission
Eyo, E. Esua	1954-1966	Electoral Commission of Nigeria [ECN]
Chief Michael An	1976-1979	Federal Electoral Commission [FEC]
Justice Victor Ovie-Whiskey	1980-1983	Federal Electoral Commission [FEC]
Prof. Eme, O. Awa	1987-1989	National Electoral Commission [NEC]
Prof.Humphrey, N. Nwosu	1989-1993	National Electoral Commission [NEC]
Pro.Okon Edet Uya	1993	National Electoral Commission [NEC]
Chief Summer Dagogo Jack	1994-1998	National Electoral Commission of Nigeria [NECN]
Hon.Justice Ephrain, I. Apata	1998-2000	Independent National Electoral Commission [INEC]
Sir. Abel Guobaadia (KSA)	2000-2005	Independent National Electoral Commission [INEC]
Prof. Maurice Iwu	2005-2010	Independent National Electoral Commission [INEC]
Prof Attahiru Jega	2010-2015	Independent National Electoral Commission [INEC]
*Source**:** Voter Education Handbook (2005) and *The NEWS Magazine* (2015)		

The statutory history of INEC informed two eras before and after political independence. In these eras, the procedural selection of the Chief Electoral Chairman is based on the actions, structure, and patterns of elections. Meanwhile, in the table above, the electoral chairman is limited to five years, except in the 1998-2000 period. The period was administered by the leadership of Hon. Justice Epharain Apata, who spent two years in office under the military regime. The amendment of the Constitution on electoral matters also informed the leadership of INEC in 2010. There was a smooth handover between Prof. Maurice Iwu and Prof. Attahiru Jega in the same year. Therefore, Attahiru Jega conducted the 2011 elections and the 2015 general elections. The difference between the past and present elections is that the commission recruited academic personnel as Returning Officers (RO) across all 36 states.

The NEWS Magazine (2015) reported the significant process in the conduct of free and fair elections across the country. The electoral outcome has improved the quality of democracy, such virtues are patriotism, self-principles, reforms, intellectual skills, and capacity building in the electoral system. The use of university scholars as returning officers in the electoral process was commended nationwide. Furthermore, PLAC (2015) justified the functions of the Electoral Act in ensuring that meaningful understanding was established in educating the electorates on matters that concern them. Thus, the structure of the electoral institution was designed to perform these tasks adequately. According to (PLAC, 2010), the electoral commission performs the tasks of conducting elections in Nigeria, how elections are conducted and the method of voting, conditions for voter eligibility, the legal requirements for being included on the voters register, conditions under which an election may be delayed or postponed and the actions to be taken to reschedule such election, election offenses and their penalties, nominations criteria for candidates and political parties, regulations for electoral campaigns, the process for counting of votes and declaring election results, election procedure for area councils mode of determination of election petitions arising from elections.

PLAC (2015) specified the electoral programs of INEC, which include the provisions of the Electoral Acts. For example, Section 99(1) of the Electoral Act 2010, as amended, stipulated 90 days for the campaign of political parties. Part of the electoral process is the collection of the party forms from INEC. Subsequently, the conduct of the party primary elections is scheduled by INEC. With regards to the preparation for the 2015 general elections, the collection of forms for all federal elections by political parties was scheduled for 4th -11th December 2014. The last day for the submission of various forms to INEC for the Presidential and

National Assembly elections was 18th December 2014, and for Governorship and State House of Assembly, it was 25th December 2014. Finally, the date of elections for the Presidential and National Assembly was scheduled for 14th February 2015, and the Governorship and State House of Assembly was also scheduled for 28th February 2015.

However, the electoral timetable was unilaterally changed by President Goodluck Jonathan to favor his re-election under the PDP. The Presidential and National Assembly elections were rescheduled for the 28 of March 2015, while the Governorship and States House of Assembly were rescheduled for 11th April 2015. Democracy allows a procedural arrangement with the agreement of the electoral institution. At this juncture, the study committed the succeeding section to explaining the challenges that confronted INEC in its operation. The character that derailed the performance of the institution centers on internal and external politics - meaning that certain challenges have confronted the statutory responsibilities of the INEC since the embracement of democracy between 1999 and 2015.

General Obstacles to the Electoral Institution

The sixteen years of democracy in Nigeria have witnessed both internal and external electoral challenges. These have affected the services of INEC. Maurice and Chinedu (2008) noted that the challenges which often frustrate the operation of INEC include political, legal, environmental, structural, and logistic challenges. The analyses of these problems have incorporated public opinions. The opinions of the public have influenced the government to appoint qualified persons to lead the institution.

INEC in 2007 was supported by the legal action of the Court of Appeal to defend its electoral action in the country. Part of the power is to vet the documents submitted by each political party. The right to perform the electoral task was rejected by the Supreme Court and this overrode the Court of Appeal judgment. As a result of the conflicting judgments, the Court of Appeal's judgment has worked against the statutory function of the commission in substantial matters. The judgment, which preceded the governorship, State House of Assembly, and Presidential elections in 2007, paved the way for the electoral commission to modify its actions, thereby resulting in the printing of a new set of 64 million ballot papers for the presidential election in the same year.

Apart from the external challenges, the distribution of electoral materials to all geopolitical areas of the 36 states across Nigeria and to 200,000 polling stations was an exigency task. The second aspect of this was noted by the explanation of David et al (2014) who observed that past elections have been reddened by electoral malpractices such as the rigging of elections, stuffing of ballot papers, inadequate and late arrival of the electoral materials, falsification of results, vote buying and ideology of the ruling party to influence the electoral law. However, it was suggested that adequate autonomy of the electoral commission should be guaranteed by the Electoral Act and that the executive arm of government should not interfere with the operation of the commission.

INEC has been neither independent nor self-reliant in the conduct of various elections in Nigeria. The inconsistency in the administration of the electoral commission is usually caused by the successive government in power. Oromareghake (2013) disclosed that the appointment of the INEC chairman and electoral commissioners has both served as an instrument of control in some electoral matters. Perhaps, the recruitment of unqualified staff to occupy sensitive positions of the commission should be corrected. The finance of INEC should be removed from the control of the executive President as the expenditure for electoral service may be frustrated in order to bring the commission to its knees.

Awopeju (2011) identified some factors which he claimed had eroded the standard of elections with evidence between 1999 and 2007. Such democratic impediments are the incompetence of electoral staff, intimidation of voters at the poll, selfish interest of the political gladiators, widespread electoral irregularities, poverty on the side of the electorates, and interference with the Electoral Act by the incumbent political party. Moreover, Abdullahi (2013) pointed out that persistent electoral violence during/after the elections has consequences on the INEC's performance, particularly in the 2011 general elections whereby the presidential, state, and local council elections were greeted with killing, arson, vandalisation of property, and riot.

The failure of elections in Nigeria can also be attributed to many behavioural factors. In the view of Enojo (2010, p. 89), electoral violence since the country's independence in 1960 has always been part of the political process. Anifowose and Babawale (2003) both added that the 2003 general elections were rigged by the elites in power. Ojo (2008) and Okolie (2010) are of the view that the 2007 general elections were the worse in the electoral administration in Nigeria with both international and

local observers concluding that there was a range of malpractices during the elections. Awopeju (2012) and Obakhado and Imhanlahimi (2009) have all claimed that low participation in the 2007 and 2011 presidential elections was due to the peoples' loss of confidence in the electoral processes.

Rawlence and Albin-Lacey (2007) characterised Nigerian elections in terms of stolen 'rights' because they were marred by extraordinary display of rigging and intimidation of voters in many areas throughout the 36 states of the country. In many states, very little voting took place as ballot papers were diverted to the offices and homes of government officials and participants to be filled with fake results. These challenges undermined the process of elections after the transition to democracy in 1999.

The accreditation of voters, late arrival of logistics, and inaccessibility of the card reader at polling stations strongly undermined the right of the electorate (TMG, 2015). In the 2011 election, these problems were acknowledged by the NSC (2011) which assessed and declared the electoral outcomes as a harassment and an intimidation of the electorates. The local observers had no access to some states while violence and lack of commitment to the INEC accreditation time by the electoral officer on duty added to the problems. In view of these problems, the study argues that the institution has conducted credible elections in the country and few abnormalities in the elections have been checked and controlled by the past chairman but many questions have been raised about the authenticity of the results in various elections. Apart from this point, the election will be meaningful when INEC conducts free and fair elections with the support of the political stakeholders in the country.

Conflict in the Electoral System

Conflict in the electoral system is a process of democratisation with reference to behaviour that obstructs the leadership selection. Electoral power involves political stakeholders who either maintain the prospects of democracy or obstruct the quality of democracy. Therefore, political power intertwines with procedural legitimacy, meaning that the power is instrumental to contesting elections. The significance of electoral arrangement dictates the distribution of power among the political elites in the state (Huntington, 1991). The electoral institution (INEC) is to comply with the regulations of election to ensure a free and fair outcome. However, electoral conflicts arise when the political stakeholders vis-a-vis the electorates, elites, and INEC fail to comply with the rule of the democratic game. In this discourse, this study has observed various electoral challenges which translate to conflict in different circumstances (Abdullahi, 2013).

The provision of the Electoral Act does not prevent conflict in the administration of election in this dispensation. Conflict arises when there is tension between the governing elite and non-governing elite (opposition parties), perhaps, leading to the third party (INEC). However, in what way does electoral conflict arise in the electoral system? Nigeria, as a case study, is usually characterised by party disunity/crisis. The evidence of party disunity in the First Republic has resulted in a party coalition which weakens the principles of democracy. The same character dominates the current political dispensation which started in 1999. The ideology of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) as a dominant political party is characterised by membership interests and political ambition has frustrated the political system. For example, the CPC, ACN, and the right wing of PDP against the left wing of PDP was evidence of the party coalition in 2014. The defection in the preceding year has led to acrimony in the 2015 general elections.

The Punch (2015) reported the clash at the INEC office between All Progressive Congress Party (APC) and PDP in Port Harcourt leading to each group mobilising for reinforcement of party members. In the same scenario, the PDP supporters accused the Resident Electoral Officer, Mrs. Gecilla Khan, of planning to favour APC in the 2015 elections. The Herald (2015) correspondingly reported that the former governor of Kwara State, Senator Bukola Saraki, mobilised Kwarans in his ward for defection to another party. Defection from one political party to another started when he left ANPP for PDP in 2003. Afterward, he later dumped PDP for APC in 2014 to re-contest for the electoral position in 2015.

The Punch (2015) also reported the gross intimidation of INEC staff on different levels from the over callous interest of the party members on the matter of card readers. In the same manner, the defection from the (PDP) to the APC often causes political enmity among politicians, and this behaviour was reported across the country. *The Punch* (2015) elucidates the behaviour of Governor Amaechi's deputy, Ikuru who defected to PDP while the governor was a b*ona fide* member of APC.

Apart from these political conflicts, *The Punch* (2015, p. 9) published the query issued to the INEC boss, Prof. Attahiru Jega, for his secret meeting with the APC in Dubai over the conduct of the 2015

elections by Mr Femi Fani Kayode, the secretary of the PDP. There was a counter allegation by the National Publicity Secretary of APC, Alhaji Lai Muhammed who dismissed the allegation as a fabrication against the INEC boss. In this connection, *The Punch* (2015) also described the political action of President Obasanjo's dumping PDP by tearing his membership card publicly.

In 2015, different political issues preoccupied the atmosphere in Nigeria. Part of the issues was drawing the roadmap for the 2015 elections. The INEC chairman suffered a large provocation in the course of electoral management. *The NEWS Magazine* (2015) reported massive attacks from all sides of the political divide in the country. A typical example was captured from the collation centre in Abuja as Mr. Orubebe, a former Minister of the Niger Delta in President Jonathan's administration who, with dismay and vituperation, alleged the INEC chairman, Prof. Attahiru Jega, of electoral irregularities and labelled Jega's action as prejucial. The query centres on how APC got the final result it posted on its website before INEC declared the presidential results publicly in the 2015 election. The outcome of the presidential election was in favour of Muhammed Buhari under the APC won the election and President Goodluck Jonathan and the PDP lost the election. Parts of good governance is transparency and accountability as both values are elements of political efficacy. Therefore, the study argues that part of the disagreement after each election in the country is caused by the political elites with the support of the people.

Table 2 – 2015 Presidential Results

S/N	Name of State	No of Registered Voters	No of Accredited Voters	ACPN	APC	PDP	No of Valid Votes	No of Rejected Votes	Total votes Cast
1	Abia	1,349,134	442,338	2,194	13,394	368,306	391,045	10,004	401,049
2	Adamawa	1,518,123	709,993	2,166	374,701	251,664	636,018	25,152	661,210
3	Akwa Ibom	1,654,481	1,074,070	443	58,411	953,304	1,017,064	11,487	1,028,551
4	Anambra	1,963,427	774,430	3,259	17,926	660,767	688,584	14,825	703,409
5	Bauchi	2,053,484	1,094069	373	931,598	86,085	1,020,338	19,437	1,039,775
6	Bayelsa	605,637	354,789	38	5,194	361,209	367,057	4,672	371,739
7	Banue	2,893,596	754,634	1,464	373,961	303,737	583,264	19,857	703,131
8	Borno	1,799,669	544,759	243	473,543	25,640	501,920	13,088	515,008
9	Cross River	144,288	500,577	514	28,368	414,863	450,514	15,392	455,900
10	Delta	2,044,372	1,350,914	916	48,910	1,211,405	1,267,773	17,075	2,284,848
11	Eboyin	1,071,226	425,301	1,214	19,528	323,653	363,888	29,449	393,337
12	Edo	1,650,552	599,166	3,284	208,469	286,869	500,451	22,334	522,785
13	Ekiti	723,255	323,799	538	120,331	278,466	300,691	8,754	309,445
14	Enugu	1,381,563	615,112	479	24,157	553,003	573,178	12,459	585,632
15	Gombe	2,110,105	515,828	192	361,245	96,873	460,599	12,645	473,444
16	Imo	1,747,681	801,717	956	183,258	559,185	702,964	28,957	731,921
17	Gigawa	1,815,839	3,153,425	540	885,988	147,904	1,037,564	34,325	1,071,889
18	Kaduna	3,763,767	3,746,031	424	1,127,760	454,085	1,637,482	32,719	1,650,201
19	Kano	4,943,662	2,364,434	402	1,903,999	215,779	2,128,821	43,626	2,172,447
20	Katsina	2,542,741	1,578,646	361	1,345,442	98,937	1,449,426	32,288	1,481724
21	Kebbi	145,763	792,817	361	567,833	300,972	677,003	38,119	715,122
22	Kogi	1,350,883	476,839	1,059	264,851	149,987	421,328	17,959	439,287
23	Kwara	1,183,032	489,360	817	302,145	132,602	440,080	213,321	461,401
24	Lagos	5,877,846	1,676754	3,038	792,460	632,327	1,443,685	52,289	1,495,975
25	Nasarawa	1,222,054	562,959	95	236,838	223,460	511,547	10,094	521,641

Table continuation

S/N	Name of State	No of Registered Voters	No of Accredited Voters	ACPN	APC	PDP	No of Valid Votes	No of Rejected Votes	Total votes Cast
26	Niger	1,995,679	933,607	441	657,678	149,222	833,671	31,012	844,683
27	Ogun	1,709,409	594,975	3,072	308,298	207,950	533,172	26,441	559,013
28	Ondo	1,501,549	618,040	2,406	299,889	251,368	561,056	21,379	582,435
29	Osun	1,378,113	683,169	1,731	363,603	249,929	642,615	20,758	603,373
30	Oyo	2,344,448	1,073,849	8,979	528,620	303,376	881,852	47,254	928,606
31	Plateau	1,972,211	1,076,833	391	429,140	549,615	987,388	18,304	1,000,692
32	Rivers	2,324,300	1,643,409	525	69,238	1,487,075	1,585,461	19,307	1,584,768
33	Sokoto	1,663,137	988,899	535	671,926	152,150	834,259	42,110	870,369
34	Taraba	1,374,307	638,578	811	261,326	310,803	579,677	23,089	602,716
35	Yobe	1,027,942	520,127	264	446,265	25,526	473,296	17,971	491,767
36	Zamfara	1,484,541	875,049	238	612,702	144,833	763,022	19,157	780,129
37	FCT	885,573	344,056	240	146,393	157,195	306,805	9,230	310.015
	Total	**67,422,005**	**31,745,490**	**40,311**	**15,424,921**	**12,853,162**	**28,587,564**	**844,519**	**29,432,083**

Source: INEC March 28, 2015

The table above shows the summary of the 2015 presidential results. The results were generated from the INEC website and reflected the electoral administration in Nigeria. In the summary, fourteen (14) political parties contested the election. These parties were AA, ACPN, ADC, AD, APA, APC, CPP, HOPE, KOWA, NCP, PDP, PPN, UDP, and UPP. Out of these, three political parties were selected based on the results. The results were collated and captured the thirty-six states including Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory FCT. Meanwhile, APC won the election with 15 424 921, PDP (second) 12 853 162, and ACPN (third) 40,311, respectively. In view of these results, the number of registered voters was 67 422 005 and the number of accredited voters was 31 745 90. There was a gap in the index showing that there was political apathy in the 2015 elections, and the electorates did not turn out for the presidential election as envisaged. Apart from the registration and accreditation of the voters, the number of valid votes was 28 587 564, which was more than the number of rejected votes 844 519. Meaning that the rejected votes were due to the electorates' wrong thumb printing during the election. Finally, the total votes cast 29 432 083 was less than the total number of accredited votes 31 745 490. This shows that it was not all the electorates that were accredited by INEC came out to vote at their polling stations.

Therefore, INEC has performed its statutory responsibility in election administration. Our argument on the outcome of the presidential election focuses on political apathy, which is peculiar to Nigeria. This draws the attention to the total number of registered votes minus the total number of cast votes and the difference was 37,989,922. The difference in the results showed the number of electorates that could not come out to cast their votes in the 2015 presidential election. As a result, the number of disenfranchised electorates was more than the electorates that came out to indicate their franchise in the presidential election. In the presidential results, INEC also failed to indicate the sex and age of the electorates despite the database. This may have assisted the public and researchers in confirming the level of participation along the lines of gender and age. In this sense, the failure to indicate the sex and age of the electorates does not allow researchers to report the level of participation of the youths in the presidential election. The youths are the opinion makers that determine if the campaign promises and the leadership performance of the elected have been reflected in the governance of the state.

Conclusion

The overall analysis of the electoral process in Nigeria is generated from the historical perspective to understand how elections were organized and conducted before political independence. The INEC, as an umpire and as a whistleblower in the electoral

competition, failed to perform its statutory functions effectively due to some weaknesses in the 1999 and 2015 elections. The reasons that surrounded the fallout include the shortage of manpower, illegal possession of voter's cards, illegal possession of ballot papers, graft, conniving with the politicians, incumbent power influence, and many more. In view of these challenges, INEC, as the electoral umpire, needs critical training when conducting free and fair elections in the country.

The above challenges have frustrated the national service of the electoral institution after the transition to democracy in 1999. Therefore, there should be harmony in this dispensation. The successive governments have improved the electoral reforms that empowered INEC to perform its legal functions in the country. The evidence has been shown in the Electoral Act, which specifies the method of conducting elections and decentralising the structure and power of the electoral body across the country.

We mentioned earlier that, to conduct a credible election in Nigeria, INEC should be supported by other institutions such as the citizenry, civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Police Force, etc. These elements will promote the management of elections in the country. The electorates need to be adequately educated before the elections.

The study observed how elections are managed and conducted by INEC in the Fourth Republic. The past and present experiences have spurred these researchers to examine the electoral framework involved in the politics of power transfer. The electoral exercise is conducive when the incumbent power holder is ready to concede defeat to the opposing political parties. The electoral institution is also ready to deploy a high level of social justice and equality to ensure the conduct of credible elections in the country. Therefore, there should be a restructuring in the statutory responsibility of INEC. This will enable the institution to be deeply involved in the process of nation-building. Other things being equal are, electoral norms and values both set the standard in a democratic state. It means the principles of democracy do not align with an autocratic system. In view of these, adequate security should be provided in the management of the election. The government should not ignore security in the management of elections because the issue of insecurity has contributed to the failure of the institution in some matters.

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING NEED ASSESSMENT (TNA) PRACTICES FOR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN BANGLADESH: A STUDY ON UNION PARISHAD

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Abstract. This research on training needs assessment aims to identify the technical, management, and leadership skills and competencies that are lacking among elected Union Parishad members in Bangladesh. The study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches and was conducted in the Chandpur District. Four unions in three Upazilas were randomly selected from the EALG project list, and 52 Chairmen, Members, and Women were interviewed. Additionally, seven Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with relevant professionals. The report revealed deficits in training for Union Parishad chairmen and members. Since the functions of chairmen and members differ, their training needs also vary. Members and chairs should prioritize training in ICT, Good Governance, and Service. Strategy, budget, and audit training should be the second priority for chairmen while training on citizens' welfare and service-related cross-cutting issues ranks third for members and fourth for chairmen quantitatively. Qualitative interviews underscored the importance of training. Notably, the combined results of chairmen and members placed training related to the general functions and activities of chairmen and members sixth, while experts feel that it is vital. Most participants recommended a seven- to 10-day district-level training with a local government or rural development organization field trip. Local government experts, especially those with experience in Union Parishads, are recommended for providing the training.
Key words: TNA, Representative, Union Parishad, Local government, Bangladesh.

Introduction

Local government institutions (LGIs) will always expand their duties (Boyle & O'Riordan, 2013). LGIs provide central government services to locals (Rhodes, 1996). As federally legitimized representatives, they provide services and uphold laws and commands. Union Parishad (UP) is Bangladesh's last and most effective local government body in terms of organization and service performance (Sarker, 2006). The ultimate gateway and implementer for residents at their doorsteps (Hasan, 2016).

Over the last few decades, global public sector administration and management have changed due to globalization and technology advances. The Government of Bangladesh has various governance duties due to its slogan of 'Putting Citizens First'. However, the administration prioritizes implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Perspective Plan, 7th five-year plan, and constitutional requirements for local government empowerment. To achieve goals efficiently and successfully, LGIs are the most important authority. LGIs need diverse knowledge and abilities to conduct programs and projects due to their many responsibilities and duties. Union Parishad has long been criticized for inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Central government programs and policies have yet to reach citizens. This suspicious tipoff led policy experts and the government to investigate why certain initiatives and programs were not adequately implemented.

In addition, the elected representatives of the local government (Union Parishad), i.e., Chairmen and Members, had to be more innovative, charismatic, skilled, and adept in leading the Parishads and their jurisdictions in the changing local governance environment. Additionally, Union Parishad is the best decentralized central government institution for addressing individuals at their doorsteps. The elected representatives of Bangladesh's UPs must be measured to maximize development initiatives and preserve law and order at the local level.

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Problem statement and significance of the research

Effective implementation at all levels of government depends on the dedication and performance of those engaged. To equip implementing staff with skills and expertise for performance, an effective curriculum is needed. Local elected officials have a big role in grassroots policy implementation. They must decide for their jurisdictions and management and then implement those decisions. The Union Parishad is responsible for administration, establishment, law-and-order, citizen welfare, and social and economic growth under its domain. They must also focus on five-year plans, rural infrastructure development, maintenance, and monitoring, education, health, family planning, agriculture, and disaster risk reduction. The Union Parishad delegates must also mediate family issues and protect women and children. UP members must lead and manage governance concerns at this most effective and critical tier of local government in addition to these tasks and responsibilities.

The findings of this study have important ramifications for the efficiency of government and the provision of basic services in Bangladesh. Improving capacity-building initiatives for local elected representatives is the goal of this study, which examines the influence of TNA practices on training program design, execution, and results for Union Parishad members. In addition, the research can help improve local governance processes and community development outcomes by naming and tackling problems with TNAs like political interference and limited resources. This will lead to policy suggestions backed by evidence that Union Parishad members can use to their advantage. It helps determine where target employees need particular training to perform better. First, identify what's wrong or why it needs to be better, then how to fix it, then who's responsible for what, and finally what training is needed and when. This research aims to address the above issues to improve the current condition and maximize the elected representatives of the UPs' production and performance.

General Objective

The primary focus of this training needs assessment study is to determine the gaps in technical, managerial and leadership skills and capacities of the elected representatives of a local government institution (Union Parishad) in Bangladesh.

Specific Objectives

The study's auxiliary aims are:

- To determine whether any training is needed for them to play effective roles and responsibilities by the elected representatives of Union Parishad.
- To determine the areas in which training are needed with the degree of needs.
- To explore the preferable methods and forms of required training.

Literature Review

Elected officials have an important role in defining governance structures and policies at the local level, especially in nations like Bangladesh, where decentralized governance exists. Union Parishads (UPs), the lowest level of local government in Bangladesh, are primarily in charge of grassroots governance and service delivery. Given the importance of their positions, it is critical that elected representatives receive proper training to carry out their responsibilities successfully. This literature review investigates the efficacy of Training Need Assessment (TNA) techniques for elected representatives in Bangladesh, focusing on Union Parishad members.

The Value of Training for Elected Representatives

Training programs for elected officials are widely seen as critical instruments for improving their ability, performance, and governance effectiveness. According to Sharma and Mitra (2019), well-designed training efforts can provide elected representatives with the information, abilities, and attitudes required to fulfil their positions effectively, resulting in enhanced service delivery and community development.

Contextualizing TNA Practices in Bangladesh

Local governance in Bangladesh confronts elected representatives with unique difficulties and opportunities. Hasan et al. (2020) contend that the decentralized governance system typified by Union Parishads necessitates targeted training interventions that address the individual requirements and constraints experienced by local elected representatives. TNA provides a full understanding of these demands, which is critical for developing effective training programs.

The effectiveness of TNA in improving performance

According to research studies, TNA practices have a favorable impact on the performance of

elected officials. For example, Rahman and Uddin (2018) discovered that Union Parishad members who participated in TNA-based training programs had significantly improved their awareness of governance concepts, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities. This shows that TNA is an effective method for detecting training requirements and tailoring interventions accordingly.

Challenges and Limitations

Despite the potential benefits, implementing TNA methods has several problems and constraints. Alam et al. (2021) cite insufficient resources, poor institutional capability, and political intervention as challenges to conducting successful TNAs for elected representatives in Bangladesh. Addressing these issues is critical to ensuring the longevity and efficacy of training programs.

Emerging Trends and Innovation

Recent advances in TNA methodology and technology provide potential to improve the efficacy of training interventions for elected representatives. According to Hossain et al. (2022), integrating participatory techniques, ICT technologies, and data analytics can lead to more comprehensive and data-driven TNAs. Embracing such advances can result in more targeted and effective training activities.

Training Need Assessment (TNA) methods are critical in improving the effectiveness of training programs for elected representatives in Bangladesh, particularly at the Union Parishad level. TNA facilitates the creation and implementation of individualized training interventions to improve governance performance and service delivery by understanding the specific learning needs and difficulties experienced by elected representatives. However, addressing issues such as resource limits, institutional capability, and political intervention is critical to realizing the full potential of TNA methods in Bangladesh's local governance context. Furthermore, adopting recent trends and innovations in TNA techniques can improve the relevance and efficacy of training activities for elected officials.

Methodology

Study Design

This is a cross-sectional study designed for having a specific analysis of the situation within a time period, and the study was completed between January 2023 to June 2023.

Study Method

The study was conducted using a mixed method approach, which included both the qualitative and quantitative approaches. This triangulating approach was used to conduct an in-depth analysis of the study and its lucrative outcomes.

Study Area

This study has been conducted in Chandpur district of Bangladesh where the EALG program is being implemented. The findings were more generalized when it covered a broader geographical area, considering the time limitation and resources, the study has been deployed in 4 Unions of 2 Upazilas of Chandpur district. Detail study location is given below:

Study Population and Sampling Technique

The target population for the study were the elected representatives e. i., Chairmen and Members of the Union Parishads of selected Unions. The citizens, Standing Committees' Members, and civil society has also been reached. The government officials who are responsible for executing the policies and programs in the said area were also be the target people. The sampling technique for the study were purposive sampling for both quantitative and qualitative part.

Determination of Sample Size

As we know that there is a total of thirteen (13) elected representatives in a Union Parishad. The chairmen, general members and women (reserved seat) members has also been reached. Thus, for the selected four unions, there were a total of 52 elected members who has been reached to assess.

Sample Distribution

Table 1 – Sample Distribution

Sample Distribution					
Method	Upazila/Area	Union Name	Chairman	Member	Total ER
Survey Questionnaire	Faridganj	Balithuba (East)	1	12	13
	Chandpur Sadar	Rampur	1	12	13
	Haimchar	Algidurgapur (South)	1	12	13
		Haiemchar	1	12	13
	Totals				**52**
Key Informants Interview (KII)	BARD representative		2		
	Standing committee member		2		
	Local government Expert		3		
	Totals		**7**		

Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Only a questionnaire survey and KIIs were used to collect the primary data. The details of the data collection techniques are provided here.

A. Questionnaire survey

Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. The necessary and present ability in every particular and common skill was measured using scaling methodologies. Data collectors interviewed elected members face-to-face to conduct the questionnaire. The questionnaire included open-ended, closed-ended, and Likert scale items. We purposefully contacted 52 chairmen and members to gain information into these four unions.

B. Key Informants Interview (KII):

Interviews with seven important informants from a variety of backgrounds were used to gather information. These individuals included government officials who were in charge of the problem, think tank representatives, and experts on the subject. The people who took part in KII were picked from non-government organizations, educators, and experts who are very interested in this topic. Another person from the UNDP project who works with EALG also reached for the KII.

Based on the study's objectives and a gaps analysis approach, the analysis strategy was laid out. In line with the study goals, suitable quantitative analysis, such as descriptive statistics analysis, has been conducted for the quantitative section. Data input and analysis were conducted using SPSS and MS Excel. The qualitative portion of the research made use of content analysis.

Results and Discussion

52 elected Union Parishad delegates from four Unions of three Upazilas in Chandpur District were surveyed. Chairmen, members, and women (reserved) responded to the quantitative survey. Seven specialists, standing committee members, and government representatives were interviewed as important informants. The researcher used informal interviews to determine the training needs of elected union representatives and the activities and functions of UP chairmen and members, as well as the competencies and skills needed to perform those functions. Cross-checking with the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2010, Union Parishad Service Manual, and other legal documents, the investigation discovered 35 things under six primary tasks and activities that might be assessed. General Functions and Activities of the UP, Financial Management, Resources and Fund, Planning, Budget & Audit, Purchase and Reporting, Information, Good Governance and Services, and Citizens' Welfare and Service-Related Cross-cutting Issues are the six main competencies. All fifty-two respondents rated the 35 functions and abilities and representative performance in the poll. Training demands depend on the importance-performance gap.

Demographic Information of the Respondents

Following is the demographic information provided to the respondents about their positions and other service-related information.

Table 2 – Detailed Study Area

Detailed Study Area				
Division	**District**	**Upazila**	**Union Name**	**Number of UPs**
Chattogram	Chandpur	Faridganj	Balithuba (East),	1
		Haimchar	Algidurgapur (South), and Haiemchar,	2
		Chandpur Sadar	Rampur	1
Total				04

The table 02 represents the detailed study area with Union, Upazila and Zila names. The study covered a total of four (04) Unions namely; Balithuba (East) at Faridganj Upazila, Algidurgapur (South) and Haiemchar Unions at Haiemchar Upazila and Rampur Union at Sadar Upazila at Chandpur District in Chattogram Division.

Designation of the Respondents

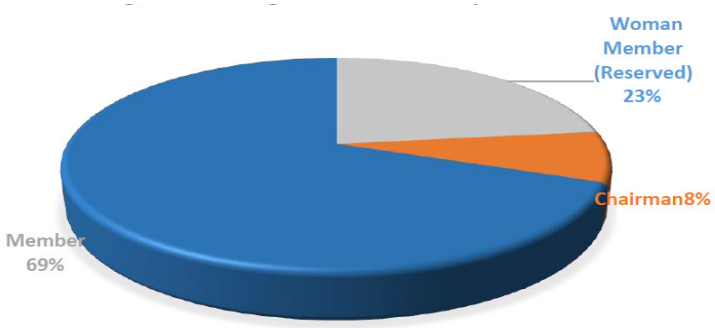

Figure 1 – Scenario of Respondent

Figure 1 shows the number and percentage of responses in each category. Though all poll respondents were elected Union Parishad officials, they were mostly Chairman, member, and women (reserved) members. Actually, a union has a chairman, nine members from nine Wards, and three women (reserved) from three Wards. Four Chairmen, 36 general members (70%) and 12 women from reserved seats at four Unions were responses.

Gender of the Participants

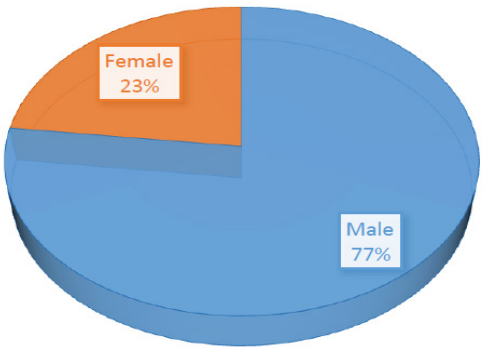

Figure 2 – Scenario of gender aspect

The gender breakdown of responders is seen in figure 2. Though the survey found a gender disparity, the organogram of the Union Parishad and designated seats for women determined the gender allocation. Twelve ladies (23% of total respondents) responded. The remaining 40 responders were male, accounting for 77%.

Educational Attainments of the Respondents

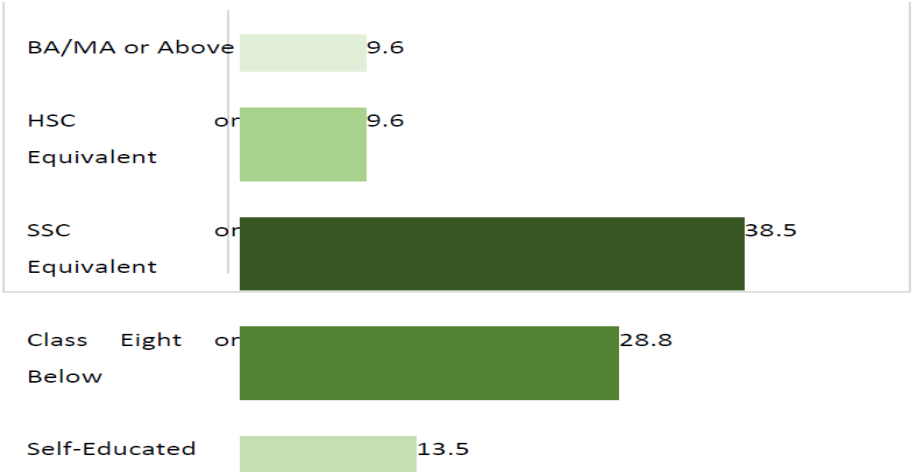

Figure 3 – Educational aspect of the respondent

The research also examined individuals' educational attainments (figure 03). Around 13% of responders are self-educated. Over 25% of respondents passed class eight or lower. The biggest number of responders was SSC or equivalent passed (38.5%). About 9.6% of respondents completed the HSC or comparable test and the same percentage passed the BA or MA or higher or equivalent degrees.

Service Length of the Participants at the Union Parishad

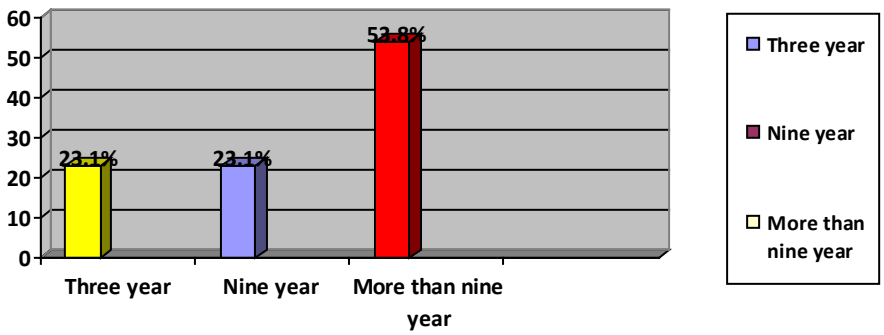

Figure 4 – Service Length of the Participants at the Union Parishad

Service duration at the Union Parishad may improve service delivery in the future. Figure 04 shows UP Member and Chairman service duration. When interviewed, 53.8% of respondents had worked at the Union Parishad for three years. One-quarter (23.1%) of respondents have nine years of service, and the same percentage have more than nine.

Training Need Priorities

The research considers Union Parishad Chairmen, Members, and Women Members for reserved seats elected members. Thus, all three representative categories were surveyed. Chairman, Members, and women members have different roles and duties. So, the researcher sought to understand all the skills needed for different occupations. Members and women members were amalgamated into one group due to their comparable role, however chairmen were categorized separately. Due of their different leadership roles, this report separates chairman and member information. The essential discussion points include qualitative analysis. Finally, all chairmen and members receive a cumulative score based on task priority and performance.

A. Training Need of Chairmen

The chairman of the Union Parishad has tremendous influence, role, and leadership consortium. Chairman skills dominate union decision-making and planning. Under his/her careful direction, all personnel do their jobs. The chairman's training should be focused on their needs and performance. The Union Parishad chairman determined this category's training needs.

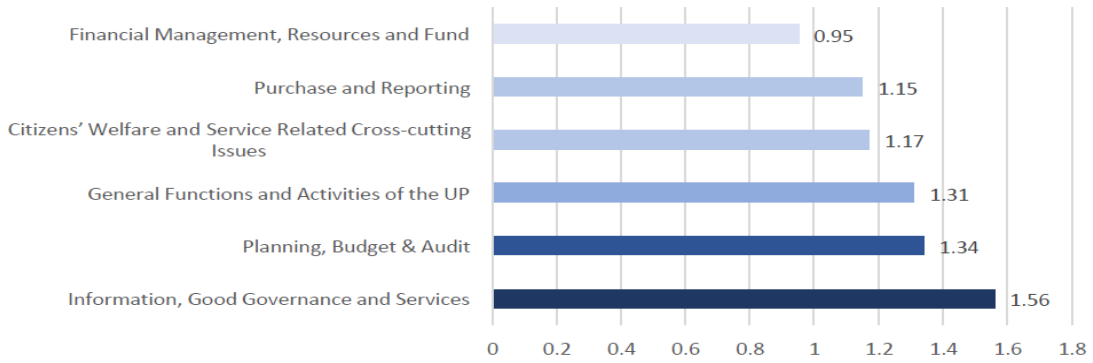

Figure 5 – Categories of competencies regarding training needs of the Chairman

The bar chart above illustrates the Chairmen's training competency categories. The mean disparities between item task significance scores and responder performance are shown. The arithmetic mean (average) ranges from 0.95 to 1.56 in several categories, indicating a wide range of training demands on a scale of 7. Information, governance, and services are the top priorities for training. Second, budget, audit, and planning training are important. The highest-counted duties include ICTs, e-governance, development project expertise, and service delivery knowledge. The result also reveals that Chairmen need less financial management, resources, finances, procurement, and reporting skills.

All Areas of Training Needs for the Chairmen

The following table 03 lists all 35 activities and competencies by training importance. By comparing task importance to performance, competencies are ranked chronologically. In various competencies, Chairmen have different opinions. The arithmetic mean (average) of training need or gap ranges from 3.25 to 0.25 in the training needs table.

Table 3 – All Areas of Training Needs for the Chairmen

All Areas of Training Needs for the Chairmen				
SL.	**Activities and Competencies**	**Importance (Mean) µ**	**Performance (Mean) µ**	**Training Need (Mean) µ**
1	IT/E-Governance for good governance	7.00	3.75	3.25
2	ICT knowledge and skills	7.00	3.75	3.25
3	Citizen Charter	7.00	4.75	2.25

Table continuation

All Areas of Training Needs for the Chairmen				
SL.	**Activities and Competencies**	**Importance (Mean) μ**	**Performance (Mean) μ**	**Training Need (Mean) μ**
4	Knowledge on/Implementing of SDGs	7.00	5.00	2.00
5	Coordination with other local level govt. agencies	7.00	5.25	1.75
6	Social Safety Nets Program management	7.00	5.25	1.75
7	Ward Shava	7.00	5.50	1.50
8	Budget preparation and implementation	6.75	5.25	1.50
9	Half yearly report of UP (LGSP)	7.00	5.50	1.50
10	EALG	7.00	5.50	1.50
11	Funds of the Parishad	7.00	5.75	1.25
12	Revenue impose and collection	7.00	5.75	1.25
13	Planning (yearly, five-yearly, dev. And others)	7.00	5.75	1.25
14	Open Budget Shava	7.00	5.75	1.25
15	Purchase management	7.00	5.75	1.25
16	Village Court	7.00	5.75	1.25
17	Innovation in service delivery	7.00	5.75	1.25
18	Formation and Functions of UP	7.00	6.00	1.00
19	Functions of Chairman and Members	7.00	6.00	1.00
20	Purchase under LGSP	7.00	6.00	1.00
21	Tender/ request for quotation	7.00	6.00	1.00
22	Half yearly report of village court	6.75	5.75	1.00
23	Information about development project	7.00	6.00	1.00
24	Leadership	7.00	6.00	1.00
25	Financial Management	7.00	6.25	0.75
26	Resources of the Parishad	7.00	6.25	0.75
27	Expenditure of the Parishad	7.00	6.25	0.75
28	Birth and Death Certificate	6.75	6.00	0.75
29	Nationality and Testimonial certificate	6.75	6.00	0.75
30	Decision making skills	7.00	6.25	0.75
31	Project management	7.00	6.25	0.75
32	Investigation of any occurrence	7.00	6.50	0.50
33	Undertaking administrative activities	7.00	6.50	0.50
34	Disaster Management	6.75	6.25	0.50
35	Human rights (understanding)	7.00	6.75	0.25

IT and e-governance for effective governance and ICT knowledge and skills are the chairman's top training needs. Citizen charter and SDG implementation expertise are the most important training needs. Other training the chairmen require is coordination with local government agencies and Social Safety Nets Program administration. In reality, most mean values of activities and competences illustrate their relevance in Union service delivery. Some tasks are important but don't require intervention training, so the Chairmen are doing well in them, such as human rights, administrative tasks, decision-making, and project management. Chairmen exhibit little interest in training on human rights, administrative responsibilities, and disaster management. Importantly, simple and general tasks like testimony certification, birth and death certification, and inquiry require no training.

Training Needs of Members

The member is the most crucial link between citizens and the government. Members are crucial to executing government policies and providing root-level services. They perform important leadership responsibilities in villages to ensure human well-being, but they need training in specialized sectors to execute and provide services effectively. In this area, members include all members and reserved ladies. Categories of competencies regarding training needs of Members The figure 06 below portrayed the categories of competencies regarding training needs of Members. All of the thirty-five activities categorized into six broader themes.

The bar chart depicts the arithmetic mean (average) difference between activity or competency significance scores and member performance. The mean value ranged from 1.39 to 1.98, indicating close training requirements groups. Members' scores place categories in virtually the same comparative order as chairmen's, except for citizen welfare and service-related cross-cutting concerns in the third segment and UPs' general functions and operations in the fifth section. Most relevance is seen in ICT and e-governance duties. Information, excellent governance and services, planning budget, and audit duties rated 1.98 and 1.97 for training needs.

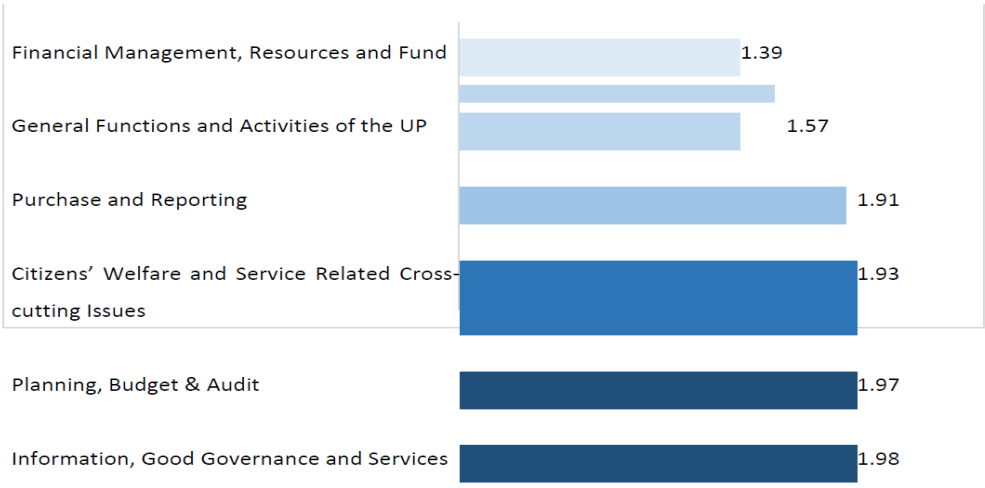

Figure 6 – Scenario of Training Needs of Members

All Areas of Training Needs for the Members

The mean values of the larger categories are determined from the scores given to specific activities and abilities covered under them. Therefore, individual activities/competencies should be appraised to verify all specific areas completely. In this method, thirty-five categories of activities or skills were assessed, and the scores of members are analyzed in the table below in descending order, starting with the highest training demand and moving down. Some activities or competencies are at the top of the decreasing ranking, while those below suggest significant training needs based on Union Parishad scores.

Table 4 – All Areas of Training Needs for the Members

All Areas of Training Needs for the Members				
SL.	**Activities and Competencies**	**Importance (Mean) μ**	**Performance (Mean) μ**	**Training Need (Mean) μ**
1	ICT knowledge and skills	6.94	2.98	3.96
2	IT/E-Governance for good governance	6.85	3.25	3.60
3	EALG	6.94	3.40	3.54
4	Knowledge on/Implementing of SDGs	6.98	3.67	3.31
5	Half yearly report of village court	6.92	3.90	3.02
6	Citizen Charter	6.94	4.02	2.92
7	Half yearly report of UP (LGSP)	6.94	4.35	2.58
8	Information about development project	6.73	4.69	2.04
9	Village Court	7.00	4.96	2.04
10	Undertaking administrative activities	6.88	4.85	2.02
11	Budget preparation and implementation	6.92	4.92	2.00
12	Functions of Chairman and Members	7.00	5.04	1.96
13	Coordination with other local level govt. agencies	6.98	5.08	1.90
14	Tender/ request for quotation	6.58	4.83	1.75
15	Purchase management	6.88	5.17	1.71
16	Disaster Management	6.90	5.21	1.69
17	Open Budget Shava	6.94	5.33	1.60
18	Financial Management	6.98	5.42	1.56
19	Funds of the Parishad	6.88	5.31	1.56
20	Purchase under LGSP	6.88	5.31	1.56
21	Resources of the Parishad	6.83	5.31	1.52
22	Revenue impose and collection	6.92	5.46	1.46
23	Innovation in service delivery	6.92	5.46	1.46
24	Project management	6.81	5.40	1.42
25	Ward Shava	6.98	5.63	1.35
26	Leadership	7.00	5.65	1.35
27	Expenditure of the Parishad	6.85	5.58	1.27
28	Human rights (understanding)	6.90	5.65	1.25
29	Social Safety Nets Program management	6.98	5.77	1.21
30	Decision making skills	6.92	5.81	1.10
31	Formation and Functions of UP	7.00	5.94	1.06
32	Planning (yearly, five-yearly, dev. And others)	7.00	5.94	1.06
33	Nationality and Testimonial certificate	6.92	5.96	0.96
34	Birth and Death Certificate	6.92	6.00	0.92
35	Investigation of any occurrence	6.96	6.17	0.79

The significance column provides the mean scores from 6.58 to This range is too narrow to affect training needs. For large changes in training demands across specific activities/performance, use the performance column. This shows the discrepancy between particular items' value of activities or

competences and actual performance. We discovered a mean training need of 0.79 to 2.00 with no significant variance. Training on ICT and e-governance, budget preparation and execution, general roles and activities of UP members, and collaboration with other government agencies is crucial for operating.

Coordinate on the intervention requirements based on scores

For Union Parishad members, the following coordination based on work relevance and performance helps clarify training priorities. The horizontal axis indicates policy officials' performance and the vertical axis denotes activity or competency relevance. On each axis, values rise from left to right and bottom to top. Hennessey-Hicks introduced a coordinate model that split each score spectrum in two. Performance scores below 4 indicate bad performance and above 4 indicate good performance. High relevance scores are over 4, while low important scores are below 4. Top-left box represents high intervention priority, bottom-left box represents low intervention priority, and both right boxes represent no intervention requirements.

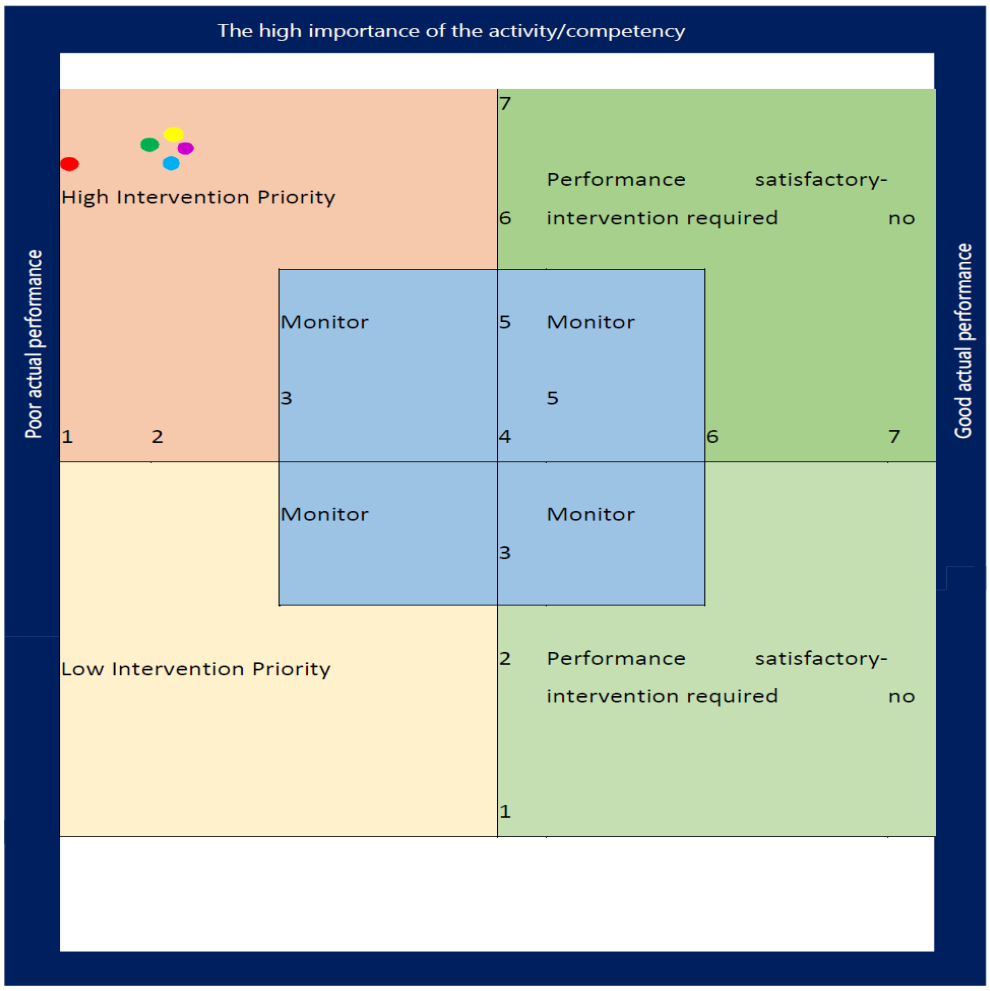

Figure 7 – Coordinate on the intervention requirements based on scores for Members

Top ten activities or competences are positioned in a coordinate in the graph above depending on their ratings. Some things have the same score and coordinate graph point; hence they have the same symbolic colors. Table 4 reveals that the top 10 items share coordinate scores (6.94, 2.98) and that three and two competencies have comparable scores, thus they are colored similarly. The other four have two distinct mean scores. Thus, the 10 things claim five graph points. Five distinct colored circles represent the top 10 activities/competences at the bottom of the coordinate. The typical values

of these categories are between 2.98 and 4.85 in the horizontal axis, indicating low performance, and 6.73 and 7 on the vertical axis, indicating significant relevance. Thus, all six broad groups are located in two successive locations. Most crucially, they're all in the top-left block, indicating high intervention priority. Most of the other 10 activities have 4 or higher mean values in the performance column, placing them in the top right box or border of two top boxes.

ICT, Good Governance and Services

Table 5 – Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Information, Good Governance, and Services

Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Information, Good Governance and Services			
Activities and Competencies	**Importance (Mean) µ**	**Performance (Mean) µ**	**Training Need (Mean) µ**
Citizen Charter	6.97	4.39	2.58
IT/E-Governance for good governance	6.93	3.50	3.43
Information about development project	6.86	5.34	1.52
Birth and Death Certificate	6.83	6.00	0.83
Nationality and Testimonial certificate	6.83	5.98	0.85
Village Court	7.00	5.35	1.65

Union Parishad elected delegates often need ICT, strong governance, and service competence. IT and e-governance for good governance competencies lead this area with a 3.43 training gap. Second, the citizen's charter is one of the most significant instruments for effective governance, yet the parishad members and chairman have been performing poorly, with a 2.58 training gap. The village court is being implemented in some selected Unions, and the study is sorted by Union, so members and chairman require additional training in those competencies. Finally, development project information, birth and death registration certification, and nationality and testimonial certificates are crucial for training.

Purchase and Reporting

Table 6 – Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Purchase and Reporting

Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Purchase and Reporting			
Activities and Competencies	**Importance (Mean) µ**	**Performance (Mean) µ**	**Training Need (Mean) µ**
Purchase management	6.94	5.46	1.48
Purchase under LGSP	6.94	5.66	1.28
Tender/ request for quotation	6.79	5.42	1.38
Half yearly report of UP (LGSP)	6.97	4.93	2.04
Half yearly report of village court	6.83	4.82	2.01

Members and chairmen are responsible for purchasing and reporting, among other activities. In tender, purchasing, and reporting, all duties must be transparent and accountable. Union members rule over the procurement committee. Thus, Union Parishad elected members require LGSP and village court tendering, quoting, and reporting training. In this area, LGSP and village court reporting have the highest training needs, with 2.04 and 2.01 training gaps, respectively. Purchase management, LGSP purchases, and tenders or RFPs require extensive training.

Citizens' Welfare and Service-Related Cross-cutting Issues

Table 7 – Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Citizens' Welfare and Service-Related Cross-cutting Issues

Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Citizens' Welfare and Service-Related Cross-cutting Issues			
Activities and Competencies	**Importance (Mean) µ**	**Performance (Mean) µ**	**Training Need (Mean) µ**
EALG	6.97	4.45	2.52
Leadership	7.00	5.82	1.18
Decision making skills	6.96	6.03	0.93
Human rights (understanding)	6.95	6.20	0.75
Knowledge on/Implementing of SDGs	6.99	4.33	2.66
ICT knowledge and skills	6.97	3.36	3.60
Innovation in service delivery	6.96	5.60	1.35
Investigation of any occurrence	6.98	6.33	0.65
Undertaking administrative activities	6.94	5.68	1.26
Project management	6.91	5.82	1.08
Social Safety Nets Program management	6.99	5.51	1.48
Disaster Management	6.82	5.73	1.09

The elected members and chairman manage many residents' welfare and service-related cross-cutting concerns since they are at their doorsteps. For cross-cutting challenges, ICT knowledge training was most needed. Second, SDG implementation knowledge ranks 6.99 (mean) in relevance. Representatives want Efficient and Accountable Local Government (EALG) training; thus, they score 2.52. Training needs include leadership ability, decision-making abilities, Social Safety Nets Program management, and service delivery innovation. Human rights, investigation, and project management training for members and chairmen are also essential.

Planning, Budget & Audit

Table 8 – Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Planning, Budget & Audit

Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Planning, Budget & Audit			
Activities and Competencies	**Importance (Mean) µ**	**Performance (Mean) µ**	**Training Need (Mean) µ**
Planning (yearly, five-yearly, dev. And others)	7.00	5.84	1.16
Open Budget Shava	6.97	5.54	1.43
Budget preparation and implementation	6.83	5.08	1.75

Union Parishad elected representatives must produce yearly, five-yearly, development, and cross-cutting problem plans. Planning is important (7 out of 7) and this field has a 1.16 training gap. The Union Parishad organizes an open budget Shava every year, however its importance is 6.97 and training is 1.43. Budget preparation and implementation for development are crucial. The budget implementation keeps the existing performance at 5.08, hence this section has a 1.75 training gap.

General Functions and Activities of the UP

Table 9 – Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on General Functions and Activities of the UP

Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on General Functions and Activities of the UP			
Activities and Competencies	**Importance (Mean) μ**	**Performance (Mean) μ**	**Training Need (Mean) μ**
Formation and Functions of UP	7.00	5.97	1.03
Functions of Chairman and Members	7.00	5.52	1.48
Ward Shava	6.99	5.56	1.43
Coordination with other local level govt. agencies	6.99	5.17	1.82

Table 9 displays the Union Parishad's general functions and activities training gap. Though elected Union Parishad representatives are expected to know the UPs' main functions and operations. Members and chairmen want this part training. Most UP duties and competences are important, and their performance is close to it. Thus, these categories' training gaps matter. Coordination with other local government agencies and officials had the highest score, 1.82 training gap, which might imply training needs. Second, training on member and chairperson roles is crucial (1.48 training gap).

Financial Management, Resources and Fund

Table 10 – Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Financial Management, Resources and Fund

Training Needs for Chairmen and Members on Financial Management, Resources and Fund			
Activities and Competencies	**Importance (Mean) μ**	**Performance (Mean) μ**	**Training Need (Mean) μ**
Financial Management	6.99	5.83	1.16
Resources of the Parishad	6.92	5.78	1.14
Funds of the Parishad	6.94	5.53	1.41
Expenditure of the Parishad	6.93	5.92	1.01
Revenue imposes and collection	6.96	5.60	1.35

Financial management, resource mobilization, and money management are union parishad duties. This ability has the lowest relevance relative to the combined mean of the other categories, yet finance, parishad resources, and money are important. Revenue imposition and collecting scores 1.35 training requirements. Parish spending scores 1.01 training deficit. The training needed for this area is equally important.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the relevance of Training Need Assessment (TNA) procedures in improving the efficacy of training interventions for elected representatives, with a focus on Union Parishad members in Bangladesh. Through a thorough examination of the literature and empirical evidence, the study has underlined the importance of TNAs in shaping the design, execution, and results of training programs targeted at empowering local elected officials. However, problems like as resource restrictions and political intervention impede the proper implementation of TNAs, reducing their total impact. To address these challenges and maximize the effectiveness of TNA practices, policymakers and stakeholders should prioritizes investment in capacity-building initiatives for Union Parishad members, such as the use of participatory approaches and ICT tools to conduct more comprehensive TNAs. Furthermore, efforts should be undertaken to strengthen institutional capacity and reduce political pressures on TNA procedures in order to maintain their integrity and efficacy in influencing training interventions. By implementing these ideas, authorities may help enhance local governance processes and improve service delivery results in Bangladesh.

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THE THEORY, PRINCIPLES, AND STRATEGIES OF THE APPLICATION OF SITUATIONAL TEACHING METHOD IN CHINA HISTORY TEACHING

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Abstract. Situational Teaching Method is a teaching method in which teachers actively create a good learning environment and atmosphere, stimulate students 'interest, help students build cognition, and promote students' all-around development. This paper uses the literature research method and the case analysis method to discuss the application of the situational teaching method in the classroom. The research shows that following the principles of scientificity, pertinence and subjectivity can improve the efficiency of the classroom. Using vivid language, life examples, asking questions and creating basic historical materials are important strategies to ensure the effectiveness of the classroom. Therefore, following the basic principles of situational teaching method is the key to improving classroom teaching.
Key words: Situational Teaching Method; History Teaching; Teachers and Students.

Introduction

In the 21st century, the level of national quality has become an important indicator of a country's comprehensive national strength, and the improvement of national quality depends on the continuous development of basic education. Therefore, in the new century, under this era's background, countries have launched a wave of basic education reform. As a member of the world's major powers, China initiated a new round of basic education curriculum reform at the beginning of this century. This reform involves multiple aspects of curriculum and teaching and has lasted for more than 20 years. It is the largest reform since 1949. In this round of curriculum reform, new adjustments have been made to history teaching and new requirements have been put forward - emphasizing the educational function of history education, emphasizing the cultivation of students' historical awareness, and enhancing cultural and humanistic literacy.

History is a fact that has happened in the past and cannot be repeated or experimented with, possessing irreversible characteristics. In teaching, students are unable to touch and observe directly, and the acquisition of historical knowledge is mostly done indirectly. Moreover, history is a comprehensive and complex discipline that involves various aspects of human life. The teaching of history, which involves many concepts, often becomes a major obstacle for students to learn history.

In the classroom, teachers can create historical contexts and resolve abstract concepts, which can bring students closer to knowledge and promote their development in the three dimensions of "knowledge and ability," "process and method," and "emotional attitude and values.". Furthermore, it helps students cultivate their historical thinking and problem-solving abilities in the process of mastering knowledge, explore problem-solving methods in the process of perceiving history, and strengthen their perception and understanding of history.

Literature review

The ancient Greek educator Socrates formed the "Socratic method", also known as the "midwifery" or "question and answer method", in his long-term educational practice. Teachers use continuous questioning to make students question their existing cognition, and further inspire and guide them to gain new insights into something through their own thinking. The Socratic method can be regarded as the earliest problem situational teaching method and a classic example of situational teaching method.

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Jean Jacques Rousseau, a famous French educator in the 18th century, also recorded scenes of situational teaching in Emile. In order to teach Emile to distinguish direction, he took her to the forest and guided her in a real environment. Rousseau moved the classroom into nature and skillfully utilized the natural context for teaching, guiding students to actively learn and think.

John Dewey, a famous American educator in the 19th century, first explicitly proposed the term "situation". Dewey believed that experience is the result of the interaction between humans and the environment, and these two, combined or interacting with each other, constitute what we call a situation. The knowledge and abilities acquired in a specific context will become effective tools for understanding and processing the next situation. Therefore, in teaching, educators should pay attention to the creation of situations, so that learners can gain valuable experiences in the learning process, which can affect the development of the entire life. Dewey believed that there must be a practical experiential context. As the beginning of the thinking stage, creating an appropriate context is the art of education, which helps students develop their thinking abilities and obtain effective experiences. Dewey has taken situational teaching a big step forward in theory.

In the field of modern education, Soviet educator Sukhomlinsky attached great importance to the educational role of natural situations. He believed that using memory instead of thinking and memorization instead of vivid perception and observation of the essence of phenomena was a major drawback that made children stupid and ultimately lost their desire to learn... Children were able to perceive vivid, colorful, tonal, and vocal images very sensitively, And keep them deep in memory. He advocates allowing children to travel to nature, and the cognition formed through children's own perception and experience is long-lasting and effective. Sukhomlinsky integrated his ideas into teaching practice, often leading students to observe nature, allowing them to learn in a joyful atmosphere, stimulating their interest, and promoting the development of situational teaching in practice.

Since the mid-1980s, constructivist theory has been increasingly accepted by more and more people, and the situational factors involved in the four major elements of "situation", "conversation", "collaboration", and "meaning construction" have also received attention. Since then, situational cognitive theory has entered the initial stage of formation. Leigh Chiarelot's "Curriculum in Context - Curriculum and Instructional Design" (2007) analyzes curriculum and teaching within the same framework, using context as a link, and explores the integration of curriculum and teaching from a new perspective. This book agrees with the definition proposed by a national research project funded by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the United States Department of Education and the Office of National School Work: Contextualized teaching and learning is a concept about teaching and learning, which can help teachers integrate subject content with real-world contexts, and promote students in the application of knowledge, knowledge, and their role as family members Establish a connection between the lives of citizens and workers.

The research on situational teaching method in the Chinese academic community mainly focuses on the connotation of situational teaching method, the significance and strategies of its application in history teaching, and so on.

The connotation of situational teaching method. Li Jilin believes that situational teaching follows the principle of reflection theory, fully utilizing the visual characteristics of things, and combining cognitive and emotional activities through the creation of typical scenes. Wang Tao analyzed the relationship between historical context, learner experience, and historical knowledge objectives, and provided a concise and vivid definition of historical context: historical context is a bridge used to connect learner experience and historical knowledge objectives. Feng Weidong proposed that situational teaching method refers to a teaching method in which teachers purposefully create concrete and vivid scenes with certain emotional colors in the process of education and teaching, in order to promote students' experience and perception of knowledge, help students better understand the teaching content, and promote their mental development.

The significance of applying situational teaching method in history teaching mainly focuses on the development of student abilities and emotional education. He Chenggang introduced the creation of historical classroom situations from three aspects: the characteristics of the history discipline, the purpose of history teaching, and educational theory. He believes that situational teaching method helps to concretize abstract history, develop students' historical thinking ability, and help students actively construct historical understanding. Liang Li discussed the significance of creating problem situations: the purpose of creating historical problem situations is to stimulate students' strong problem awareness. Through the creation of problem situations and exploration in the process of

problem solving, students can change their learning methods, elevate their level from "learning" to "learning", and truly implement the goals of the new curriculum reform. From the perspective of emotional education, Huang Xiangping believes that creating situations in history classrooms can help achieve the goal of emotional attitudes and values. In these situations, students can resonate and achieve the effect of entering their environment, feeling their emotions, and understanding their path.

Strategies for the application of situational teaching method in middle school history teaching. Li Haijun proposed strategies such as storytelling of character experiences, customs of historical backgrounds, plot based literature production, artistic representation of typical themes, and comprehensive contemporary history. Xia Huihui discussed the prominent role of creating effective historical contexts in concept teaching, and believed that using situational teaching methods to break through dry and difficult historical concepts may be the most effective. Chen Zhenhua discussed three methods for creating story situations in historical concept teaching: the "understanding and reasoning method", the "perspective transformation method", and the "serial story method".

The above research results are a good foundation for studying the application of situational teaching method in history teaching. But the author believes that the application principles and strategies of situational teaching can also be explored by combining important factors such as teachers' understanding and application of situational teaching method, mastery of historical knowledge, and student reactions in actual teaching. Because the problems reflected through classroom observation will be more convincing.

Methodology

This study refers to various works on situational teaching methods and history teaching, as well as a large number of journal articles. On this basis, combined with the author's observations and research on history teaching in daily education and teaching. These observations include the use of situational teaching methods by teachers in classroom teaching and the reactions of students to situations. Identify problems through observation and propose issues that should be noted during the application process. In addition, this article also deepens the understanding and comprehension of the connotation and characteristics of situational teaching method by analyzing and summarizing various collected cases, and further explores the specific implementation principles and strategies of situational teaching method in history teaching.

Results and Discussion

1. Theoretical basis for the application of situational teaching method in history teaching

Principle of suggestion

Education and teaching are purposeful and planned activities. During the teaching process, teachers often directly impart knowledge to students and transmit information directly to them. In this situation, students are in a passive position, making it difficult to truly obtain satisfaction from learning, developing potential abilities, and expressing their emotions truthfully. The acquisition of knowledge and the development of abilities by students will be hindered to a certain extent. To some extent, the situational teaching method can effectively overcome the drawbacks of "indoctrination" teaching. By creating a context, optimizing the learning environment, students can be unconsciously influenced, thereby promoting the development of their thinking and emotions.

In the context, students develop an unconscious psychological tendency to actively engage in learning and reveal their true emotions, quickly responding to the learning content. The indirect way of creating and optimizing situations without revealing the purpose has an impact on children's psychology and behavior, thereby gradually achieving established educational goals, which is the role of suggestion. Every student has the ability to accept suggestions, and the most important thing in teaching is to stimulate their own desire to learn, so that they have a strong desire for knowledge and a genuine love for learning. Therefore, in the teaching process, we should fully leverage the role of context, resonate with students' psychology through the creation of context, tap into their potential abilities, help them unconscious processing, quickly promote teaching activities, and enable students to achieve maximum development in the learning process.

Marxist theory of comprehensive human development

The theory of comprehensive human development in Marxism is a rich theoretical system and the soul of Marxist thought. Marx believed that humans possess their comprehensive essence in a comprehensive way, that is to say, as a complete person, they possess

their own comprehensive essence. Therefore, the comprehensive development of human beings has a rich connotation, which includes the full development of human abilities, social relationships, personality, and many aspects of human beings as a whole, rather than one-sided and distorted development.

The comprehensive development of students in teaching is closely related to the teaching methods of teachers. Students need to learn in a relatively harmonious environment and fully exert their autonomy in learning. The creation of situations can have an impact on students' knowledge, abilities, emotions, and other aspects, fully unleashing their autonomy and promoting their overall development. Therefore, in history teaching, teachers should create appropriate historical situations to promote students' comprehensive development.

Constructivist theory

Human cognitive activities occur in specific contexts, and context is the core concept of constructivism. Humanities places particular emphasis on context, as it relates to the meaning of facts, and the same fact has different meanings in different contexts. The constructivist teaching philosophy indicates that teaching should create ideal learning situations for students, stimulate advanced thinking activities such as reasoning, analysis, and identification, and provide students with rich information resources, tools for processing information, and appropriate help and support, promoting their own meaningful construction and problem-solving activities. The constructivist learning perspective emphasizes the situational nature of knowledge learning. Knowledge exists dependent on context and cannot exist independently. Only in specific contexts can knowledge be truly understood and applied. Constructivism believes that learning is the active exploration of the learning object by the subject, thereby constructing a process of understanding the meaning of the object. Students are the active builders of meaningful learning, so attention should be paid to their meaningful construction.

Starting from constructivist theory, teachers need to artificially create meaningful historical contexts, enabling students to construct meaningfully in specific historical contexts, using contexts to help establish connections between new and old knowledge, assimilating new knowledge with existing cognitive experiences in the mind, and endowing new knowledge with a certain meaning. Once existing experience cannot assimilate new knowledge, existing cognition will be transformed and reorganized, which is the process of adaptation. By creating scenarios, students can be motivated to be autonomous and proactive, enabling them to actively discover, analyze, and solve problems. Through assimilation and adaptation in the context, students can transform from passive receivers to autonomous builders. Situational teaching method is a teaching method that is based on numerous theories and has been tested in practice. The author believes that constructivist theory is the most core theoretical basis of situational teaching method.

Transfer theory

The transfer of learning refers to the impact of one learning on another, or the impact of acquired experiences on the learning activities to be completed. Greeno et al. proposed the situational theory of transfer, which suggests that transfer problems mainly explain how learning to participate in one activity in one context will affect participating in another activity in different contexts. Learning is an activity of interaction between individuals and situations, which is an adaptation to the characteristics contained in the situation. Therefore, in the history classroom, teachers create corresponding historical contexts based on historical knowledge and three-dimensional goals. Through specific contexts, students can not only learn historical knowledge, but also learn corresponding problem-solving methods and skills, which can promote the development of thinking in the process of thinking and exploring problems. These methods, skills, and thinking may be transferred and applied to the process of solving similar problems. Students who study in meaningful historical contexts for a long time, constantly interpreting the situation and solving problems, will have richer experiences and strategies, and higher ability to solve problems in new learning contexts. Students will have more confidence in learning and life, which is also of extraordinary significance for the development of their personality.

2.The basic principles of applying situational teaching method in history teaching

Scientific Principle

When creating a historical context, it should be noted that the created historical context must conform to historical facts and current mainstream ideology. The authenticity of teaching situations can be divided into two levels: first, the examples cited in teaching situations should be real or potentially existing and occurring in history; Secondly, the analysis of

historical figures on examples in teaching contexts should conform to the personalities and concepts of historical figures themselves, and should not impose the ideas of later generations on the ancients. When applying situational teaching methods, teachers should convey real historical information to students. Whether using textual materials, images, or film and television resources, careful verification is necessary. In the selection and use of teaching resources, authenticity and scientificity should be ensured; Teachers should also make students understand that these rich historical materials are real and exist. In truly revealing the original appearance of history, history is real and cannot be joked about. History learning should be approached with a rigorous attitude.

People should have the right to imagine in the face of history, but this right must not be abused. For some teaching methods that reproduce history through imagination, special caution is needed. In the vast river of history, with rich and colorful historical materials, is there really no real material to assist teaching? It has been proven that this is not the case. When Zhong Hongjun, a famous middle school history teacher, talked about the story of "World Industrial Revolution", he created a historical circumstances with the report of British steel consultant Keens. While visiting the St. Louis World's Fair, Keens recorded the size of the American factory, the enterprise and modernity of the American people. In Mr.Zhong's teaching, a group of very simple digital materials in the Keens report were selected to guide students to gain insight into the essence behind the numbers, find out the relationship between the problems, and then guide students to draw the law and enlightenment of historical development.When many teachers see this teaching clip, they will be surprised at the vividness of Keens report and the practicality of history teaching, and will also ask the question: Is Keens a virtual character?However, Keens is not virtual, it is real.All the materials used in teacher Zhong's teaching clip are real, including detailed data.All this is recorded in Business empire and American economic history.Mr.Zhong's case fully proves that in history teaching, we should believe in the charm of history itself, the historical facts are far more wonderful than the virtual situation, and the real historical situation has more teaching value than the virtual historical situation.

Classroom teaching is based on textbooks, which are written according to curriculum standards and are the most basic materials used by teachers and students in the teaching process. No matter what teaching method is used in teaching, textbooks are indispensable basic materials. The creation of situations can be diverse and can refer to various materials. However, textbooks are the foundation of creating situations. Teachers must find other materials to assist or expand the content of textbooks after understanding them thoroughly, so that the teaching content is more systematic and complete.

The principle of subjectivity

Students are the subject of learning, and all knowledge can only be internalized into their own through their own brains and hands. Bruner, a representative figure of cognitive psychology, emphasizes that knowledge is acquired through active reception by learners, and learners should be active participants in the process of acquiring knowledge, rather than passive recipients of knowledge. The principle of subjectivity emphasizes the student-centered approach in teaching, fully reflecting the student-centered status, and creating situations based on their understanding. Students have a high level of self-awareness development and often require independent problem-solving to meet their self-esteem needs. Therefore, in teaching, teachers should focus on creating historical contexts that are conducive to students' independent learning and cooperative exploration, fully tapping into the independent thinking ability and preliminary abstract logical thinking ability that students already possess, and giving them space to freely express themselves; Enable students to think independently and actively engage in collaborative exploration in historical contexts, striving to provide them with emotional satisfaction through experience, and thereby promoting the next step of history learning. When creating situations, teachers should keep up with the pace of the times, create historical situations with distinctive characteristics of the times, and attract students' attention to learning. When preparing lessons, teachers should fully consider the important factor of students. During the teaching process, students should always be placed in the main position, and one of the important tasks of teachers is to establish student subjectivity and teach students how to learn.

Targeted Principle

The application of situational teaching method in history teaching should be determined based on the specific teaching content. When creating scenarios, teachers should not only meet the teaching objectives, but also be targeted, especially paying

attention to the handling of teaching priorities and difficulties. Creating historical contexts is to better serve history teaching, and it is necessary to have substantial teaching content that is in line with the actual teaching situation, fully grasp the quantity of contexts and the required time. If teachers set up scenarios at each teaching stage to showcase an active classroom atmosphere, and the created scenarios are not targeted, then for students, it is only a "vivid" history class, and the creation of scenarios becomes meaningless, and our history course loses its educational significance.

During my education internship, I once listened a teacher's lesson about the May 4th Movement. At that time, the teacher used the scene from My 1919 to create the situation. One scene was the confrontation between Gu Weijun and Japanese diplomats at the Paris Peace Conference, and the other scene was the last minute of the meeting, when Gu Weijun fought resolutely, and did not sign the treaty. The two fragments total for 15 min. I think it is inappropriate to spend 15 minutes in a 45-minute class to show the struggle of a Chinese representative at the Paris Peace Conference. Before organizing teaching, teachers should carefully select teaching materials, closely follow the teaching objectives and main teaching lines, and especially create the situation around the key and difficult points in teaching.

3. Basic strategies for the application of situational teaching method in high school history teaching

Describe the situation with vivid language

Language is the most common, direct, and commonly used teaching method. In the process of history classroom teaching, teachers use appropriate language to describe situations, use language to describe touching historical stories and the fate of generous and tragic characters, and use language to reproduce the war scenes of swords and artillery fire at that time. This can enable students to have a clearer and deeper understanding of history.

Zhao Ran, a teacher from the High School affiliated to Shandong University, once showed us a lesson entitled The Establishment of the Socialist Economic System in the Soviet Union.At the end of the course, the content of the course is sublimated,When the wind of history blows across the vast Russian land, when the familiar melody brings us to the red years, when we along the winding path back to the economic development of a red country.With such a beautiful text, with beautiful music, the students' thoughts and emotions suddenly led up, I believe that students can not only study attentively in the classroom, in the classroom is all in relish this vivid history class.Therefore, the importance of using vivid and vivid language to depict situations in history teaching is self-evident. The language of teachers should be emotional and infectious, fully showcasing the charm of history to students, stimulating their interest, resonating with them, and guiding their observation and thinking.

Using real-life examples to construct a situation

History is the process of human social development. It tells the events of the past, which happened hundreds or even thousands of years ago. There is a certain time span from the actual life of students, which leads to difficulties for some students in learning history. Some students believe that history is of little use to their current lives and adopt a perfunctory attitude towards learning history. Historian Croce once said that all history is contemporary history. In history teaching, connect history with students' real lives, organically combine "emotion" and "environment", use environment to convey emotions, melt students' past aversion to learning, and guide students to use historical knowledge to analyze society correctly.

For example, in the historical trend of the reunification of the motherland class, Shandong affiliated high school of normal university Tian Xuelian teacher in classroom teaching "Taiwan ABC children's clothing", "small mouth fort", "island coffee", "yonghe" soya-bean milk, "bear" and other local Taiwan shop, further questions, let the students think about the cause of the new performance, solved the efforts to realize the reunification of the motherland and this problem. Teacher Tian properly uses the familiar things to create the situation, so that the students can feel the Taiwan things around them. On the one hand, it can stimulate students' interest, on the other hand, it can realize that their Taiwan culture has a subtle influence on our lives, and more deeply realize that the reunification of the motherland is the inevitable trend of historical development. Tian teacher create teaching situation pay attention to strengthen the contact with students 'life experience, can stimulate and arouse the enthusiasm of students and the fun of learning, let the student in a pleasant environment actively to explore problems, problem solving, deepen the understanding of the problem of this problem design is more able to arouse students' intellectual desire and independent inquiry spirit.

The new curriculum reform advocates that classroom teaching should be linked to reality, creating situations based on students' life experiences, actual events and existing things around them, which can better stimulate their desire to learn and explore, and make them feel the joy of learning.

Creating situation based on problems

Tao Xingzhi once said: Creation begins with problems, only with problems can one think, only with thinking can there be methods to solve problems, and only with thinking can there be the possibility of finding independent thinking. In high school history teaching, teachers can raise an exploratory question and create corresponding problem situations to arouse students' inner conflicts, awaken their thinking impulses, and stimulate their conscious exploration. In problem situations, teachers guide students to explore the problem, guide them to discover, analyze, and solve the problem. When the problem is solved, students' thirst for knowledge will be unprecedentedly strengthened, and their confidence will also be strengthened, thereby promoting continuous thinking and exploration.

Zhong Hongjun, a teacher from Shandong Experimental Middle School, taught New Democratic Revolution and the Communist Party of China, two pictures appeared: the maker of the hundred people beheaded" competition , and carefully interpreted the two pictures, let the students feel the boundary between man and the devil. Through the comparison of these two shocking pictures, Teacher Zhong raised a thought-provoking question: " What power makes people become the devil?"This question is of great educational value, which makes the students' understanding of the war rise to the height of human nature, with a novel Angle, and has the value of inquiry.

In history teaching, allowing students to think about problems in a certain context will make their thinking more active and stimulate their desire to explore. However, when setting questions, teachers should pay attention to grasping the current level of understanding of students, making the questions close to their nearest development zone, and also pay attention to the hierarchical nature of the questions, gradually progressing from shallow to deep. In high school history teaching, cleverly creating problem scenarios is of great significance in stimulating students' learning motivation and helping them open the door to thinking.

Establishing situations based on historical materials

History is not dogma, but inquiry; It is not about artificially breaking down history into several elements , and then requiring students to remember these elements clearly. Instead, it requires students to form basic methods of learning and exploring history, in order to restore real history; History is not memory, but thinking; History is not a conclusion, but a process. The essence of history education lies in restoring the original appearance of history to the greatest extent possible in the process of history teaching, guiding students to think about historical issues, and forming their own views and insights. Historical materials are the carrier and presentation form of history. In history teaching, it is necessary to fully utilize the role of historical materials to restore real history, cultivate students' exploration ability, and improve their thinking level. Based on historical materials, create historical contexts to bring the historical conclusions in textbooks to life, allowing students to approach and appreciate history in the context of vivid historical materials. Guide students to engage in a transcendent dialogue between themselves and history in the context of historical materials, guide them to appreciate history with heart, stimulate their historical thinking, and cultivate their sense of history.

In the process of history teaching, with the help of rich historical materials, complex problems can be simplified and abstract concepts made concrete to facilitate students to understand and apply knowledge. For example, in the birth of marxism lesson, with the help of image material creation situation, guide students into the European life in the 19th century, through the interaction of reality and theory, experience the real history, thus the historical background of marxist birth formed a deep understanding, to better understand the process of the birth of marxism. In the Communist Manifesto, with the help of the original data Communist Manifesto to create the situation, through the analysis and interpretation of the declaration, to help students to form the overall understanding of Marxism. When telling the part of the content of the Paris Commune, we can choose the relevant content of Selected Poems of the Paris Commune and Marx and Engels' views on the Paris Commune to interpret, to summarize the lessons and enlightenment of the failure of the Paris Commune, and to help students understand the progress and course of the socialist movement.

In the teaching of this lesson, teachers should help students to fill the gap through historical materials, help students to go deep into the historical situation, understand knowledge and construct knowledge in the specific situation.

Conclusion

In the vast historical river, in the history class of condensed essence, the experienced history teachers convey the true meaning of history to the vibrant students, leading them to feel history, understand history, appreciate history, and reflect on history. We draw nourishment from the vivid history, constantly move forward under the urging of history, be inspired and inspired by history, constantly reflect on ourselves in history, and constantly contemplate. It is the unremitting pursuit of every history teacher to teach every history class well, convey the "sentiment" of history to students, and bring the past history to life in front of students.

The author believes that in the application of situational teaching method in history teaching, "beauty" should be introduced, "emotion" should be connected, "spirit" should run through, and "environment" should be expanded. Through the rendering of language and the influence of music in the classroom, students can unconsciously understand history. Situational teaching method stimulates the classroom atmosphere in the classroom, enlightens the students' wisdom, and improves the students' observation ability, language expression ability, analysis ability, and thinking ability while passing on history. It also plays a unique role in the cultivation of students' aesthetic interest and will quality, which can improve the effect of classroom teaching and promote the overall development of students.

There are still many shortcomings in the discussion of this article. I believe that in the near future, with the joint efforts of all educators, situational teaching method will be of greater help in improving the quality of high school history teaching.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTING QUALITY EDUCATION IN GHANA, WEST AFRICA THROUGH THE USE OF CAREER GUIDANCE MOBILE APPLICATION

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Abstract. This study explores the Ghanaian education career choice model by examining the career decisions of secondary school students. Utilizing field research, SWOT analysis, inspection, and market research, the study aims to offer recommendations for improving the Ghanaian educational system. The research spans articles published between 2000 and 2022. The study focuses on supporting secondary school students (ages 13–17) in developing their skills and finding fulfilling careers by providing necessary information and resources. The objective is to evaluate the Ghanaian educational system, identify challenges and limitations affecting its quality, and propose actionable recommendations to address these issues. Ghana's educational landscape has evolved significantly since the pre-colonial era. Despite reforms aimed at enhancing the quality of life, the anticipated improvements in education quality remain elusive. The study highlights the potential of an intuitive mobile application for career guidance, enabling students to seek career advice, consult professional counselors, and persuade their parents to support their career choices. Findings on how the Ghanaian education system influences students' career decisions are detailed.

Key words: Quality Education, secondary school students, adolescent age thirteen to seventeen, Ghana Education System.

Introduction

This study examines how parents, friends, and lack of information are incorporated into teenager's career decision-making using case studies from West Africa. Adolescents make critical decisions every day that affect their future. The opportunities they will have throughout their lives are significantly shaped by the amount of time and energy they commit to learning and the subjects on which they focus their strongest efforts. Realizing their goals for their careers and personal lives is a major source of inspiration for students to work hard in their studies. However, in addition to relying on a student's talent, their hopes and aspirations can also be greatly influenced by the student's and their family's personal backgrounds, in addition to the extent and depth of their understanding of the working environment. In summary, pupils are unable to be what they do not perceive (Sefa Dei, G.J., 2011). When students make a well-informed decision based on their own strengths, they chase after their dreams with all their might. So, they emerge from it stronger and have a greater beneficial influence on the communities they end up in. That way, there won't be potential engineers practicing teaching and great teachers struggling as medical doctors. Parents often try to steer their secondary school children in a different direction when it's time for them to make a career decision. Research shows that, due to a lack of direction, five out of ten students in Ghana choose courses without having all the necessary knowledge. For the most part, students are only concerned with getting into school, which causes them to either become frustrated after graduation or simply stop practicing altogether.

There were 488,000 reported cases of stress and depression in the workplace in 2015 and 2016, with 1,500 cases per 100,000 employees, proving that choosing the wrong professional path can lead to major health problems (Nyarko, N.Y. and Addo, H., 2013). In other words, "personality" matters when deciding on a profession. Researchers argue that students should begin thinking about their future occupations as early as kindergarten and continue through elementary, middle, and high school. One

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of the best ways to avoid confusion and poor job decisions is to take a career exam earlier in life. Our approach is to provide a simple and fast way for people to consult with an expert about their career options so that they can choose a path that makes the most of their strengths. With the use of a user-friendly career guidance app on their mobile device, they should be able to seek advice from a trained counselor, discuss their options with their parents, and ultimately gain the green light to follow their dreams. The challenge that secondary school students confront when trying to decide on a profession is something that this user-friendly career advisory mobile app aims to address. According to research, the majority of secondary school pupils do not have access to sufficient information to make well-informed judgments about their future careers. This includes details like job possibilities, obstacles, schools that provide relevant courses, proper subject combinations, etc. (Dr. Adu-Agyem, J. and Dr. Osei-Poku, P., 2012). Figure 1 depicts different phases involved in career decision-making.

Figure 1 – Phases of decision-making in career

Literature Review

History of Ghana Education

Ghana's education system began long before colonialism. This type of education was informal and indigenous, with information and skills passed down from elders to younger generations through word of mouth or apprenticeship. It was reinforced by a strong sociocultural milieu that promoted lifelong engagement. In the 16th and 19th centuries, respectively, Western education was brought to the Gold Coast (now Ghana) by European traders and Christian missionaries. Academic in nature, the curriculum was considerably different from that of indigenous schools. The "fort schools," founded by European traders specifically for their mulatto students, served as the venue for the event. The intention was to produce educated locals who could work as clerks and storekeepers in business, government, and industry, so they made math, reading, and writing core subjects. It was commonly known that Christian missionaries used Western education as a teaching and evangelizing tool (Berthelemy, J.-C., 2006). The indigenous government launched a number of educational initiatives shortly before and after independence with the goal of raising the standard of education in the nation, building more schools around the nation, and providing funding to unaided institutions.

Still, some government programs led to problems in the educational system, and the most recent change in education was developed to deal with these anomalies. Ghanaian education needed a more practical emphasis in 1973; therefore, the government recognized the need to shift the intellectual focus of the curriculum. Consequently, to restructure the content and make it more relevant to Ghanaian culture, the Dzobo Committee was established. This was done to give the person the opportunity to significantly contribute to the nation's economic progress. Thus, new programs that were approved and put into effect by the government at that time were launched in 1974 as a result of the reorganized curriculum. The country's financial difficulties prevented the reform program from moving further than its first stages, even though it was supposed to be implemented in kindergarten, primary, junior, and senior secondary schools. In an effort to make the 1974 education reform more relevant and in keeping with Ghanaian culture and way of life, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) government reexamined it in 1981. The education reform was examined in 1994 by the deHeer Ammisah Committee and assessed in 2002 by the Anamuah-Mensah Committee. They looked at the make-up and substance of the previous educational system in order to identify the anomalies in it and decide how best to address them in order to eventually promote high-quality education (Anamuah-Mensah Report, 2002). Thus, providing every individual with a thorough, excellent education is the aim of the new education change. This would make it possible for those who receive an education to live fulfilling lives and make meaningful contributions to the nation's socioeconomic advancement. Given this, it is essential to critically examine Ghana's recently redesigned educational system and talk about how to provide the highest caliber of instruction possible.

Structure of Education in Ghana

Ghana's current educational system comprises basic school education through tertiary education. Three (3) years of junior high school education plus six (6) years of primary school instruction make up the nine (9)-year basic education curriculum. Four years of technical and vocational education —also referred to as senior high school — are the next step. Depending on the particular program requirements, students may continue their studies at a post-secondary institution for three to four years after completing this level. Universities, colleges, polytechnics, institutes, and other post-secondary institutions that offer courses leading to the awarding of degrees and diplomas are the providers of post-secondary education in Ghana.

Kindergarten (Pre-School) Education

Preschool instruction is incorporated into basic education in kindergarten, introducing 4-year-old children to formal education for the first time during a two-year period. The formative years are a child's early years, and they are particularly important for their physical and physiological development. The development of a child's personality, social skills, and intellectual stimulation all depend heavily on these formative years. By offering a high-quality pre-school education, preschool education also seeks to instill in children a love of learning and supports primary education. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a secure and loving atmosphere for the child by offering the necessary infrastructure amenities.

Primary Education

Education in primary school comes after education in preschool. Along with laying the groundwork for inquiry, creativity, and invention, it also seeks to reinforce the knowledge and skills learned in kindergarten and get students ready for higher education and training. The six (6) years of primary school comprise two stages that represent a child's growth and development. The lower primary is the initial stage, lasting three years, while the upper primary is the second stage, lasting an additional three years. It is intended that children in Lower Primary (ages 6–8) and Upper Primary (ages 9–11) go through different stages of education. Children in lower primary school are expected to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills through hands-on experiences during their first three years of education. Children should be assisted and encouraged to observe, think critically, criticize, ask questions, solve issues, and pick up new skills throughout their final three years of upper primary school.

Junior High School Education

A three-year junior high school education follows a primary school education shortly after it concludes. Ghanaian basic education gives pupils the chance to discover their aptitudes, interests, and talents. Students who attend junior high school are exposed to basic scientific and technological concepts and skills, which prepares them for further education. The primary goals of the junior high school programs are to ensure that students understand how to apply the cognitive and psychomotor domains of learning and to assist them in developing pre-technical and

pre-vocational skills that will enable them to build upon the knowledge and abilities they have already acquired at the primary school level.

Senior High School Education

Education through senior high school is highly valued in Ghana. Following their studies at the junior high school (basic level), students may continue their secondary education at this level. The major objectives of senior high school education are to prepare students for postsecondary education and training while also reinforcing the knowledge and skills they acquired in basic education. Students are also exposed to a range of pertinent occupational skills that are essential for both national and human development during their senior high school education. It also seeks to instill in kids a sense of selflessness and discipline, as well as an appreciation of the environment and the need to preserve it. Moreover, it cultivates a passion for lifelong learning among students. At senior high school, students begin to concentrate in one area or another, and it is at this age that they are usually accepted into specialized training programs and other establishments. Because people differ in their aptitudes, abilities, interests, and talents, the curriculum at this level is designed to accommodate these differences. After the 1987 Education Reform program was put into place, the senior high school system saw ups and downs over its three-year existence. The senior high school curriculum has drawn the most criticism, with some questioning whether it should last four years or three. Nevertheless, as it prepares students for admittance into postsecondary institutions, it is important to give it careful consideration and make every effort to succeed.

Technical and Vocational Education

The Anamuah-Mensah Committee Report states that the technical and vocational education and training objective is to give students who aspire to pursue professional postsecondary programs a foundational grasp of technical and vocational knowledge and abilities. Students who wish to contribute to the workforce are given specific technical and vocational knowledge and skills by them; they also provide students with the tools they need to become self-employed or employable and keep up with changing industry knowledge and skills. The contribution of technical and vocational education and training to the socioeconomic development of Ghana is anticipated to be substantial. Technical institutes, vocational institutes, secondary technical schools, and apprenticeship training centers are currently among the streams in technical and vocational education and training.

Tertiary Education

Tertiary education is defined as instruction given beyond the secondary level. It is made up of universities, polytechnics, specialized schools, colleges of education, and other institutions that offer training leading to certification and degrees. In addition to producing high- and middle-level human capital for the various economic sectors, postsecondary education aims to develop critical and analytical thinking skills as well as the knowledge and skills necessary for doing both basic and applied research. Higher education is crucial to the generation, sharing, and use of knowledge to address developmental demands in the current knowledge-based economy. It also plays a part in promoting synergies throughout the economy and fortifying the whole educational system (Ministry of Education, 1994). The country's educational system must be strengthened at all levels by correcting any anomalies or deficiencies in order to guarantee the provision of high-quality education and to meet the goals of postsecondary education, national well-being, and economic development. A strong foundation in basic and secondary education is crucial for the success of postsecondary education and obtaining a top-notch tertiary education will be challenging in the absence of a strong basic education (Buama, L. K., 2009).

Case Study Description

Study Area Overview (Quality Education)

In any school system, receiving a high-quality education is essential. The provision of high-quality education is in the best interests of the government, the Ghana Education Service (GES), the Ministry of Education (MOE), and collaborating organizations in Ghana. It involves putting the right procedures in place, such as providing high-quality inputs and delivery throughout the educational process, to help produce exceptional educational results. Education in Ghana aims to produce well-rounded individuals who possess the information, skills, values, and aptitudes needed for self-actualization as well as for the country's socioeconomic and political transformation (Abdi, A. and Alie, C., 2005). The educational system's primary goal is to educate students using this comprehensive and superior method. To do this, the student must develop academically, psychologically, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and instinctively. Only then will they be able to favorably influence the nation's progress and adapt to advancements in other fields as well as technology. The purpose of the Ghanaian government's education

vision is to provide high-quality education to everyone by allocating sufficient funds and resources to meet these objective at all educational levels. Thus, it is crucial to establish an atmosphere that will support and encourage the provision of high-quality instruction in Ghana's educational system. For this reason, learning and teaching should take place in settings that are gender-sensitive, secure, well-resourced, and have enough amenities. To provide a quality education, a teacher must apply child-centered approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools. This process requires qualified and motivated educators in addition to effective time management, skillful assessment, positive attitudes toward learning, efficient supervision, and good discipline. Other important components of quality education delivery include the efficient use of ICT as a teaching tool (Boateng, F., 1990).

Case Study Background

Parents' influence and pressure are keeping a large number of Ghanaian secondary school students, who range in age from thirteen to seventeen, from pursuing their career goals. They settle for a job they're not passionate about just to keep the peace at home, but they wind up failing miserably at meeting all of the standards. Because of this, many of them feel depressed and unfulfilled, as if they are not living up to their potential. Students are unable to choose suitable programs to pursue at the Senior High School level due to a lack of assistance at the Junior High School level. Students from rural and suburban areas are disadvantaged greatly by this arrangement, which, if left unchecked, would support the aristocratic educational system that the government is rightfully trying to stop (Ministry of Education, 2002). In fact, research shows that choosing a profession that is a good fit for one's personality and strengths actually leads to greater happiness and success. A student's career choice is a crucial decision that they will face throughout their education. Given the gravity of the decision, it is essential to have access to accurate and sufficient information. Quality education is one of the Sustainable Development Goals that this study aims to fulfill. Improving Ghana and Africa as a whole is its primary goal. It is commonly believed that education is the key to resolving global socioeconomic issues, including hunger, poverty, and insecurity. The importance of education cannot be overstated (Fafunwa, A. B. and Aisiku, J., 1982).

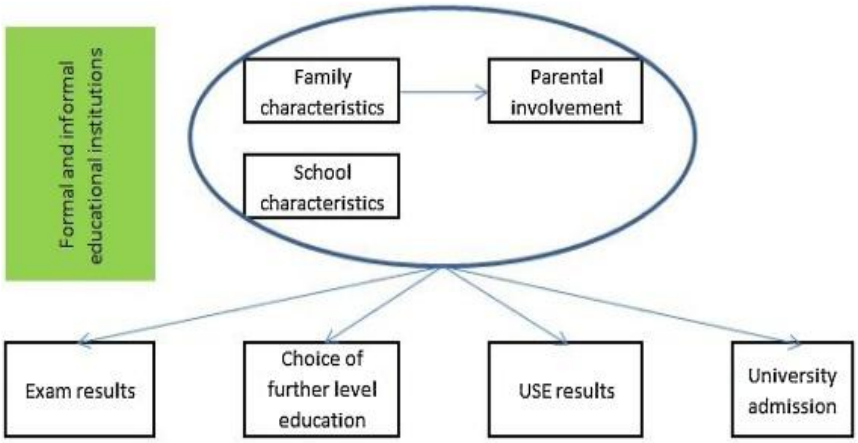

Figure 2 – Impact of parental involvement on children's performance in school

Table 1 – SWOT analysis was performed to highlight the benefits and drawbacks of the study areas

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- Amazing contents - Suitable for junior secondary schools and Ministry of Education - Tele-counseling feature - Algorithm for suggested career choices - User friendly, highly interactive and engaging	- Students in junior secondary schools may not have access to it. - Data subscription constraints - System Updates - Phone software compatibility - Network Constraints - Mobile device or laptop constraints

Table continuation

Opportunities: - The availability of the internet - The younger generation spends a lot of time on their digital devices. - The Tele-counseling feature on career choice will be great as they would be able to express themselves better and get answers to burning questions.	**Threats:** - Online career coaching academy - Cyber Insecurity

Methodology

A variety of publications on studies of quality education were sourced from several journal databases, including ResearchGate and Open Access journals. This research aims to mitigate the challenges associated with choosing a career path that equips students with the knowledge needed to achieve their full potential. Consequently, they will flourish as individuals and fulfill their purpose in the world. Adolescents in secondary schools, aged 13 to 17, frequently choose not to pursue their intended careers because of peer pressure and parental influence. Additionally, we wanted to know if they would be interested in a user-friendly mobile app that would support their profession decision and persuade their parents. A survey was carried out via Google, with 23 secondary school students participating. A digital platform that provided solutions to their most pressing career-related queries was what 97% of them wished for. 99% of respondents to the study said they would use the suggested mobile application to take care of their needs. As reported by Career Hunter on February 14, 2017, a startling nine out of ten individuals between the ages of thirteen and seventeen regretted hurrying their career decisions. Many of them chose a university course at random because they had no idea what they wanted to do and felt pressured to decide because they were "running out of time. "The primary approaches used for the research were descriptive and content analyses of business ideate projects. In addition, a SWOT analysis was performed to highlight the benefits and drawbacks of the study area's user-friendly career-advising software for mobile devices.

Table 2 – Survey Data

1. Did you run a survey?	Yes
2. Who did you target and how many participants were there?	- Adolescents in Junior Secondary School Students between the age of 14 and 16. - 23 participants took part in the survey.
3. How did you run the survey? Online, over the phone, etc.	Online (Google Form)
4. What categories of questions did you ask?	- What do you enjoy doing without being paid for? - What do you enjoy doing but you would love to be paid for it? - How has it enhanced your choice of career? - What's your desired career? - Are your parents, relatives, friends and teachers in support? - Would you be willing to use an application that could enhance your choice of career? - What features do you look forward to in a mobile application that could enhance your choice of career as well as convince your parents?
5. What were you trying to determine?	We were trying to determine the prevalence of adolescents who would like to use the mobile app; and 91.3% answered yes.
6. What was the breakdown of participants' ages, gender, etc.?	- Age 10-13(17.4%) 14-16(82.6%) - Gender Male 26.1% Female 73.9%
What was the most important data point?	93.1% of Participants will love to use the mobile App. We need to include this answer in our SWOT Analysis.

Young individuals who undervalue the education necessary to achieve their goals should anticipate that, given their upbringing and academic achievement, their early working years will be more difficult than they would have imagined. The fact that the majority of young people with aspirations that don't match their education come from underprivileged families is especially concerning. Career counseling has long been used to facilitate the labor market's smooth operation. It is now evident that it addresses inequality in an equally significant way. Reviews of the scientific literature indicate that young people who engage in school-based career development activities may generally, though not always, anticipate improvements in their future employment and academic performance. Young people who participate in effective career development programs can expand their career aspirations, have a better grasp of the connection between school and employment, and become more aware of the steps necessary to reach their objectives. Parents can have a significant and beneficial influence on decisions that impact a young person's career development. However, they also issue a warning that parental influence as a beneficial source might be compromised by excessive involvement in the decision-making process. Negative effects arise from parents overly controlling adolescents' career choices. It is important to warn parents against setting unrealistic expectations for their kids or taking their achievements personally. Therefore, parents ought to let their teenagers find their identity on their own, even though they should show genuine interest in and support of their career goals. Some teenagers are terrified of their parents' rejection if they decide to pursue a career in theater, music, or the arts rather than a lucrative field like law or medicine. If parents make it apparent that they have no particular expectations for their child's job, then the child will feel free to explore a wider choice of professions and choose one based on their own likes rather than those of their parents. (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2005). Figure 2 shows how parental involvement affects children's performance in school.

Results and Discussion

In addition to the financial consequences, numerous scientific studies demonstrate that choosing the incorrect professional path can lead to major health problems. In 2015–2016, there were 488,000 cases of work-related stress and depression, with a prevalence rate of 1,500 cases per 100,000 workers. One of the best methods to prevent uncertainty and poor job decisions is to take a career exam early in life. Actually, studies demonstrate that individuals who select a professional path that aligns with their aptitudes and personalities are happier and more successful.

Students in secondary schools were the focus of our study. The Career Guidance mobile application will serve as a means of providing them with the essential knowledge they need to realize their full potential. Consequently, they will flourish as individuals and fulfill their purpose in the world. A survey was undertaken in order to ascertain the target's needs, and twenty-three secondary school respondents participated. A digital platform that provided solutions to their most pressing career-related queries was what 97% of them wished for. According to the poll, 93.1% of participants said they would adore using the Career Guidance mobile app. The most significant insights from our research emerged from both qualitative and quantitative data are demonstrated in Figures 3-5.

In addition to the mobile app, our research aims to look at a potential software version of career guidance that secondary school students without smartphones could soon be able to access via computers. Career Hunters is the main rival, but research indicates that consumers are complaining about not being able to generate their report after the exam, excessive data usage, and a lack of materials as promised. Therefore, by keeping our suggested career guidance program user-friendly and avoiding too frequent maintenance concerns, we will make sure that it is free of such product defects. The implementation of the Career Guidance application will be used in the first year to guarantee that secondary schools and the Ministry of Education in Ghana's two capital towns will test it extensively. Later on, we shall go on to other regions of Ghana. More attention will be paid to career counselors, private schools, and ministries of education. Ghanaian students and government agencies will have downloaded and installed a significant number of the applications over the first five years of their release. We intend to establish partnerships with corporate, governmental, and school owners.

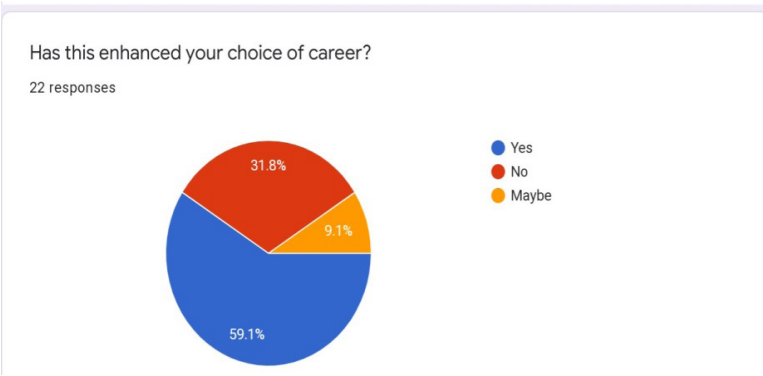

Figure 3 – The impact of the mobile app to the career choice

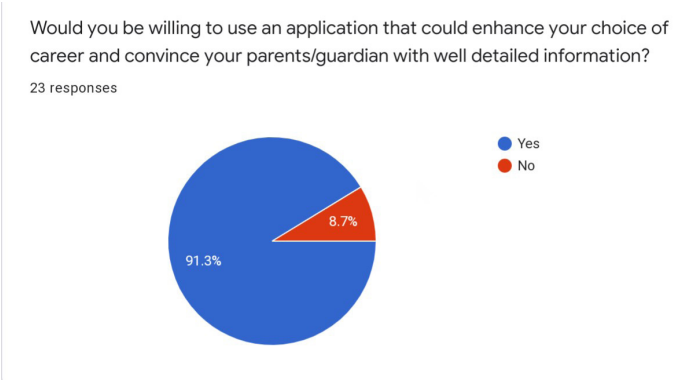

Figure 4 – Willingness to use the app in the future

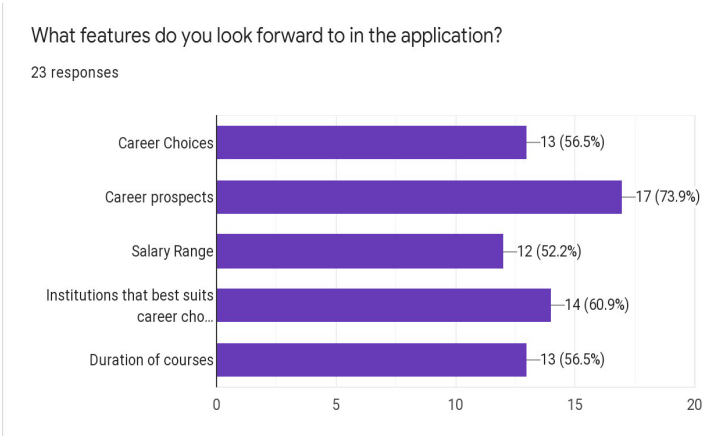

Figure 5 – Anticipated features of the app

Conclusion

Teenagers appreciated parental influence and guidance in the areas of career choice and occupational development. It's critical that parents support and encourage their children to explore all of their job alternatives in order to find the one that best suits them. The conversation should begin as soon as possible, and a large portion of the formative debate ought to have taken place considerably earlier than this point of filling a specialty. Making poor decisions is less likely if the process is initiated early. Parents should exercise caution when discrediting their children's vocational aspirations. It is important to warn parents against setting unrealistic expectations for their kids or taking their achievements personally. Therefore, parents ought to let their teenagers find their identity on their own, even though they should show a

sincere interest in and support of their career goals. When it comes to choosing a career in the arts, drama, or music over a high-paying profession like law or medicine, some adolescents are afraid of their parents' rejection. A child will feel free to explore a wider range of professions and choose one based on their own tastes rather than those of their parents if parents make it obvious that they have no specific expectations for their child's career. It is important for parents to stay in constant contact with their children and to support them in learning as much as they can about the areas of interest in their careers. Recognizing that their job is only to support their child in their career path, parents need to understand that letting their child make their own career decisions is the first genuine step toward adulthood for a young person. The aim of our study was to investigate the experiences that teenagers in Ghanaian secondary schools aged 13 to 17, consider while making profession decisions. We also planned to investigate the experiences that could offer obstacles.

The purpose of this study was to identify recurring themes in the experiences and thought processes of secondary school students regarding career choice. We aimed to gauge their perceptions of the new product we are developing, which is designed to significantly assist them in making informed career decisions and convincing their parents of their choices. This study seeks to address the challenges that secondary school students face in selecting a career path. Research indicates that most secondary school students lack adequate information for making well-informed career decisions. Most students are still in the process of enrolling, which causes them to get frustrated after graduation or possibly quit altogether. The purpose of the Career Guidance mobile app is to guarantee that these students have access to the data they require in order to make informed career decisions. The mobile app will assist in raising the standard of the school, give parents useful information about their wards' preferred careers, and assist students in making well-informed career decisions. Additionally, it will increase instructors' effectiveness by assisting them in realizing how different every child is and how to connect with them most effectively. The fourth Sustainable Development Goal—Quality Education—is being addressed by the Career Guidance mobile app. Bringing about constructive change in Ghana (Africa) and the global community is its main goal. Most people agree that the best way to address global socioeconomic issues like hunger, poverty, and instability is through education. Since its importance cannot be overstated, education is essential (McWilliam, H.O.A. and Kwamena-Poh, M.A., 1975).

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DOES CURRENCY VOLATILITY AFFECT NON-PERFORMING LOANS? EVIDENCE FROM THE TURKISH BANKING SECTOR

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Abstract. This study aims to econometrically investigate the relationship between non-performing loans and Euro and USD indices in Turkey. The data set of the study consists of the Turkish banking sector non-performing loan ratio and Euro and American Dollar (USD) indices variables for the period 01/2003-09/2023. Time series analyses were used to test the relationship between the variables. Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron (PP) unit root tests were applied to the data. Since the series became stationary at different levels, the ARDL (Autoregressive Distributed Lag Bound Test) test, one of the cointegration tests, was applied. Afterward, whether there is causality between the variables and if there is a causality relationship, the determination of the direction of causality is mutually tested with the "Granger Causality" method. According to the results of the research, a cointegration relationship was found between the non-performing loan ratios of the Turkish banking system and the Euro and USD indices. In the long run, it is concluded that a 1% increase in the Euro index is associated with a 2.93% decrease in non-performing loan ratios. On the other hand, in the short run, Euro and USD index values have no effect on non-performing loan ratios. According to the results of the Granger causality test, a unidirectional Granger causality relationship was detected between non-performing loan ratios and the Euro index. A similar unidirectional causality relationship was also found between the Euro index and the USD index.
Key words: Non-performing Loans, Exchange Rate, ARDL Boundary Test, Granger Causality Test.

Introduction

Nowadays, with the effect of globalization, the relations between financial markets across countries have become increasingly complex. In this context, the impact of exchange rate fluctuations on economic indicators has become an important research topic. Many financial institutions are vulnerable to exchange rate fluctuations, such as banks and corporations, which are affected by exchange rate fluctuations. In particular, fluctuations in exchange rates directly affect banks operating in international markets and transacting in foreign currencies. Changes in exchange rates affect banks not only through international transactions but also indirectly through competition in foreign markets, loan demand, and other banking activities.

Banks are financial institutions that act as intermediaries in efficiently channeling the idle funds held by savers to investors who need these funds (Koyuncu & Saka, 2011, p.113). In other words, they are enterprises that act as a bridge between those who supply funds and those who demand funds (Selimler & Kale, 2018, p. 275). It is possible to define a loan as a loan given to enterprises and individuals for a certain price to be repaid in a predetermined term (Black et al., 2009, p.39; Tanınmış & Sözer, 2011, p.43). In this respect, the banking sector is the most important institution that directs the transfer of funds within the financial system (Şahbaz & İnkaya, 2014, p. 69). In the banking sector, the loan item is one of the most basic products offered by banks and the majority of these loans are provided by savers who deposit their idle funds in banks. In this way, the funds in the hands of savers are used effectively (Koyuncu & Saka, 2011, p.113). In order for banks to continue their activities and increase their profitability, they need to ensure the return of the loans they have given. Failure to ensure the return of loans may bring serious risks in the banking sector and thus in the economy.

Article 5 of the "Regulation on Principles and Procedures for the Determination of the Qualifications of Loans and Other Receivables and the Provisions to be set aside for these Loans and Other Receivables by Banks" published in the Official Gazette dated

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01.11.2006 and numbered 26333 states that: "In the event that the borrower has more than one loan granted by the same bank and any of these loans is considered as non-performing loans due to the classification made, all loans of the borrower from the bank shall be classified in the same group as non-performing loans". In the continuation of the same article, loans that are more than ninety days past due or due for payment are also classified as "Non-Performing Loans" (Official Newspaper, 2006).

"Non-performing loans", in other words non-performing loans (NPL), bring along some risks for banks. The most important of these are profitability and liquidity risks. For non-performing loans that are not repaid and fall into non-performing loans, banks set aside provisions at certain ratios and recognise them as expenses, thus affecting profitability. On the other hand, loans that are expected to be repaid on time create liquidity risk for banks since they cannot be repaid on time.

Banks are obliged to set aside provisions at the rates stipulated by the law for both retail and commercial loans that become problematic. As the number of overdue days of a loan increases, the provision allocated for the loans will increase and the increased provisions will increase the costs of the loans to the bank. The fact that a loan is thrown into legal follow-up accounts or becomes a non-performing loan completely is an indication that the problem to be encountered in the loan has reached the highest point. As a matter of fact, when defining the concept of non-performing loans, loans for which the legal follow-up period has started are generally mentioned, but this situation may vary due to the credit policies of banks. Some banks may be based on loans that cannot be collected for 30 days and some banks for 90 days.

This study aims to investigate the effect of exchange rate volatility on the non-performing loan ratio of the Turkish banking sector. In this context, after the introductory section, a brief review of the literature on the subject is provided. Then, information about the data set and methodology used in the study is given. In the last part of the study, the findings of the research are given and the study is finalised. In the literature, it has been observed that non-performing loans are taken in quarterly or annual periods in many studies on the subject. The difference of this study from other studies in the literature is that the variables used in the study are taken on a monthly basis and cover a period of 249 months.

Literature review

When the studies in the literature on non-performing loans are analysed, the general view is that non-performing loans may be an important macroeconomic indicator and may have some effects on the economy in general. In this respect, the relationship between non-performing loans and various macroeconomic indicators (growth, gross domestic product, inflation, interest rates, production index and some stock market indices, unemployment, some exchange rates, etc.) have been analysed and the studies have focused on the macroeconomic determinants of non-performing loans.

In the study conducted by Yücememiş & Sözer (2011), NPL ratios were tried to be estimated monthly with macroeconomic data. In the model constructed, it is observed that the past period performance coincides with the realised value and it is determined that NPLs are affected by the past period performance. At the same time, it is determined that the NPL ratio is affected by the value of TL and industrial production with a one-period lag.

Park & Zhang (2012) examined whether there is an observable relationship between NPL and macroeconomic variables and bank-specific variables in the US banking sector through regression analysis. In the study, unemployment rate, GDP growth and central bank borrowing interest rates were used as macroeconomic indicators, while bank-specific variables such as solvency ratio, return on equity, efficiency ratio, non-interest income and bank size were used. Year-end data of 2670 banks were used in the study, which was divided into two process-dependent phases as the pre-crisis period between 2002-2006 and the crisis phase between 2007-2010. As a result of the study, a statistically significant negative relationship was found between GDP ratio and NPL.

In the study of Mileris (2012), a forecasting model on doubtful and non-performing loans was developed by considering the banking sector of 22 European Union member countries. According to the results, non-performing loans are related to many macroeconomic variables such as GDP, inflation, interest rates, money supply, industrial production index and current account balance. The model developed in the study provided 98.06% accuracy in predicting the percentage of doubtful and non-performing loans in banks.

Castro (2012) conducted a panel data analysis test for Ireland, Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal between 1997 and 2011. The study concludes that banking credit risk is significantly affected by the macroeconomic environment. It is observed that credit risk increases when GDP growth, stock price indices and house prices decrease and increase; unemployment rate, interest rate and credit growth increase; real exchange rate is positively affected; and there is a significant increase in credit risk during the recent financial crisis.

Kolapo et al. (2012) conducted a study on the quantitative impact of credit risk on bank performance of five commercial banks in Nigeria for the period 2000-2010. As a result of the study, the rate of return on assets (ROA) is negatively affected by non-performing loans ratio and loan loss provisions. The effect of non-performing loans is found to be greater than that of loan loss provisions.

Janvisloo, et al. (2013) constructed a structural VAR model for the period 1997-2012 to determine how macroeconomic shocks affect non-performing loans in the Malaysian economy. The model includes four variables (real GDP, inflation rate, interest rate and non-performing loan rate). The results of the impulse-response analysis show that non-performing loans increase in response to a positive interest rate shock and decrease in response to a positive inflation shock.

Curak et al. (2013), in their study on 69 banks in 10 countries in the Southeast European banking system, investigated the effects of macroeconomic data and a number of banking-related variables on non-performing loans using a panel data test. According to the study, low growth, high inflation and high interest rates in the economy positively affect non-performing loans and are also affected by variables such as credit risk, bank size, bank performance and solvency.

Yağcılar & Demir (2015) examined the determination of the factors affecting the non-performing loan ratios in the Turkish banking sector. In this context, they aimed to determine the macroeconomic and bank-level determinants of non-performing loan ratios, which are the main indicators of risk and performance in commercial banks. Panel data analysis was used in the study. According to the results of the study, while there are negative relationships between loan/deposit ratio, stock market listing, scale, liquidity and return on assets variables and non-performing loans, there are positive relationships between interest rates, growth and capital adequacy ratio and non-performing loans. On the other hand, interest rates applied to loans, inflation and net interest margin variables have no statistically significant effect on non-performing loans.

Anastasiou et al. (2016) examined the banking sector of European countries and analysed the factors affecting non-performing loans using panel data and VAR model. According to their research, non-performing loans increased after 2008 and were found to be under the influence of macroeconomic factors such as unemployment, growth and taxes.

Abdioğlu & Aytekin (2016) used panel data analysis in their study on determining the factors affecting the non-performing loan ratio. In their study, it is aimed to determine the factors affecting the non-performing loan ratios of deposit banks after the 2001 financial crisis. In this context, private capital domestic deposit banks, public capital deposit banks and foreign capital deposit banks operating in Turkey between 2002-2014 were analysed in detail. As a result of the study, it was determined that the non-performing loan ratio, capital adequacy, solvency and net interest margin ratio in the previous period had a negative effect on non-performing loans.

Banerjee & Murali (2017) investigated the effects of domestic macroeconomic variables and external factors on banks' asset quality in India. In the study, the VAR model method was estimated using quarterly data for the period 1997-2014. The VAR model includes 7 variables (non-performing loans, loan interest rate and deposits, net capital inflow, output gap, wholesale price index, real effective exchange rate). The impulse-response analysis reveals that non-performing loans are negatively affected by shocks to the real exchange rate, foreign capital inflows and output gap.

In their study, Mensah, et al. (2017) analysed the period covering the global crisis period (2007-2009) in the Ghanaian banking sector. In their analyses, they found that micro factors such as the previous year's NPL ratio, credit risk, bank size and loan growth as well as macro variables such as inflation, debt stock, growth and real interest rate have a statistically significant effect on NPLs.

In their study, Poyraz & Arlı (2019) examined the effect of foreign exchange volatility on non-performing loans through the case of Turkey. As a

result of the study using Granger causality test, a long-run relationship between USD and non-performing loans was observed and it was determined that USD affects non-performing loans. Gbp did not have a clear long-run relationship with NPLs, but Gbp was found to be the cause of NPLs. They concluded that Jpy has no long-run relationship with non-performing loans.

Sevinç (2021) investigated the effects of some selected macroeconomic factors on the NPL ratios of the Turkish Banking Sector for the periods between 2005-2019 using the ARDL Bound Test. As a result of the research, it was found that increases in inflation and economic growth have a negative effect on NPL ratios, while increases in exchange rates and unemployment factors have a positive effect on NPL ratios. Moreover, a bidirectional causality relationship was found between NPL ratios and unemployment rates.

Özel & Sayılgan (2021) conducted a study on the structure of non-performing loans in the Turkish banking sector and bank-specific macroeconomic determinants. As a result of the analysis covering the period between 2003-2019, the existence of a long-run cointegrated relationship between NPL ratios and macroeconomic and bank-specific factors was determined. According to the findings of the analysis, positive and statistically significant relationships were found between the NPL ratio and credit growth, exchange rate appreciation, consumer inflation, capital adequacy ratio and deposit/loan ratio variables. On the other hand, no significant relationship was found between industrial production index and NPL ratio.

In their study, Gül & Koy (2023) investigated the determination of macroeconomic indicators that can be associated with non-performing loan ratios (NPL), which is one of the leading indicators of bank assets, taking into account the effective role and position of banks in shaping the economy in Turkey. They used the Momentum Threshold Autoregressive Model (MTAR) method in the study. They concluded that there is a non-linear, asymmetric causality relationship between NPL ratios and inflation rates.

Sezal (2023) investigated the effect of Covid-19 on non-performing loans. In the study covering the pandemic period, time series analyses were used. Whether there is causality between variables, and if there is a causality relationship, determining the direction of causality is tested by Hatemi-j method in the form of binary analysis. According to the test results, a causal relationship was found between the number of cases and non-performing loan variables.

Varlık (2023) investigated the relationship between non-performing loans ratio and macroeconomic variables for the period 01/2003 -04/2019 in Turkey. Structural vector autoregressive model estimation was used in the study. According to the findings of the impulse response analysis, increases in loan growth and real GDP growth slow down the increase in the NPL ratio, while an increase in the loan interest rate accelerates the increase in the NPL ratio. An increase in the NPL ratio, on the other hand, is found to have a negative feedback effect on loan growth and economic growth.

Research Design and Methodology

This study utilizes time series analysis methods. In this context, it investigates the relationship between NPL and Euro and USD indices in Turkey. Time series analyses, which were previously used for economic research, have become increasingly important in financial studies.

Purpose of the study

The study aims to econometrically investigate the relationship between NPL and Euro and USD indices in Turkey and to determine whether there is a relationship between the monthly frequency data between 2003 and 2023.

Data set

The data set of the study consists of NPL and Euro and USD indices for the period 2003-2023. In terms of foreign currencies, the first two of the most widely circulated currencies in the world according to the December 2022 report of the "Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication" (SWIFT) were selected. The time series in question were accessed from BRSA and T.C.M.B Electronic Data Distribution System (EVDS). The logarithm of all variables used in the research was taken. In this way, measurement differences between the series were tried to be minimized.

In Table 1, it is determined that all three series have a normal distribution since the mean and median values in descriptive statistics are close to each other and the JB P-values show that the null hypothesis is not rejected.

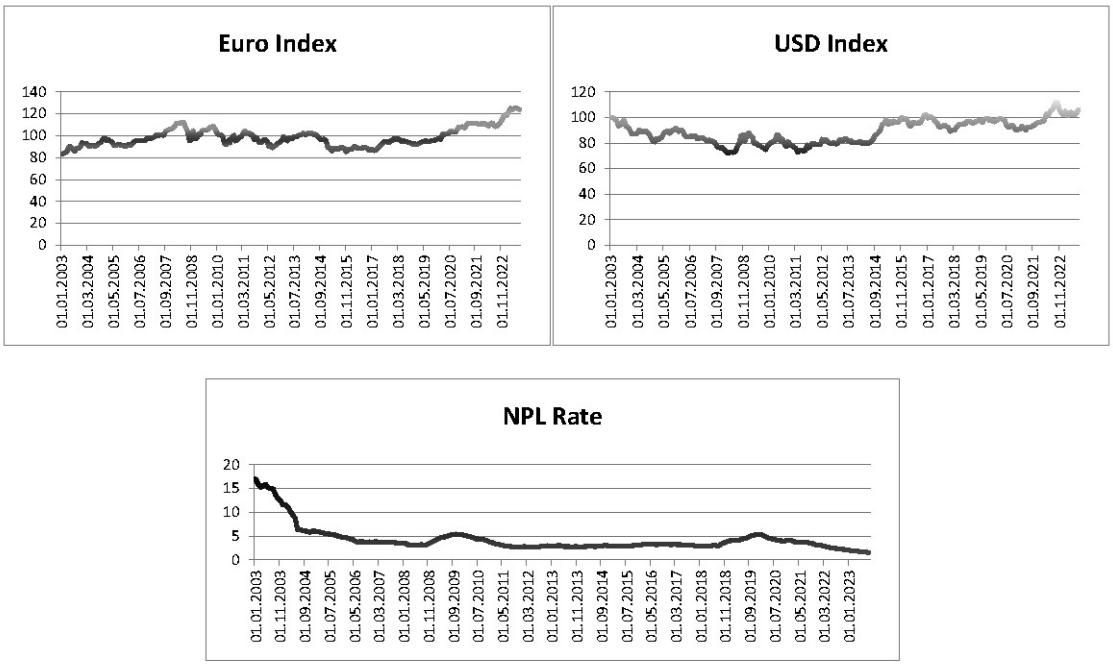

Figure 1 – Time series graphs

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics

	LOGNPL	LOGEUR	LOGUSD
Average	1.334.823	4.585.840	4.483.632
Median	1.220.830	4.568.195	4.492.561
Maximum	2.834.976	4.831.987	4.719.570
Minimum	0.425268	4.424.128	4.273.884
Standard deviation	0.433650	0.085214	0.100084
Distortion	1.454.188	0.675987	-0.067094
kurtosis	5.854.078	3.153.050	2.048.170
Jarque-Bera	1.722.708	1.920.679	9.586.367
Possibility	0.000000	0.000067	0.008286
Observations	249	249	249

Method

The study utilizes time series analysis to test the relationship between the Turkish banking system NPL variable and the Eur and USD indices. In order to determine the relationship between the variables, the stationarity of the variables should be determined first. Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron (PP) unit root tests are applied to the data. Since the series are stationary at different levels, ARDL (Autoregressive Distributed Lag Bound Test) test, one of the cointegration tests, was applied. The ARDL method, which helps to model the dynamic interactions between the current and past data of the dependent and independent variables, contributes to the understanding of the long-run relationships between variables. Afterwards, whether there is causality between the variables, and if there is a causality relationship, the determination of the direction of causality is mutually tested with the "Granger Causality" method. Analyses in the research were conducted with the help of the E-Views 9.0 program.

ADF and PP unit root tests

The Extended Dickey-Fuller unit root test is frequently used in research to determine whether the

series contains unit roots. This unit root test can be characterized as a different version of the ADF unit root test based on the AR(1) process. However, in time series, εt (error/residual terms) loses its clean series property if there is a higher order correlation in the series. To solve this problem, the ADF test utilizes the AR(p) process rather than the AR(1) process and includes "p" lagged difference terms in the equation (Dickey & Fuller, 1979). Thus, ADF equations without constant term and trend (none), with constant term (intercept) and with constant term and trend (intercept&trend) respectively:

$$\Delta y_t = \delta y_{t-1} + \sum_{i-1}^{p} \beta_i \, \Delta y_{t-i} + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

$$\Delta y_t = \mu + \delta y_{t-1} + \sum_{i-1}^{p} \beta_i \, \Delta y_{t-i} + \varepsilon_i \quad (2)$$

$$\Delta y_t = \mu + \beta t + \delta y_{t-1} + \sum_{i-1}^{p} \beta_i \, \Delta y_{t-i} + \varepsilon_i \quad (3)$$

is expressed as follows. In equations 1, 2, and 3, μ corresponds to the constant term, t to the trend, p to the number of lags, and εt to the error term series. For all three ADF equations, the null hypothesis is formulated in the same way and states that the series contains a unit root. Therefore, the null hypothesis states the existence of a non-stationary series (Gujarati, 2015, p.328). The hypotheses for the existence of a unit root for these models are as follows:

H_0: δ=0 (The series is non-stationary)
H_1: δ<0(φ1<1) (The series is stationary)

The ADF test is based on the basic assumptions that error terms are independent and constant variance. Moreover, the DF test does not provide adequate results in series with structural breaks. PP attempts to generalize the DF test by smoothing its assumptions about error terms (Demirel, 2015, p.28). In this transformation, the nonparametric method was utilized (İnce, 2015, p.30).

As in the ADF test, the PP test is applied in three different ways: without constant, with constant, and with constant and trend (Samut, 2016, p.40).

$$\Delta y_t = a y_{t-1} + x_t^1 \delta + \varepsilon_t \quad (4)$$

is of the form. In equation 4, a= ρ -1, "xt " is the set of deterministic components (constant term or constant term and trend) and "εt " is the set of error (residual) terms. In the PP test, the main and alternative hypotheses are formulated as "H_0: α = 0 and H_1: α < 0" and the main hypothesis states that the series contains a unit root (Çağlayan and Saçalı, 2006, p.125).

H_0: If δ = 0, there is a unit root.
H_1: If δ<0, there is no unit root.

Cointegration and ARDL bounds test

Cointegration means that linear combinations of multiple non-stationary time series are stationary and these series have an equilibrium relationship in the long run (Tarı, 2014, p.415). Although there are different cointegration tests developed in the literature such as Engle-Granger (1987), Johansen (1988) & Phillips-Ouliaris (1990), in order to apply these cointegration tests, the series of all variables must be stationary in their first differences, i.e. I(1). However, the ARDL bounds test approach eliminates this constraint and allows cointegration analysis in all combinations where the variables are I(0) and I(1) (Pesaran, Shin & Smith, 2001, pp.289-290). In other words, cointegration relationships between time series with different stationarity levels can be realized with the ARDL bounds test approach. In addition, the dependent variable must be I(1) in the ARDL bounds test approach.

The bounds test, which is based on the estimation of the unrestricted error correction model, is applied in two stages: the first one is to establish the long-run relationship between the variables and the second one is to determine the cointegration relationship between the variables. The ARDL Border Test equation with two variables to be performed in order to reveal the cointegration relationship is as follows:

$$\Delta Y_t = \beta_0 + \sum_{i=1}^{m} \beta_{1i} Y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=1}^{m} \beta_{2i} X_{t-i} + \beta_{3i} Y_{t-1} + \beta_4 X_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t \quad (5)$$

In the equation; is the dependent variable, Xt is the independent variable, is the error term, m is the optimum lag length and m is the minimum value of the information criteria. The hypotheses regarding the existence of cointegration in the ARDL bounds test model are as follows:

H_0: $\beta_3 = \beta_4 = 0$ (There is no cointegration)
H_1: $\exists \delta_i < 0, i = 3,4$ (There is cointegration).

In the ARDL bounds test approach, the long-run relationship coefficients of the variables are examined after the cointegration relationship for the variables is revealed. In addition, the existence of short-run deviations from the long-run relationship can also be examined with the help of the error correction model. The equation for the long-run relationship is as follows:

$$Y_t = \beta_0 + \sum_{i=1}^{m} \beta_{1i} Y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{n} \beta_{2i} X_{t-i} + \varepsilon_t \quad (6)$$

In the equation, Yt is the dependent variable, Xt is the independent variable, is the constant term, is the error term, and n and m are the optimal lag lengths.

Granger causality analysis

Granger causality means that the independent variable X in the regression has a causal relationship with the dependent variable Y. For this to happen, two basic conditions must be met. The first one is that the dependent variable X mediates the prediction of the independent variable Y. The second assumption is that Y will not be effective in predicting X. In causality tests, the direction of the tests is important, that is, it is important in determining whether the variables are dependent or independent. The direction of causality is important in understanding whether the relationships between two or more variables are unidirectional, bidirectional or no relationship at all (Granger, 1969, pp. 424-438; Kennedy, 2006, pp. 81-82; Gujarati, 2009, pp. 620-623). Granger causality test enables causality analysis between dependent and independent variables in the "short run".

$$y_t = a_1 + \sum_{i-1}^{n} \beta_i x_{t-i} + \sum_{j=1}^{m} Y_j\, y_{t-j} + e_{1t} \quad (7)$$
$$x_t = a_2 + \sum_{i-1}^{n} \theta_i x_{t-i} + \sum_{j=1}^{m} \delta_j\, y_{t-j} + e_{2t} \quad (8)$$

If hypothesis H_0 is rejected, it means that X has a Granger causality relationship with Y. In a Granger causality test, there can be both a direction from X to Y and a direction from Y to X. It is denoted as X↔Y. If both H_0 hypotheses are rejected, it is possible to say that there is a bidirectional causality between X and Y variables. In order to conduct a Granger causality test between X and Y series, the covariance of both variables should be stationary and stochastic. The hypotheses of the Granger causality test are as follows:

H_0: There is no causality between NPL ratios and Euro and USD indices.
H_1: There is a causal relationship between NPL ratios and Euro and USD indices.

Results and Discussion

In this section of the study, the results of the tests applied and the findings obtained in order to reveal the relationship between the Turkish banking system NPL dependent variable and Euro and USD indices are presented.

ADF and PP unit root test results

Before proceeding to cointegration analysis, it is necessary to check whether the series contain unit root, that is, whether they are stationary. For this purpose, ADF and PP tests were conducted. The purpose of these tests is to prevent spurious regression. The results of ADF and PP unit root tests are presented in Table 3 below.

According to the test results applied to check the stationarity of the series used in the research, it was determined that some variables were non-stationary, that is, they contained unit roots. The series were made stationary by taking the first differences of the variables containing unit root.

Table 2 – ADF and PP unit root test results

			ADF			PP		
			logEUR	***logNPL***	***logUSD***	***logEUR***	***logNPL***	***logUSD***
LEVEL	With Constant	t-Statistic	-1,4351	-2,7945	-1,5071	-1,4785	-2,7957	-1,6869
		Prob.	0,5648	0,0605	0,5285	0,5430	0,0603	0,4367
			-	*	-	-	*	-
	With Constant & Trend	t-Statistic	-1,7379	-3,0764	-2,9114	-1,7938	-2,8428	-3,0163
		Prob	0,7315	0,1143	0,1607	0,7051	0,1835	0,1298
			-	-	-	-	-	-
	Without Constant & Trend	t-Statistic	1,1789	-2,2962	0,1401	1,2313	-2,8195	0,1287
		Prob	0,9387	0,0212	0,7258	0,9443	0,0049	0,7223
			-	**	-	-	***	-
FIRST DIFFERENCE	With Constant	t-Statistic	-16,1836	-4,8739	-15,4074	-16,1947	-11,7367	-15,4354
		Prob	0,0000	0,0001	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000
			***	***	***	***	***	***
	With Constant & Trend	t-Statistic	-16,1617	-4,8935	-15,5139	-16,1728	-11,7726	-15,5318
		Prob	0,0000	0,0004	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000
			***	***	***	***	***	***
	Without Constant & Trend	t-Statistic	-16,1217	-4,6206	-15,4370	-16,1181	-11,3737	-15,4639
		Prob	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000	0,0000
			***	***	***	***	***	***
Significance Level	1%	-3,4566						
	5%	-2,8729						
	10%	-2,5729						

Note: (*) denotes rejection of the null hypothesis that there is a unit root in the series at 10%, (**) 5% and (***) 1% significance level.

ARDL bounds test results

In time series analysis, whether the variables are related to each other in the long run is investigated by cointegration tests. Normally, for these tests to be applied, the series should be stationary. However, if non-stationary series form a stationary process when they come together, a long-run relationship between variables can be determined. In order to conduct the ARDL test, the maximum lag lengths of the data must first be determined. The results of this test are as follows:

As a result of setting the maximum lag length as 4, the results of the ARDL Border Test applied to the NPL and Euro and USD indices series are as follows:

Table 3 – Maximum lag lengths

Lag	LogL	LR	FPE	AIC	SC	HQ
0	4.013.197	NA	7.36e-06	-3.305558	-3.262178	-3.288081
1	1.782.662	2.716.831	8.34e-11	-14.69429	-14.52077*	-14.62438
2	1.798.983	3.169.317	7.84e-11	-14.75504	-14.45139	-14.63271*
3	1.807.355	1.604.983	7.89e-11	-14.74983	-1.431604	-14.57507
4	1.820.720	2.528.902	**7.61e-11***	**-14.78606***	-14.22213	-14.55887
5	1.823.589	5.356.957	8.01e-11	-14.73518	-14.04111	-14.45555
6	1.826.585	5.518.482	8.42e-11	-14.68535	-13.86115	-14.35329
7	1.835.170	1.560.267	8.45e-11	-14.68191	-13.72756	-14.29742
8	1.845.992	19.39883*	8.33e-11	-14.69703	-13.61255	-14.26011

Note * denotes the lowest critical value indicating the maximum lag length.

Table 4 – ARDL bounds test results

Model	K	M	F Statistics	Significance Level	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
				1%	4,13	5,00
ARDL (4,0,0)	4	12	4,085288	5%	3,10	3,87
				10%	2,63	3,35

Note: Critical values for lower and upper bounds are taken from Table CI(ii) in (Pesaran et al., 2001, p.300).

As can be seen in Table 5, the F-statistic value is above the upper bound at the 5% level. According to this result, there is a cointegration relationship between the NPL ratios of the Turkish banking system and the Euro and USD indices. Since there is a cointegration relationship between the series, it is appropriate to use the ARDL model for long and short-run estimations.

Table 5 – ARDL (4,0,0) model long-run coefficient estimates

Variables	Coefficient	Std. Deviation	t-Statistic	Probability
LOGEUR	-2.931635	1.281126	-2.288326	0.0230
LOGUSD	-1.057848	1.054507	-1.003168	0.3168
C	19.317662	7.875567	2.452860	0.0149

As can be seen in Table 6, only the Euro data is statistically significant in the long run. The data is significant at the 5% level. The coefficient of the Euro index is -2.93. Accordingly, a 1% increase in the Euro index results in a 2.93% decrease in NPL ratios. Therefore, there is a negative and strong long-run relationship between the Euro index and NPL ratios.

Table 6 – ARDL error correction model

Değişkenler	Coefficient	Std. Deviation	t-Statistic	Probability
D(LOGEUR)	0.021110	0.194197	0.108705	0.9135
D(LOGUSD)	-0.071020	0.179567	-0.395507	0.6928
CointEq(-1)	-0.021661	0.005323	-4.069.413	0.0001

The existence of a short-run relationship between variables should be determined by the coefficient of the error correction model (ECT). For this model to work, the ECT coefficient must be between 0 and -1 and statistically significant. Table 7 results show the short-run data and error correction model for the ARDL (4,0,0) model." When the short-run estimation results are analyzed, the coefficient of the error correction term "Y1" corresponds to "CointEq(-1)" in this table. This coefficient is expected to be negative (-) and the probability value is expected to be less than 0.05. As can be seen in Table 7, the coefficient of the error correction term is -0.021661 and the probability value is 0.0001. The fact that the coefficient of the error correction term is negative and statistically significant provides additional evidence that the variables are cointegrated. A probability value less than 0.05 indicates that this coefficient is significant, while a negative (-) coefficient means that an imbalance in the model will be corrected. The data show that the Euro and USD index values do not affect NPL ratios in the short run.

Granger causality analysis results

The direction and lag structure of the causality relationship between variables are analyzed by Granger Causality Test. This test aims to determine whether there is a unidirectional or bidirectional relationship between the variables in the model. While determining the causality between the series, the lag length (k) of the series is found according to the "Akaike Information Criterion (AIC)" and the maximum degree of integration (dmax) is found according to the unit root tests. Then, "Wald Statistic" was applied to the lagged values of this model (k) and it was determined whether there is a causality relationship between the variables.

Table 7 – Granger causality test results

Independent Variable	*Dependent Variable*	*K*	*F-Statistic*	*Prob.*	*Relationship*
LOGEUR	LOGNPL	4	412.607	0.0173	**There is a relationship**
LOGNPL	LOGEUR	4	0.16163	0.8509	No relationship
LOGUSD	LOGNPL	4	0.16351	0.8493	No relationship
LOGNPL	LOGUSD	4	204.017	0.1322	No relationship
LOGUSD	LOGEUR	4	362.557	0.0281	**There is a relationship**
LOGEUR	LOGUSD	4	268.485	0.0703	No relationship

Table 7 shows the results of the Granger causality test. According to the results of this test, there is a unidirectional Granger causality relationship from NPL ratios to the Euro index. A similar unidirectional causality relationship was also found from the Euro index to the USD index. For the relationship between these variables, the H_0 hypothesis is rejected while the H_1 hypothesis is accepted. Since no relationship was found for other comparisons, hypothesis H0 was accepted while hypothesis H_1 was rejected.

Conclusion

The banking sector non-performing loan ratio is considered as an indicator of financial stability. An increase in this ratio may lead to a liquidity shortage or even a crisis in the banking sector as it causes a decline in banks' profits and an increase in the provisions they set aside. Therefore, the question of what factors determine the NPL ratio gains importance. In addition to factors specific to the banking sector, macroeconomic factors can significantly change the NPL ratio by affecting the debt repayment capacity of borrowers. On the other hand, macroeconomic variables can also be affected by the NPL ratio. An increase in the NPL ratio may create negative feedback on domestic credits and economic growth.

Although the Turkish banking sector is positively differentiated from banks in major world economies in terms of asset management quality, it is important to closely monitor some critical parameters in order to maintain the success of our banking sector in asset quality. International studies reveal that there are negative or positive correlations between some bank-specific variables and certain macroeconomic indicators and NPL ratios. In this context, the determination of the relationship between these variables and their direction may not only contribute to the inferences to accurately predict NPL ratios at controllable levels, but also shed light on the policies to be implemented by bank managers and legislative authorities to maintain asset quality in the sector.

In this study, the volatility in foreign exchange, which is thought to have an impact on non-performing loans, is analyzed. In this context, non-performing loans from the banking sector balance sheet on a monthly basis for the period 01/2003-09/2023 and Euro and USD indices on a monthly basis for the same period were the subject of the study. Time series analysis methods were used in the study. Firstly, ADF and PP tests are used to examine whether there is a unit root or not, and then cointegration and causality relationship between the series are tried to be revealed. Based on this, ARDL bounds test and Granger causality tests were conducted. According to the results, there is a cointegration relationship between the NPL ratios of the Turkish banking system and the Euro and USD indices. In the long run, a 1% increase in the Euro index is associated with a 2.93% decrease in NPL ratios.

In other words, there is a negative and strong long-run relationship between the Euro index and NPL ratios. There is no relationship between the USD index and NPL ratios. On the other hand, Euro and USD index values do not affect NPL ratios in the short run. According to the Granger causality test results, there is a unidirectional Granger causality relationship from NPL ratios to the Euro index. A similar unidirectional causality relationship was also found from the Euro index to the USD index.

Preventing loans from becoming problematic is as important as the management of problematic loans. For this purpose, banks should have an effective credit risk management. Regulations for the banking sector should aim to mitigate the effects of exchange rate fluctuations on the banking sector on the one hand and the feedback effects of credit risk on the economy on the other. In this respect, in order to reduce the vulnerability of the banking sector in the face of sudden shocks in exchange rates, priority should be given to surveillance and supervision to ensure the maintenance of credit quality. Macroprudential regulations should aim at preventing excessive risk-taking behaviour of banks and maintaining high credit standards. Moreover, FX-denominated loans to unprotected borrowers should be prevented and the sensitivity of bank balance sheets to exchange rate fluctuations should be reduced.

In future studies, the panel data analysis technique can be used to extend the study by using bank-based and additional currencies (such as Sterling, Swiss Franc, Japanese Yen). On the other hand, a different study can be conducted by analyzing bank-specific endogenous and exogenous factors affecting non-performing loans.

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE NIGERIAN ECONOMY

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Abstract. Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a key driver of economic growth, wealth creation, and improved living standards in modern economies. However, in Nigeria, its potential to drive development has not been fully realized. This study investigates the impact of entrepreneurship on economic development in Nigeria using annual time series data from 1992 to 2022 and employing ARDL techniques. Self-employment rates were used as a proxy for entrepreneurship, while the contribution of SMEs, private sector credit, and inflation rate were also considered in the model, with the human development index representing economic development. The findings suggest that while the short-term impact of self-employment rates on economic development is positive yet insignificant, its long-term impact is significant. Similarly, the contributions of SMEs and private sector credit are positive but insignificant in the long run, while the inflation rate shows an inverse relationship. These results underscore the need for governments and monetary authorities to formulate and implement effective economic policies that promote entrepreneurship, taking into account macroeconomic variables. Financial institutions, particularly deposit money banks, should also support entrepreneurship by providing start-up funds at reduced or concessionary rates.
Key words: Entrepreneurship, SMEs, economic development, Self-Employment Rate, economic growth.

Introduction

In today's globalized and rapidly evolving economies, characterized by technological advancements, corporate restructuring, and outsourcing practices, entrepreneurship is a crucial and indispensable element. Its importance lies in its contribution to economic growth and development, serving as a catalyst for sustainable long-term growth, wealth creation, job opportunities, and the overall economic progress of many nations (Juliana et al., 2021). Asogwa and Arinze (2017) emphasize that entrepreneurship has become a focal point for governments, policymakers, and researchers in the field of finance, both in developed and developing countries, due to its significant impact on the economy.

Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying or developing a novel idea with the aim of generating profit. It plays a vital role in driving economic development by introducing and implementing changes in business structures within society. These changes typically result in increased productivity, leading to greater wealth creation for all involved. According to Omoruyi et al. (2017), the drive for financial independence and the desire to be self-employed motivate individuals to pursue entrepreneurship, transforming their passions into profitable business ventures. An entrepreneur is someone who identifies a unique opportunity, carefully assesses the associated risks and rewards, and utilizes available resources to create economic value, such as generating profits.

Conversely, economic development occurs when a country undergoes a prolonged and consistent increase in the production of goods and services, accompanied by positive changes in its social, economic, and political systems. This is evidenced by a continual rise in real income per capita while maintaining minimal levels of poverty (Uma et al., 2015). According to Chigbu (2006), economic development is characterized by equitable income distribution, improved health outcomes, and sustainable environmental practices. Therefore, for developing nations like Nigeria to achieve sustainable economic development, the significance of entrepreneurship cannot be overlooked. In today's dynamic economic landscape, characterized by rapid change, individuals with entrepreneurial skills are essential for fostering creative thinking that can

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drive economic growth and development. Hence, entrepreneurship is a crucial factor in explaining and predicting the economic advancement and development of a nation.

Entrepreneurship is considered a crucial element in modern economies, contributing to wealth creation, enhancing living standards, and playing a vital role in economic development. However, despite its recognized importance, its impact on Nigeria's economy in achieving the desired development goals has not been fully realized. This may be attributed to ongoing uncertainties stemming from political unrest, social disruptions, and incidents of kidnapping in the country. Furthermore, various government and non-governmental programs aimed at supporting enterprises at various levels have not yielded the expected results (Juliana et al., 2021).

Furthermore, various studies such as Faajir (2019), Omoruyi et al. (2017), Uma et al. (2015), Dau and Cuervo-Cazurra (2014), Okechukwu and Nwekwo (2020), Olaniyan and Ayangbekun (2017), among others, have explored the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development. These studies have yielded conflicting results, with some indicating a positive relationship (Juliana et al., 2021; Faajir, 2019; Omoruyi et al., 2017; Uma et al., 2015; Dau and Cuervo-Cazurra, 2014), others suggesting a negative relationship (Okoye and Nwisienyi, 2019). The divergence in findings may be attributed to each country's specific institutional factors, such as economic, political, human capital development, or environmental factors, which influence entrepreneurial initiatives and, consequently, economic development. Given these conflicting results, there is a need to clarify the true nature of the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development, with a specific focus on Ekiti State, Nigeria.

The importance of this study cannot be overstated, as it will help entrepreneurs understand the vital role of entrepreneurship skills in the economic development of the nation. This includes the creation of employment opportunities, improvement of living standards, generation of economic and social value, and the overall development it can bring to the state and the economy as a whole.

Literature review

Economic Development

The terms "economic growth" and "economic development" have been widely discussed in literature, often used interchangeably without considering their distinct meanings. It is possible for a nation to experience economic growth without achieving corresponding economic development. This raises questions about why researchers and policymakers emphasize these two concepts. Economic growth is expected to facilitate economic development. Looking closely at the concept of economic growth, it can be described as the result of the quality of output determined by the quality of input. On the other hand, economic development involves a continuous enhancement of the economic well-being and quality of life of people in a specific country, aligned with targeted goals and objectives (Omoruyi et al., 2017; Uma et al., 2015). Economic development is characterized by improvements in life expectancy and overall economic well-being over time. While previous studies often used gross domestic product (GDP) to measure economic development, a more comprehensive measure, the human development index, has been employed as a proxy for economic development.

Entrepreneurship

Omoruyi et al. (2017) defined entrepreneurship as the capacity of an individual or group within an organization to identify new opportunities in society, aiming to gain economic benefits such as profit, leading to success for the initiator or the organization. Dau and Cuervo-Cazurra (2014) described entrepreneurship as the creation of new businesses involving coordinated efforts of individuals or groups in society to generate new economic value. Uma et al. (2015) characterized entrepreneurship as the application of resourcefulness to adapt to a business situation and transform it into a new endeavor. This can involve diversifying existing businesses into new areas to increase profit potential.

Various measures of entrepreneurship have been developed in the literature, including the World Bank entrepreneurship index, total entrepreneurship activities, self-employment rate, and the global innovation index. However, due to data limitations, this study adopts the self-employment rate, as utilized by Okoye and Nwisienyi (2019). According to Okoye and Nwisienyi (2019), a self-employed individual works independently or with partners. Okechukwu and Nwekwo (2020) define self-employment as a situation where the owner's income depends on the profit generated by the enterprise.

Empirical Review

Asogwa and Arinze (2017) conducted a study in Enugu State to explore how entrepreneurship has

contributed to economic growth. They distributed a questionnaire to respondents and analyzed the data using Chi-square. The study concluded that entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in Nigeria's economic growth and recommended restructuring macro credit facilities for businesses in the country.

Faajir (2019) assessed the impact of entrepreneurship on Nigeria's economy by surveying SME owners in Benue State. Using a structured questionnaire, the study employed descriptive and simple regression analysis, finding a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship and the Nigerian economy.

Juliana et al. (2021) conducted a study on innovative and creative ideas for developing entrepreneurship in Nigeria. They used Ordinary Least Squares and ANOVA tests to test their hypotheses. The study found that technological advancement and creative thinking are incentives for entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

Olaniyan and Ayangbekun (2017) studied how peace and progress can be sustained through entrepreneurship to aid economic development in Nigeria. They conducted a content analysis of past studies and found that corruption, kidnapping, and militant activities in Nigeria have reduced the effectiveness of enterprises. They suggest empowering youths to reduce these social vices and enhance economic development.

Okechukwu and Nwekwo (2020) investigated how entrepreneurial development could address security challenges for unemployed youth in Nigeria. The study used descriptive statistics such as mean, median, standard deviation, frequency counts, and percentages. Additionally, Z-test was employed to test the formulated hypotheses. The findings indicated that security challenges in Nigeria are exacerbated by high unemployment rates and widespread corruption among leaders.

Okoye and Nwisienyi (2019) investigated the role of entrepreneurship in improving economic growth in Nigeria. Analyzing data from 1996 to 2018 using ARDL techniques, they found no positive relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth. However, they observed a significant direct impact of private sector credit on Nigeria's economic growth.

Omoruyi et al. (2017) investigated whether entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth in Africa. They conducted a content analysis of past studies and employed descriptive research. The study found that entrepreneurship positively influences economic growth by creating employment, which in turn reduces poverty in African nations. The findings suggest the need to include vocational training and entrepreneurship in the educational system.

Onileowo and Anifowose (2020) studied entrepreneurship as a fundamental element for economic growth in Nigeria. Drawing on previous research, the study revealed that entrepreneurship is a key instrument for achieving sustainable economic development in Nigeria. Furthermore, it demonstrated that through the job creation ability of entrepreneurs, economic growth can be realized.

Vatavu et al. (2021) studied entrepreneurship in relation to economic development, focusing on government-initiated policies in eight developed countries from 2001 to 2018. They used correlation and OLS estimation techniques and found that social norms, early-stage entrepreneurial involvement, cultural values, and infrastructure positively impact economic development in these countries. However, anxiety about business failure negatively influences economic development.

Methodology

The analysis of the impact of entrepreneurship on economic development in Nigeria utilized annual data spanning from 1992 to 2022. Data for the study were sourced from the CBN bulletin and the World Development Indicator. Given the nature of the data as a time series, a unit root test was conducted initially to determine the series' stationarity. The results of the test guided the application of Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) techniques.

Model Specification

The model employed in this study is based on the model used by Okoye and Nwisienyi (2019) to assess how entrepreneurship contributes to improving economic growth in Nigeria. Okoye and Nwisienyi (2019) used gross domestic product (GDP) as the dependent variable, with the self-employment rate, credit to the private sector, and inflation rate as independent variables. In contrast, this study replaces GDP with the human development index (HDI) to not only reflect the aggregate output but also account for the economic well-being of the population over time. Furthermore, considering that many entrepreneurs establish small and medium enterprises, this study deems it necessary to include the proportion of contributions from these enterprises. As a result, the model for this study is formulated as follows:

$$ECD = f(SER, CSME, CPS, INFR) \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots. \quad 1$$

In a detailed form, equation 1 can be expressed as:

$$ECD = f(\beta_0 + \beta_1 SER + \beta_2 CSME + \beta_3 CPS + \beta_4 INFR + \mu) \ldots \quad 2$$

Where:

ECD	=	Economic Development
SER	=	Self-employment Rate
CSME	=	Contribution of Small and Medium Enterprises in the economy
CPS	=	Credit to Private Sector
INFR	=	Inflation Rate
μ	=	Error term
$\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and β_4	=	Coefficients of the Estimates

Table 1 – Variables Expected Relationship in line with literature

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables (Macroeconomic Variables)	Expected Relationship
Economic Development (ECD)	Self-employment Rate (SER)	+
	Contribution of SMEs in the economy (CSME)	+
	Credit to the Private Sector (CPS)	+
	Inflation Rate (INFR)	-

Source: Author's Computation

Results and Discussion

Results of Analysis

Table 2 – Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF) Unit Root Test

Variables	ADF			Integration Order
	Critical values	t- stat.	Prob.	
ECD	-2.967767	-6.752711	0.0000	I(1)
SER	-2.967767	-5.072936	0.0003	I(1)
CSME	-2.967767	-4.897183	0.0005	I(1)
CPS	-2.967767	-5.011934	0.0003	I(1)
INFR	-2.967767	-3.115867	0.0364	I(0)

Source: Author's Computation, 2024

The results of the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) unit root test are presented in Table 2. The test indicated that economic development, the self-employment rate, the contribution of SMEs in the economy, and credit to the private sector exhibited a unit root, suggesting they are integrated of order one (I(1)), while the inflation rate showed no presence of a unit root. However, series such as ECD, SER, CSME, and CPS, which were not stationary, became stationary after being differenced once. Given the mixed integration levels, the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) approach was employed. To determine the appropriate lag length for the ARDL model, a Vector Autoregression (VAR) lag length selection was conducted, with the results suggesting a lag order of one, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Lag Selection for ARDL Model

Lag	LogL	LR	FPE	AIC	SC	HQ
0	-33.48469	NA	9.78e-06	2.654117	2.889857	2.727948
1	84.58180	187.2779*	1.64e-08*	-3.764262*	-2.349818*	-3.321276*
2	100.5111	19.77425	3.64e-08	-3.138693	-0.545546	-2.326552

Sources: Authors' Computation, (2024)

Test for Co-integration

Table 4 – ECD Unrestricted Model

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.*
C	-1439.833	447.7992	-3.215354	0.0040
ECD(-1)	0.401550	0.139044	2.887930	0.0085
SER	-25.88968	102.5066	-0.252566	0.8029
SER(-1)	344.5111	102.9173	3.347454	0.0029
CSME	0.513039	2.850179	0.180003	0.8588
CPS	3.347285	3.407476	0.982336	0.3366
INFR	-0.428956	1.132168	-0.378880	0.7084
INFR(-1)	2.058009	1.192475	1.725831	0.0984

Source: Author's Computation, (2024)

R^2 = 0.712204;
Adjusted = 0.620633;
F-stat. = 7.777586;
Prob. (F-stat.) = 0.000091

This test preceded the ARDL bound test which provides insight as to whether long-run interconnection among variables is upheld.

The bound test for the impact of entrepreneurship on economic development is presented in Table 5. The results indicate that there is a long-run relationship among the variables, as the F-statistic value of 4.320992 exceeds the upper bound threshold of 3.49. This validates the rejection of the null hypothesis, which suggests no long-run relationship.

Table 5 – ECD Bound Test (Co-integration Approach)

F- Statistic		4.320992
Significance	**I0 Bound**	**I1 Bound**
5%	2.56	3.49

Source: Authors' Computation, (2024)

Table 6 – ARDL Short and Long-run result for ECD Model

Variables	Coefficient	Prob.
LR C	24.936970	0.0100**
SER	53.411079	0.0099**
CSME	0.857280	0.8571

Table continuation

Variables	Coefficient	Prob.
CPS	5.593258	0.3680
INFR	-2.722121	0.1846
SR D(SER)	11.391285	0.8836
D(CSME)	-2.142712	0.3410
D(CPS)	6.539246	0.0209**
D(INFR)	-0.808839	0.3949
CointEq(-1)	-0.617039	0.0000***

Source: Author's Computation, (2024)
***, denotes 1% level of significant and ** means 5%.

Table 6 reveals the short and long-term relationships among the variables used to analyze the impact of entrepreneurship on economic development. The Error Correction Model (ECM) coefficient of -0.617039 with a p-value of 0.0000 indicates a moderate deviation from the short to the long run, suggesting that about 62% of correction occurs before reaching the long-run equilibrium.

Regarding the parameter coefficients, the self-employment rate shows an insignificant direct impact in the short run but becomes significant in the long run, with a coefficient of 53.411079 units. This suggests that a 1% increase in the self-employment rate corresponds to a 53.4% rise in economic development. The contribution of SMEs has an insignificant negative impact in the short run but has a positive impact in the long run, with a coefficient of 0.857280 units, indicating that a unit increase in SME contribution results in an 86% increase in the long run.

Similarly, private sector credit has a significant direct impact on economic development in the short run but is not significant in the long run, though it still has a direct impact of 5.593258 units. This implies that a 1% increase in credit to the private sector leads to a corresponding 5.6% increase in economic development.

Lastly, the inflation rate is negatively related to economic growth in both the short and long run. This suggests that a unit increase in the inflation rate results in a corresponding decrease of 2.7% in economic development in the long run.

Diagnostic Tests

Table 7 – ARDL Diagnostic Estimations

Normality Test		
Stat.	Values	Prob.
Jarque-Bera	0.606941	0.738252
LM Correlation Test		
Stat.	Values	Prob.
Obs*R^2	0.3657	0.2380
Heteroskedasticity Test		
Stat.	Values	Prob.
Obs* R^2	2.557973	0.9227

Source: Author's Computation, (2024)

Table 7 illustrates the model's robustness outcome. It revealed the normality of the residual, the absence of an LM correlation problem, and the homoskedasticity of the residual P-value of all tests exceeding 5%.

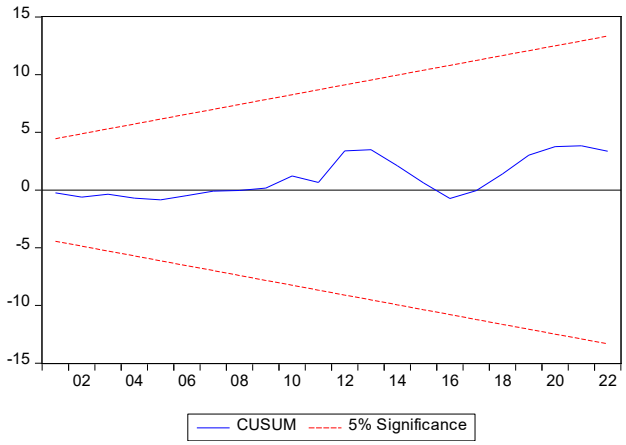

Figure 1 – Cumulative Sum (CUSUM) Stability Test

The Cumulative Sum (CUSUM) stability test was conducted to assess the suitability of the entrepreneurship and economic growth model. The plotted CUSUM graph falls within the 5% significance level, indicating that the coefficients of the estimated model are accepted.

Results and Discussion

To investigate the impact of entrepreneurship on economic development in Nigeria, researchers used annual data from the CBN bulletin and the World Development Indicator. The analysis revealed a long-run relationship among the variables, and the ARDL results showed that self-employment rates have a direct and significant impact on economic development in the long run. This finding is consistent with the findings of several other studies. It suggests that for Nigeria to achieve economic development, entrepreneurship must be a cornerstone of its economy, potentially reducing reliance on imported goods.

However, some studies have found a lack of positive relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth in Nigeria, attributing this to poor support from the government and financial institutions. Additionally, while SMEs and credit to the private sector have a positive impact, it is not statistically significant. This indicates the level of support provided by deposit money banks to SMEs and private businesses in the country.

Contrary to some studies, it was also found that inflation rates negatively affect economic development in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study on entrepreneurship and economic development in Nigeria analyzed annual time series data from 1992 to 2022 using ARDL techniques. It found a long-run relationship among the variables. In the short run, the self-employment rate was positive but not significant, while its impact on economic development was significant in the long run. Similarly, the contribution of SMEs and credit to the private sector was positive but not significant in the long run, and inflation rate was inversely related to economic development.

The findings suggest that the government, in collaboration with monetary authorities, should develop and implement effective economic policies that promote entrepreneurship, taking into account macroeconomic variables. It is also crucial for financial institutions, especially deposit money banks, to support entrepreneurship by providing startup funds at reduced or concessionary rates.

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