

ASRF Conference Abstracts

2023 ASRF Abstracts

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Sabella Ogbobode Abidde 1

The Politicization, Condemnation, and Criminalization of Homosexuality in Africa

Within the Hausa ethnic group of Northern Nigeria is a documented historical society known as the *yan daudu* (loosely translated to mean homosexuality or transvestite). And among the Yoruba, *Adofuro* is the archaic word for homosexuals or someone who engages in anal sex. Indeed, there is historical and anthropological evidence to support the fact that homosexuality is not foreign to African society. Stephen Murray and Will Roscoe, for instance, provided ample evidence to show that same-gender attraction has been a “consistent and logical feature of African societies and belief systems.” Some of the groups cited as having localized same-gender attractions included the Zande people (Central Africa); the Maale people (Southern Ethiopia); the Ovimbundu (Angola); the Namu of Southeastern Africa; and the Nykakyusa group. Much of the politicization and criminalization of homosexuality on the continent is, to some degree, premised on the belief that it is a “white man’s disease” and is likely to have a detrimental effect on the African landscape and psychology. But this inference is not supported by data or historicity. This paper traces indigeneity and the historical antecedence of homosexuality and explains why the practice is being criminalized and politicized in parts of the continent. Leading the debate against gay people and homosexuality communities are three groups who have found commonality in a common cause: religious leaders; politicians; and the supposed guardians and paragons of morality. The primary purpose of this paper, therefore, is to examine the ramifications of the politicization, condemnation, and criminalization of homosexuality in select African countries – principally in Nigeria and Uganda.

Sabella Ogbobode Abidde 2

Tenure Elongation: A Re-Emerging Trend in African Politics

Tenure elongation sometimes referred to as *Sit Tight Syndrome* is a political and legal tactic whereby a sitting president, colluding with some members of the three branches of government, manipulates the electoral laws, to enable him to serve beyond the set term limit. Within the African context, many of the offending leaders ended up being *President-for-Life*. This practice usually ends if there is a coup; in-office death; or a combination of internal and external factors force the president to hold elections. But, as African countries began to embrace Western-styled democracy, tenure elongation began to fizzle. In more recent times, however, this practice is re-emerging. In 2006, for instance, President Olusegun Obasanjo’s attempt at tenure elongation was foiled by a section of the Nigerian Parliament. The attempt by President Yahya Jammeh (The Gambia) to effectuate tenure elongation in 2016/2017 was thwarted by regional and international actors. Ironically, this phenomenon seems to be at play in an otherwise orderly Senegal (in 2023). This rematerializing practice has the potential to void many of the gains made by emerging democracies; and unless the perpetrators are made to bear the cost of their illegality, it is likely to overshadow many of the democratic gains of the last three decades. This, after all, is a continent where the abuse and misuse of state power contributed to the spate of upheavals, military coups,

secessionist fervor, and wars that were rampant for many years. What this chapter does, then, is to examine the detrimental effects of tenure elongation on politics, political practices, and good governance across the continent.

Adenike Olufemi Adegoke

Media Coverage of Nigerian Women in Politics: Between Underrepresentation and Misrepresentation

The media play a significant role in shaping individuals' views and beliefs or skewing individuals' opinions on issues due to being provided with a particular narrative. The media's underrepresentation and misrepresentation of women in politics have been a recurring pattern since the advent of democratic governance in Nigeria's fourth republic which started in 1999. Historically, women have not always been at the back seat of decision-making in Nigeria. Indeed, in several instances, women were appointed as substantive rulers and regents at various times in different Nigerian societies before the advent of colonial rule. However, studies on media portrayal of Nigerian women in politics show that there is a general bias against them; not only are women underrepresented, they are also negatively portrayed. This shows that women not only occupy limited space in the media coverage but are also marginalized in political news despite advocacy for gender equality. Several factors have been identified as reasons for this phenomenon, among which are patriarchy, cultural and religious barriers, authoritarianism, military rule, and civil unrest, among others. This study employs a qualitative case study approach and Agenda-setting Theory to examine how the patterns of underrepresentation and misrepresentation were evident in media coverage of women candidates during Nigeria's 2023 general elections. Textual analysis of selected news reports shows that the Nigerian media set the agenda in such a way that women in politics are underrepresented and misrepresented, which creates a false image of these women in politics that eventually leaves them in a disadvantageous position during electioneering.

Abiodun Yetunde Agboola

Informal Sector Unions and Impact on Peaceful Conduct of Elections in Nigeria

This paper looks at the influence of the informal sector on election outcomes and the consequence for peaceful conduct of electoral processes in Nigeria, with particular focus on the road transport union. Elections in Nigeria have largely been defined by a culture of violence right from the emergence of the nation as a sovereign state. This is especially so in the south-west region of Nigeria where the political elite in the region have strong political relationships with the informal sector associations of the region. These ties have greatly enabled some of these union bodies to become stakeholders in the political decision making process of the states where they are active. The process of institutionalizing these bodies gives them such powers as to levy taxes on workers within the informal sector. The amount of political influence wielded by these groups has greatly increased over time, and has made violence become a veritable tool in socio-political relations within the region. Among such unions that exist, the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) remain the most politicized and violent and as a result constitute one of the most influential bodies among the informal sector unions in this regard. The paper reveals the level of political influence associated with National Union of Road Transport Workers is such that their activities has been informally institutionalized into the socio-political structure of states within the southwest region.

Ana Alakija (Ana Maria Alakija Wadley)

Afro-Brazilian Women and Memories of Displacement

This paper points to gender intersectionality in the oral history of Afro-Brazilian families through links between the past diasporic processes with the present. The paper examines micro-stories of women from multi-generational Afro-Brazilian families that emerged in the Brazilian state of Bahia towards the end of the 19th Century and could trace their African ancestry. Exploring an Afro-global perspective, the paper discusses the diasporan experiences of these women as embodied in their families' history that date back to ancient Yoruba family clans of the Old Oyo Empire, before 1800, in pre-colonial Western Africa present-day Nigeria. During my investigation, interviews were conducted with members of these families from third, fourth, and fifth-generation offspring in Brazil, Nigeria, and other parts of the world, such as the United Kingdom, to where some have moved and are now residing. The accounts of these new generations in the diaspora and the mainland point to a matriarchal resilience in the past that continues in the present as they deal with the challenge of belonging in one national context while navigating the other through their diasporic identities and ancestral connections across the Atlantic. The tension of being at "home" and "away from home" includes the experience of living with memories of their ancestries as passed down through oral histories to preserve their inheritances despite cultural disruptions caused by living in the Diaspora and the newly established environment that has been shaped by colonialism and even post-colonialism.

Oluwafunmilayo (Funmi) Bode Alakija

Revalorization of "Africa": Identification and Diasporic Identity Construction of a Second Generation Nigerian Diaspora in "Little Lagos," London

This paper discusses the role of global media through the popularity of Afrobeats in the revalorization of "Africa" by second generation Nigerian immigrants in "Little Lagos," London. The paper shows how these born-abroad Nigerians articulate diasporic identifications with their country of heritage in the British mainstream, where their everyday diasporic experience is enacted. The argument is that Afrobeats as a genre has enabled the performance of identity by these born-abroad Nigerians in such a way that living "with difference" is easy as they proudly embrace their Nigerian identity as their coping strategy with the challenges of immigrant life. In this context, through the affordances of digital technologies and the advent of social media, music is more readily available outside and beyond the shores of the country. Thus, digitalization technologies and diasporic media within the larger context of global trends are aiding cultural production and reproduction that has become central to contemporary identity. Further to this identification is a new valorization of their "African" connection. A collective identification that situates them between the two national imaginaries of host, Nigeria, and the global African Diaspora just as the music celebrated has travelled across space, time and generations. This popularity not only becomes a new way of connecting across space and time with other members of the Diaspora, also, of revalorizing "Africa," and in particular their "Nigerian identity," within collective "Black identity." The discussion is based on the results of seven-month ethnography of the Nigerian Diaspora in Peckham, London. The findings demonstrate that the inclusion of music from Nigeria in the host context gives Nigerian culture a sense of "now" and of being "trendy," stylish, and future-oriented.

Olateju Jumoke Ajanaku

Maximizing Data Value for Student Outcomes: Big Data Analytics in Canadian Higher Education

The integration of innovative technologies in higher education has brought about significant changes in teaching and learning methodologies. Among these technologies, big data analytics has gained prominence due to its potential in improving the quality of education. This study explores the readiness and use of big data analytics in higher education institutions in Ontario, Canada, with a focus on student outcomes. The study recognizes the increasing complexity and competitiveness faced by higher education institutions, necessitating their adaptation to economic, political, and social changes. The growing need to address discipline-specific demands, incorporate workplace graduate attributes, and ensure relevant learning programs further underscores the importance of leveraging big data analytics. However, despite the vast amount of data generated by educational institutions, the utilization of big data analytics is still in its early stages. The Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework serves as the theoretical basis for understanding the technological, organizational, and environmental factors that influence the readiness, and use of big data analytics in higher education. Employing an interpretive approach, qualitative data will be collected through literature evaluation, and in-depth interviews with the faculty academic counselors in the selected institutions. The findings from this study are expected to contribute to the existing body of literature and inform practice by addressing the gap in empirical evidence in the context of Canadian higher education. By exploring the current state of readiness and identifying barriers and challenges, this research will provide valuable insights for institutions to develop tailored strategies, policies, and technologies to effectively leverage big data analytics.

Oladotun Larry Anifowose 1

Analyzing the Effect of Digital Financial Technologies Usage on Female-Owned Business Performance in Nigeria

The crux of this paper was to investigate the extent as well as whether digital finance technologies affect business performance of female-owned businesses in Lagos State, Nigeria. This paper empirically examined the effect of digital finance technologies usage among female-owned business performance in the state. By looking at female-owned enterprises that deal with agribusiness with special interest in aqua foods to build an econometric model to test the hypothesis, descriptive statistics and Ordinary Least Square (OLS) were used in the analysis of the data collected through a structured questionnaire. The study employed multistage sampling in selecting the respondents from the study areas. A majority of the female-owned business owners in the study area are in their adulthood age and agile to work. The result showed that a majority (73.33%) of the respondents were high adopters while only 26.67% of the female-owned business owners were low adopters. Point-of-sale (POS) users have the highest percentage of the high adopters followed by automated teller machine (ATM) users. The implication is that mobile banking adoption level of the respondents was lower compared to all other technological innovations adopted by female-owned business owners in the study area. The result of the OLS shows that only mobile banking and POS have a significant effect on the performance of female-owned business owners in the study area at $P < 0.05$. The finding revealed that the contribution of POS to performance was higher than that of mobile banking. The result of the t-test indicated that there is a significant difference in the performance of high adopters and low adopters due to technological innovations at $P < 0.05$.

Oladotun Larry Anifowose 2

BRICS Countries Inclusive Growth Index

The essence of this paper is to develop an inclusive growth index (IGI) for BRICS countries—i.e. Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—for 48 years (1970-2017), which involves the composition of five economic and five social indicators. The Z-sum score technique was utilized to develop the index, which lies between zero and one. A value for an IGI close to zero shows low growth; a value close to one denotes a high inclusive growth for the study period. In sum, the proposed BRICS inclusive growth index serves as an alternative or companion to the human development index (HDI) as well as open up new ways of thinking about inclusive growth challenges and assist to find possible and workable solutions to present and rising development issues.

Oloo Pamela Anyango

Corrupted Gender Identities: Which Way Africa?

This paper is about the place of the current global conceptualizations of gender and the impact that this has on the African context. While gender as conceptualized in the traditional African context refers to the binary distinction of male and female based on biological sex, this paper seeks to examine what in this paper will be referred to as corrupted forms of gender. Corrupted gender forms will refer to the intermediate forms of gender whereby individuals are neither distinctly male nor female; instances whereby males are trapped in female bodies and females trapped in male bodies—the distinction between cis-gender and trans-gender—whereby gender no longer matches the sex assigned to individuals. Gender as conceptualized in the African context is closely intertwined with the concepts of marriage, family and child bearing, and any shift in gender identities potentially impacts (usually negatively) these social concepts. The current global shift in gender identity presents being male or female as well as combinations of both as being more complicated than the body parts and hormones; that gender identity refers to more than the body parts that people are born with. It is more of a feeling in both the mind and heart. That one does not have to be distinctly all male or all female; that intermediate positions do exist, hence the corruption of gender as previously constituted. Corruption as construed here will refer to alteration from the original or correct form or version and entails a disturbance of what is considered the norm, breaking of hitherto closed spaces, a rupture of sorts. What then are the implications of the gender transition from binary to multiple, whereby new genders are formed and old ones irrevocably destroyed? This question is examined against the background of the traditional African context.

B

Emmanuel D. Babatunde and Kelebogile T. Setiloane

Bini and Yoruba Characteristics of the Human under Pressure: The 1918 Influenza

The fundamental cultural question, when cultures go through the extreme stress occasioned by a pandemic, is about what the qualities of the human in those cultures are. How were the societies in which they belong able to weaponize these qualities of the human to deal with the extreme stress and loss of the pandemic? Using Aristotelian Nicomachean ethics (Aristotle, Nich, Ethics Book IV) whose paradigm presents each quality in a tripartite form (the positive and negative extremes

with a mediating middle tendency to moderation), this paper looks closely at the Benin and Yoruba notions of the good person. It attempts to see how these notions transformed into cultural values of humane behavior that assisted the Bini and Yoruba people of Western Nigeria to overcome the enormous stress of the 1918 Influenza epidemic. Therefore, a silent comparative historical entity is the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-2019 pandemic that has lasted from 2020 to 2023 and killed over a million people. The research resources of the 1918 Influenza were collected for a doctorate degree at Oxford supervised by the world renowned anthropologist, Godfrey Lienhardt, in 1982 from the Achieves of the Society of African Missions at Cork, Ireland and Lagos, Nigeria, the missionary field in Nigeria. Ethnographic research was conducted in Benin for one and a half years. The world has just survived the COVID-2019 global pandemic in which strange cultural behaviors revealed a sadness and selfishness in which individuals, instead of sharing resources with one another, tried to buy such things as toilet rolls in such large quantities that revealed a selfishness that worsened the dangerous atmosphere generated by the pandemic. Examples of human kindness from among the Yoruba and the Benin who did not have the sophisticated health resources to fight the pandemic in 1918 as the developed world reveal a kindness that made poor people survive into the new world order.

Fatima Babih

The Crisis of Undetected, Unidentified Victims of Child Trafficking in West Africa: A Case Study

This is a case study on the crisis of undetected and unidentified child trafficking victims in West Africa. Child trafficking is a subset of the global human trafficking, also known as trafficking in person and modern-day slavery. It is an act in which perpetrators exploit victims for financial profit or other benefits, and it is a problem that affects millions of people worldwide, primarily female children. Victims are recruited through various means, including fraud, force, or coercion. It is a growing industry around the world which the United Nations International Organization of Migration has described as the third largest illegal business globally, surpassed only by the drugs and weapons industries. The Global Slavery Index has suggested that perpetrators of human trafficking keep over 40 million people worldwide in situations such as forced labor, forced marriage, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, and forced criminal activities. The International Labor Organization's report titled Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labor indicated that each year around the world, traffickers generate US \$150 billion in profits from the labor and services of their victims. As a global criminal enterprise, human trafficking continues to grow and flourish against a massive global effort to combat it through legislation and other means. One of the most challenging aspects of combatting human trafficking is that it occurs in many forms that are difficult to identify or detect, which has led to the large-scale growth of the problem in Africa, especially West Africa. Employing a qualitative case study research approach, observation and interview methods were used to explore the situation of four adolescent Sierra Leonean girls who were engaged in street vending in Nouakchott, Mauritania. The data revealed that all participants were transported from Sierra Leone by the adults who were harboring them in Mauritania. The data also showed that participants were recruited through deceptive means and subjected to forced labor, involuntary servitude, and debt bondage. The findings illuminate the need for observing and recognizing indicators of trafficked child victims who are often undetected in West Africa because of the cultural acceptance of child labor.

Cecy Edijala Balogun

Sustainability Capacity of Youth Employment Programmes in Nigeria

The paper examines the youth employment programmes in Nigeria and the sustainability capacity of the programmes to drive inclusive youth development in the face of a growing youth population with a diversity of aspirations. Several government regimes have attempted to address youth unemployment challenges over the years, however, the proportion of youth employed by these programmes in comparison with the unemployed remains low. This is in view of a growing youth population, the high youth turnover from higher institutions requiring employment, increasing proportions of school dropouts and the increasing spate of insecurity perpetrated by the unemployed youth who are becoming a social menace to society. The 2020 report of the National Bureau of Statistics showed that 58.8 percent of young people between the ages of 25-34 were unemployed. Beyond the programme implementation to drive youth employment, the sustainability capacity of implemented programmes is very critical because when programmes are not designed in line with the aspirations and expectations of the beneficiaries, it will affect their participation and the overall programme goals. The paper, therefore, analyzed youth employment programmes, the inclusiveness of the programme beneficiaries and the sustainability capacity of implemented programmes in Nigeria between 2001 and 2019. The paper used primary and secondary data. The primary data, which include both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from the National Bureau of Statistics, the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development and the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment. The study found that the proportion of youth that has benefitted from the programmes of the government is limited and such programmes were not inclusive given the diverse categories of youth. Also, while some of the implemented programmes were sustainable, the political environment in the country poses a barrier to programme sustainability.

Cecy Edijala Balogun and John, O. Oladeji

The Political Economy of Rice in Nigeria: Whose Voice Counts for Best Policies

The paper examines the participation of rice value chain stakeholders in the agricultural policy process in Southern Nigeria. Rice is an important staple that has become a serious concern in political discourses given its importance in the diet of millions of people in Nigeria. Although rice has the potential to address the food security challenge in the country, its production has failed to meet domestic demand, which is over 7 million metric tons, with domestic supply meeting only about 50% of the demand. Attempts by the government to address the constraints on rice sector performance have not successfully addressed the demand-supply gap due to the limited participation of the rice value chain stakeholders in agricultural policy decision-making processes. Agricultural policy domains are dominated by political officeholders and civil servants who lack an understanding of the indigenous views of the problems affecting the sector. This has resulted in the continual failure of policy interventions implemented to address the shortages in the domestic production of rice in Nigeria. The availability of space for the stakeholders' contribution to decision-making processes will ensure their indigenous perspective of the problems they are encountering and localized solutions to their challenges. The paper analyzed the participation of rice value chain stakeholders in the agricultural policy process in Southern Nigeria and the factors that enhance or hinder their participation using SWOT analysis. Data for the study was collected from primary sources using quantitative methods. The study found that the participation of the rice value chain stakeholders in the policy process in southern Nigeria was low, and concludes that

incorporating their concerns through their inclusion in processes that affect the sustainability of their livelihood will contribute to the performance of the rice sector in Nigeria.

Abdul Karim Bangura

***Sab-khenti-Seshesh* in the Caribbean: E-clustering for Dealing with the Current Global Economic Crisis**

We glean from the World Bank that the coronavirus disease (COVID)-2019 pandemic had such a calamitous effect on the Caribbean countries that the region's gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by as much as 16-20 percent in 2020. As tourism resumed, uneven recovery started in 2021 with average growth in the region recording 9.7 percent. The current global economic crisis has slowed the momentum and the average growth in 2022 was 7.9 percent. Rising price levels and challenging global environment pose significant challenges as countries work to strengthen their fiscal balances, revitalize growth, and build resilience against natural disasters. In this paper, based on a theoretical postulate of the Ancient Kemetian/Egyptian *Sab-khenti-Seshesh* (the role of the finance minister), with its attendant concepts, I employ a triangulative methodological approach (i.e. a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative techniques) to analyze the effect of the current global economic crisis on the Caribbean. Thereafter, I suggest an E-clustering approach for the Caribbean finance ministers to deal with the crisis and make their countries economically stronger. As I have explained it elsewhere, E-clustering is an economic approach based on the concept of "cluster-building." In this case, an economic cluster initiates the networking of all participants in a value-added chain. The objective is to bundle the potentials and competences for increasing the innovation power and competitiveness of the partners in a cluster. Given Internet technology, even business and government networking in rural areas can obtain a driving force.

Saidu Bangura

The Quest for Sociohistorical and Sociopolitical Healing in Sierra Leone: A 'Socioliterature' Reading of Aminatta Forna's Novels

Literature around the political trajectory of Sierra Leone from 1961 when it gained independence from Britain to date is one that is shrouded with a lot of political intrigues and incomprehensibilities, coupled with the suffering inflicted on its people by their political representatives. Nonfictional and fictional narratives on Sierra Leone present to the reader a nation which has not had any political leadership that is societal- and people-centered. The precolonial and colonial narratives apart, two of the most controversial and paradoxical ways Sierra Leone as a post-independent country has been described are (1) it is one of the poorest countries in the world, its abundant natural and mineral resources notwithstanding; and (2) it would have been completely forgotten had it not been for the rebel war, the dark period which made Sierra Leone to be shown not only on international television newscasts but on Hollywood screens as well depicting the horrendous events of the rebel war from 1991 to 2002. These descriptions of Sierra Leone apart, Sierra Leoneans has been considered to be a remarkable people. What is wrong then with Sierra Leone, the natural and mineral rich but poor country, which has such marvelous people? To answer this question, I read Forna's three evocative novels on Sierra Leone: (1) *The Devil that Danced on the Water*, the memoir of her late father, assassinated for political reasons; (2) *Ancestor Stones*; and (3) *The Memory of Love*—these two are fictional stories based on some sociohistorical facts from the pre-colonial period to the post-independent era culminating with the rebel war and its traumatic effects on Sierra Leoneans. I then proffer, following the conceptualization that literature does not only impact society and thereby bring about social

change, but equally has the power of healing, the idea of “stories as medicine.” The underlying thesis of the paper is that Forna’s novels, while presenting Sierra Leone with historical, political, social and psychological traumas, should be considered fitting candidates for the sociohistorical and sociopolitical healing of post-independent Sierra Leone.

Odair Barros-Varela

Rabidantes Women and the Informal Economy in Cape Verde in the Context of the Pandemic and Crisis Era: Academic Activism for an Inclusive Economic Governance in Cape Verde

The main objective of this research is, in the context of the pandemic and crisis era, to contribute to the creation of an endogenous research agenda on the struggle of rabidantes women for the recognition of their economic activity and, in general, on informal economies (as members of the Social and/or Solidarity Economy), looking at knowledge not as a simple conceptual reproduction of objective data of reality but, rather, as an authentic constitution and/or foundation, centered on the subjects. This proposal falls within the field of Critical African Political Economy and Africanist Political Science, whose task is to bring social transformation back on the agenda in Africa. The research question of this work is to understand whether, in the current era of crises, pandemics and epidemics, rabidantes women are not only alternative actors to the exclusive dominant neoliberal capitalist economy, but also protagonists of a Solidarity Economy. The work has, as other main objectives, to contribute to the knowledge of the multifaceted reality of the “informal” economies in Cape Verde to understand the relationship between the national economy (formal and/or official) and the “informal” economies in Cape Verde through the analysis of continuities in relation to the colonial period, the ruptures, and the new developments after independence.

Eric Junior Bomdzele

Assessment of the Impact of Climate and Non-Climatic Parameters on Cocoa Production in Cameroon

Agriculture remains the mainstay of Cameroon's economy, with cocoa as one of its key export commodities. However, cocoa production may be affected by climate-related stressors. This study assesses the influence of climate and non-climate parameters on cocoa performance in Cameroon. We use time series data for temperature, rainfall, carbon dioxide emission, land use, labour hours, pesticide application, and cocoa output in Cameroon spanning 60 years (from 1961 to 2021). Trend analyses reveal a stochastic response of crop production under climate variation. Leveraging the perennial crop supply response framework, a Vector Error Correction Model is specified to analyse both short- and long- run climate impacts on cocoa production. The econometric estimation shows that climatic and non-climatic parameters explain the variations in cocoa output. More specifically, the short-run results reveal that temperature, carbon dioxide emission, land use, and pesticide quantity significantly increase crop yield, whereas rainfall decreases it substantially. Furthermore, the long-run analysis indicates that temperature, rainfall, carbon dioxide emission, and land use are significant negative determinants of the yearly changes in cocoa output. We recommend government policy reforms which address access to land, subsidies, and improved production technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance farmers' adaptive capacities to climatic stressors.

Phebe Brako-Owusu and John Conteh

Here's the Thing about Transracial Adoption in the African Diaspora

Transracial adoption, referring to parents adopting a child of different race, has implications for racial, social and systemic development of adoptees. In the African Diaspora, the nature of transracial adoption is a silent crisis with significant bottlenecks. For example, tackling and tracking transracial adoptions and related mental health concerns contribute to the burden of the global mental health crisis. Key among these is the impact on ethnic and racial identity development of adopted individuals. As such, Black transracial adoptees have not been socialized in the same way as their non-Black counterparts. This points to the fact that there are differences between conceptualizations of race and ethnicity. Complicating the transracial adoption process are the juxtaposing family life cycles of both adoptive parents and cultural racial identity development over time. In the past decade, transracial adoption has received overwhelming attention given the prevalence across the United States. Between 2017 and 2019, research on transracial adoption reported 90% of transracial adoptees as Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC), while 21% were Black. This presentation is an attempt to systematically examine various facets impacting transracial adoption and the emerging process of navigating the silent crisis using a mental health counseling perspective.

Anitra Butler-Ngugi

Replacing Pedagogy with the Mwalimu Training Model of Ubuntu

Centuries of Western pedagogy has miseducated Africans worldwide and caused many African communities on the continent and the Diaspora to remain marginalized. The continuous use of Western pedagogy permits European incursion into African practices and ways of knowing. At its root, pedagogy is based on a system of slavery. This stratified system of cultural transmission was designed for young boys and employs the philosophy of European classical humanism which is founded on the Aryan system of dominance and privilege. Pedagogy operates on disinformation; selective omission of non-European achievements, inventions, and technologies in academic works; and distorted data that confirms the hypothesis of non-Africanist scholars. Some scholars have tried to revise pedagogical approaches to address Western miseducation however, the pedagogical by-products have not reversed the extreme damage brought on by pedagogy. Freire's Critical Pedagogy applies critical theory to instruction while Asante's Revolutionary Pedagogy employs Africological, Kemetological and rhetorical techniques within its instructional framework. Although both pedagogical approaches offer some benefits to African learners, they inadvertently leave out religiosity, the core of African humanism. Given the extensive limitations and shortcomings of pedagogy, a massive reeducation process is necessary. African teachers and African teacher educators must replace pedagogy with an Afrocentric instructional design model that is culturally specific and culturally relevant for African learners. Ubuntu, an African educational paradigm rooted in African humanism, can serve as that model. Given the damage that has been done to the African community by pedagogy, the triple agenda of deconstruction, reconstruction, and regeneration can only happen with educators (ubuntugogues) who are trained in the three tenets of Ubuntu. The tenets of religiosity, consensus building, and dialogue will provide the needed foundational methods to Africanize the curricula, thus creating a pathway where Africans can once again "think with our African minds."

Eric Kudzanai Chakonda

Examining the Relationship between African Health Systems and Socioeconomic Wellbeing: An In-depth Research Study

The research paper highlights the significance of health systems and policies as key factors shaping the socioeconomic conditions of African countries. By examining the effectiveness of these systems, the study aims to inform strategies for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3), which focuses on promoting good health and well-being. Specifically, the research conducts a comparative analysis between Zimbabwe and South Africa, two neighboring sub-Saharan countries with distinct healthcare systems. The selection of these countries is based on the notable disparity in their healthcare indices, despite their geographical proximity. In addition to the country-level analysis, the research delves into the disparities within South Africa by considering variations across provinces. This examination helps conceptualize the gaps within the healthcare system and sheds light on the multifaceted nature of healthcare disparities within a single country. To provide practical examples and insights, the paper draws attention to Japan's successful implementation of the National Health Insurance system from 1961 to date. The Japanese case serves as a model for achieving universal health coverage and ensuring access to healthcare services for all citizens. Over time, Japan has adapted its healthcare system to meet changing needs and demographics. The success in implementing the Japanese National Health Insurance contributes to Japan's reputation as one of the world's best healthcare systems. This, in turn, has played a role in Japan's economic growth and the overall well-being of its citizens. In conclusion the paper prescribes recommendations for the need to develop robust and inclusive health systems and policies as they are strong determining factor on the socioeconomic state of countries, and subsequently the continent.

Samson Chamboko

Reimagining Education: A Comparative Analysis of Zimbabwean University Degrees and Their Applicability to Africa's Progress

The dynamic landscape of the 21st Century demands a transformative approach to education, particularly in the African context, where higher learning institutions must respond effectively to the evolving needs of the continent. This study endeavors to assess the current state of degree programs offered by Zimbabwean universities and their relevance in contributing to Africa's sustainable development and progress. By undertaking a comparative analysis, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the existing curricula and identify areas of improvement for aligning educational offerings with the continent's pressing challenges. The study will employ a mixed methods research design, incorporating qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Through surveys, interviews, and comprehensive curriculum analysis, valuable perspectives from university students, faculty, industry experts, and policymakers will be gathered to evaluate the existing degree programs' efficacy. Additionally, a thorough examination of national development plans, industry demands, and socioeconomic indicators will be conducted to determine the alignment of current degree offerings with Africa's progress. The research seeks to address critical issues such as the relevance of Zimbabwean university degrees in equipping graduates with the necessary skills and knowledge to tackle the continent's developmental challenges. It will explore whether the degrees adequately address issues related to technology, entrepreneurship, sustainable development, and other contemporary demands. The findings of this

study will serve as a basis for identifying gaps and opportunities to enhance the applicability of degrees in the African context, ultimately contributing to the continent's growth and prosperity.

Tatenda D. P. Chikazhe

Overcoming Challenges and Leveraging Opportunities in Implementing Integrated Reporting for African Banks: Insights from Zimbabwe

This study delves into the challenges faced by African banks while implementing integrated reporting practices and explores the potential opportunities that arise from adopting such reporting frameworks. The study focuses on insights gained from the Zimbabwean banking sector, where integrated reporting is gradually gaining prominence. Integrated reporting is a comprehensive approach that provides a broader view of an organization's strategy, governance, performance, and prospects. While it has gained traction globally, its adoption in Africa, particularly in the banking industry, remains relatively nascent. The research adopts a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis from financial reports and qualitative insights from interviews with key stakeholders in Zimbabwean banks. On the one hand, the findings reveal the challenges encountered by Zimbabwean banks in their journey to implement integrated reporting, including limited awareness and understanding of the reporting framework, resource constraints, data availability, and internal resistance to change. On the other hand, the study uncovers the potential benefits and opportunities associated with integrated reporting, such as improved stakeholder communication, enhanced decision-making processes, increased transparency, and the potential to attract socially responsible investors. Drawing from the Zimbabwean context, the research offers valuable insights and best practices to guide other African banks in overcoming challenges and leveraging opportunities presented by integrated reporting. The study's outcomes aim to encourage broader adoption of integrated reporting across the African continent, thereby contributing to sustainable growth, responsible business practices, and increased confidence in the banking sector among investors and stakeholders. By shedding light on the journey of Zimbabwean banks towards integrated reporting, this research contributes to the advancement of corporate reporting practices and fosters a deeper understanding of how African banks can effectively navigate the challenges while harnessing the potential benefits of integrated reporting for sustainable development.

Nyarayi Chinyama, Oliver Gore, Johan Botha, Coliar Twine and Shantha Naidoo

Mental Health in Education: Strategies for Africa and the African Diaspora during Crises: A Systematic Literature Review

This paper explores tailored strategies for promoting mental health and wellbeing in education in Africa (Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and South Africa) and the African Diaspora (Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom) during times of crisis. Through a systematic literature review, the study identifies key approaches to support and enhance mental health in educational settings. The findings highlight the importance of creating safe and supportive environments, implementing comprehensive mental health policies, integrating mental health education into the curriculum, fostering positive relationships, and providing professional development for educators. Resilience Theory, Cultural-Historical Activity Theory, and Ecological Systems Theory are commonly used theoretical frameworks that inform research in this area, focusing on the interplay of individual, social, cultural and environmental factors. Implementing these strategies holistically and collaboratively has the potential to improve mental health outcomes for students in Africa and the

African Diaspora, even during crises. By centering the voices and experiences of stakeholders, particularly within higher education institutions, this review offers valuable insights and recommendations for promoting mental health and wellbeing in education in these specific contexts. In conclusion, this paper provides insights into tailored strategies for promoting mental health and wellbeing in education in Africa and the African Diaspora during times of crisis. By emphasizing safe environments, comprehensive policies, integrated mental health education, positive relationships, and support for educators, the study contributes to enhancing mental health outcomes. Utilizing theoretical frameworks and considering stakeholder perspectives, this research informs future efforts in promoting mental health and wellbeing in educational settings.

Last Hope Happison Chiona

Navigating the Crisis: Africa, the African Diaspora, and the Current Global Crisis

Due to many unresolved problems, Africa's progress is moving towards retrogression. A survey of rural Zimbabwe shows that 75 % of the youths are now abusing drugs, committing crimes, and dying young. Many have no access to proper healthcare; women and girls are exposed to prostitution and early marriages, thereby affecting their education, and have no access to technology. Also, rampant inflation and corruption have hindered businesses. Social intolerance caused by divergent views lead to deaths and displacements, especially around election time, with the 2008 election being an example. Climate change and environmental degradation have crippled Africa. Droughts are increasing, causing desertification, land degradation and deforestation. This is due to unregulated alluvial mining activities, no reforestation, and stream bank cultivation causing siltation. About 30% of dams are silted. The lack of food security threatens peace and stability as many social ills like robberies and prostitution occur, leading to murders and disease transmissions. All of these problems strain African Diasporans as they have to support their struggling relatives left home. Globally, more resources will be channelled toward Africa to resolve the crisis that encompasses conflicts, debts, climate change, and other predicaments facing the continent. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed to analyze the data collected and generate findings.

Melissa Mazvita Chitambire

Domestic Violence and the COVID-2019 Pandemic in Zimbabwe: Exploring the Relationship between Lockdown Measures and Intimate Partner Violence

This study explores the relationship between lockdown measures and intimate partner violence (IPV) during the COVID-2019 pandemic in Zimbabwe. Lockdowns implemented to curb the spread of the virus have raised concerns about an increase in IPV cases due to heightened tensions, limited support systems, and reduced avenues for reporting. This research adopts a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with survivors, stakeholders and service providers, and quantitative surveys to assess the prevalence and patterns of IPV. Collaboration with local organisations ensures ethical considerations, cultural sensitivity, and community engagement. Findings will contribute to knowledge on COVID-2019's impact on domestic violence in an African context, with Zimbabwe as the case study. Policy recommendation, intervention strategies, and social work practices will be informed to effectively address and prevent IPV during similar crises in Zimbabwe and other African countries. This research aims to shed light on the underlying factors contributing to domestic violence during the pandemic, providing evidence-based recommendations and interventions for the safety, well-being, and empowerment of survivors. It

emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive social work response to address the intersecting challenges of domestic violence and COVID-2019 in Zimbabwe and beyond.

D

Suleyman M. Demi, Suzanne R. Sicchia, George J. S. Dei, Liben Gebremikael and Tameika Shaw

Resiliency against Food Insecurity among the Black Population in Scarborough during the COVID-2019 Pandemic

One of the effects of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-2019 pandemic is the increased level of food insecurity, especially during the first wave. Food insecurity is an indication of poverty and results in serious health and social effects. Consequently, the objectives of the study are twofold: (1) to determine the food security status of the Black population in Scarborough, Canada; and (2) to examine the role of individuals and community organizations in addressing food insecurity challenges. This qualitatively focused mixed methods study recruited 20 Black participants from TAIBU Community Health Centre located in Scarborough (TAIBU means “Be in Good Health” in Swahili). Furthermore, the study recruited eight nurses and two Black doctors in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) but only one affiliated with TAIBU. The study used manual coding and NVivo software to analyze the qualitative data and presented quantitative data through distributive statistics. The results of the study indicate that despite a significant level of food insecurity, new local food aid organizations sprang up to assist the existing ones to tackle the problem. The combined efforts of the local food aid organizations and the volunteering spirit of individual community members significantly reduced the burden of food insecurity on struggling families. These combined efforts reportedly brought considerable relief to Black families struggling to feed themselves during the pandemic. However, the study found that the operations of food aid organizations are not sustainable. Based on the health effects of food insecurity, the study recommends that both federal and provincial governments prioritize food insecurity as a major public health issue. Furthermore, community members should be supported in their commitments to continue to support and strengthen local organizations through cash and in-kind contributions to local organizations in order to increase community resilience against food insecurity.

Plato Dhliwayo

The Power of Incumbents and Shrinking Democratic Space in Africa

This paper is about how incumbent presidents of African countries use their power to influence political decisions and election processes, and how this has led to a shrinking democratic space across the continent. There has been a wave of disputed elections in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Ivory Coast and Nigeria, among others. The paper shows that it is the outgoing ruling power that wants to retain power at all costs, thereby leading to election malpractices and then a sham election. The will of the electorate is subverted with most election petitions ending up seeking judicial remedies. In most cases, however, the courts are willing appendages of the incumbent presidents; hence, the judicial outcomes are usually favourable to them. The Power Theory stresses that a leader utilizes his/her power and influence to get things accomplished. It looks at positional power and personal power

and how they impact leaders' choices and outcomes. Using a qualitative case study methodology, the paper shows that most incumbents apply the Power Theory to get their intended election results irrespective of whether or not it inspires their citizens. When they are in power, they bend all the levers of power to their will.

E

Mark Eghan

Do Agricultural Households Use Remittances to Reduce Vulnerability to Expected Poverty?

Remittances are increasingly gaining importance as a source of capital in developing economies and in particular their potential impact on recipient households is of interest to academics and policy makers. Existing literature suggests that remittances can help alleviate poverty in developing countries through income and consumption smoothing, and asset accumulation. Households receiving remittances generally have higher spending and lower incidences of poverty than households that do not receive remittances. If remittances have welfare implications, then they should cushion households against future poverty. Understanding the determinants of vulnerability to expected poverty of households is important to help policy makers to design and implement targeted social protection policies that have maximum impacts. This paper estimates the impact of remittances on vulnerability to expected poverty among agricultural households in The Gambia, Ghana, and Nigeria. It follows the three-step feasible generalized least squares (FGLS) estimation procedure to estimate household vulnerability levels and used probit model to estimate the effect of remittance on vulnerability. For robustness of the analysis, additional analysis to account for possible selection and endogeneity bias, the Heckman sample selection model and propensity score matching methods are employed to estimate the effect of remittances on the vulnerability of households to expected poverty. It is found that in all three countries, households that benefit from remittances can smoothen consumption to reduce their vulnerability to expected poverty and therefore guard against future poverty. In addition, although urban households were less vulnerable than rural households to expected poverty, rural households that received remittances become less vulnerable to expected poverty. This underscores the importance of remittances in enhancing the welfare of poorer households. The results imply that rural farming households are more vulnerable to expected poverty in all three countries; hence, public policy must specifically target the rural farmers when designing social protection schemes to have the desired impact.

Ayogebah Epizitone and Smangele Pretty Moyane

A Data-driven Paradigm for Resilient and Sustainable Integrated Health Information Systems for Health Care Applications

This paper is focused on health information systems for healthcare applications in the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) era. Many transformations and uncertainty of certain occurrences, such as the fourth industrial revolution and pandemics, have driven healthcare adoption and implementation of health information systems (HIS). HIS deployments for health care applications have been influenced by external and internal factors aligning with the global revolution. At the epic of these revolutions are modernization, automation and digitalization, which have crept into every nook and cranny of the healthcare arena with massive data generation. The landmark of the

digitalized revolution within the healthcare arena is characterized by the continuous growth of healthcare data, which is considered complex and dynamic. Extant literature reveals insurgent data within the healthcare to be problematic and disruptive and, at the same time, embedded with the potential to revolutionise healthcare. This phenomenon has necessitated the need to harness data-generated insight required to develop a resilient and sustainable HIS for health care applications. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the existing body of gen on HIS for healthcare through the data lens to present a data-driven paradigm for healthcare augmentation that is paramount to the attainment of sustainable and resilient HIS for healthcare. The paper's findings demonstrate a detailed discourse of the elements of a data-driven paradigm for resilient and sustainable HIS for health care applications. Additionally, it highlights the data-driven tract that serves as the anchor for enabling the attainment of resilient and sustainable HIS that enhances health care application by incorporating and applying data analytics insights.

F

Gerald K. Fosten

“Beneath the Veil”: Tenets from W. E. B. Du Bois Apropos the Current Global Crisis

The major challenge for Blacks across the globe has been achieving self-determination and equality in terms of access to political and economic domains since the Westphalia construct was crafted and implemented by Medieval European powers. Having arguably conducted the first urban sociology study in the United States, the “Father of Pan-Africanism” W. E. B. Du Bois was instrumental in crafting a framework that laid and guided important blueprints for Civil Rights resistance. This propelled post-Civil Rights leaders in the United States, as well as leaders in colonial and post-colonial Africa and the rest of the African Diaspora, to fight against political and economic systems that were, and still today are, counter-productive and hamper the full liberation of Blacks on the Motherland and across the globe. Accordingly, the major questions probed in this paper as the following: To resist and overcome oppressive powers and their institutions, what approaches were observed and implemented most effectively in the quest to liberate and empower Blacks in terms of Du Bois’ tenets? What external and internal challenges were and still are confronted by an oppressed people that Du Bois had to deal with and share his answers across a multi-ethnically diverse, yet similar, groups of victimized people? What were his objectives in uniting divided groups of Blacks against a common oppressor? More important, how can Africans and African descendants stop their ethnic rivalries and other forms of infighting and become a collective and influential voice on the global stage based on the insights of Du Bois? The answers Du Bois offered to address past challenges are still relative to issues confronting Blacks across the globe today and must be addressed in order to build institutional capacities for historically oppressed communities. Using a qualitative, explanatory analytical approach, the thesis that underlies this paper is that lessons delineated from Du Bois’ work can be assembled and directed into courses of action for dealing with the current global crisis and building the capacity for sustainable community, political, economic, social and cultural development.

Stephen Graves**Lessons from Frantz Fanon's Double Realization Theory for Building a New Africa**

This article argues that the case for reparations and ending the French colonial tax is necessary for the future sustained development of formerly enslaved and colonized peoples. The current crisis in the African Diaspora continues to be enabled by the perpetual invasive policies of foreign powers that influence the ability for independent nations to exercise sovereignty and self-determination. Using Frantz Fanon's theory of double realization, it is suggested that the capitalist powers must come to understand the oppressive practices that continue post colonialism. Although Fanon has been critical of reparations in his works, his position echoes criticisms made by theorists within Black political thought that justice for slavery and historical wrongdoings is necessary for the identity of former colonized peoples, despite the barriers of capitalism and the inability of colonial powers to recognize the economic and cultural burdens placed on newly independent nations. Ultimately, the future of Africa's ability to thwart continued economic and cultural invasion by foreign powers will depend on its ability to secure economic freedom and build shared institutions.

Janeen C. Guest**Assessing the Impact of Improved Water Infrastructure on Economic Development in Nigeria**

There is a strong relationship between water infrastructure development and economic development in Africa. Access to water and sanitation services is crucial to economic development in Africa. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, approximately 418 million Africans lack access to basic drinking water, 779 million people lack access to basic sanitation services (including 208 million who still practice open defecation) and 839 million people still lack basic hygiene services.¹ This research examines the relationship between increased water infrastructure investment and economic development in Nigeria. By combining qualitative and quantitative assessments, this research analyzes available data on investment in water and sanitation services in Nigeria and its impact on Gross Domestic Product. In addition, this research gathers insight from policymakers and experts on the positive effects of improved water infrastructure on key economic indicators such as agricultural productivity, gross domestic product, health outcomes, and overall human well-being. This study also explores policy implications for overcoming challenges and case studies of successful water infrastructure projects in Nigeria. In addition, this study focuses on the importance of prioritizing investment in water infrastructure as a catalyst for sustainable economic development. The preliminary quantitative analysis concluded there is a strong positive relationship between the increased investment in water and sanitation services and economic development in Nigeria. The quantitative analysis is supported by qualitative analysis on the impact water infrastructure projects have had on economic development in Nigeria. This study is concluded with policy recommendations and the importance of collaboration among other African countries and regional organizations to promote a coordinated and sustainable approach to addressing water and sanitation challenges on the continent in order to encourage investment in these areas.

¹*Africa to drastically accelerate progress on water, sanitation, and hygiene—report* (March 22, 2022). Retrieved on May 20, 2023 from <https://www.unicef.org/senegal/en/press-releases/africa-dramatically-accelerate-progress-water-sanitation-and-hygiene-report>.

Netsai Bianca Gwelo and Olagoke Akintola

Community Participation in Health Research for School-going Children: Negotiating Entry and Relevance

In South Africa, many school-going children face major health barriers to learning and proper development. These barriers affect the overall development of children and youth. This paper describes an element of the process of community participation and engagement (CP/E) of stakeholders in the research process in marginalized rural areas of Umzinyathi District, South Africa. We drew on Paulo Freire’s dialogical philosophy to set up our workshops with various stakeholder groups: teachers, principals, and policy planners and implementers from the department of education, health and social development. The first consultative meeting was an introduction of the team and research theme. The second meeting aimed at discussing the research project with various stakeholders. The third meeting comprised group activities to delve deeper into the research issues. The three consultative meeting with key stakeholders assisted in the processes, principles and identifying techniques of community mobilization and participation. From these consultative meeting, we were able to recognize relevant stakeholders for the study and adopted the most appropriate processes in meeting, interacting and working with them. We also established relationships and collaboration which resulted in beneficial outcomes to all partners. Researchers benefited by gaining entry to communities, and the community organizations benefited by gaining a better understanding of the school health program. However, we experienced street level bureaucracy. The findings of this study highlight that the process of CP/E is very important. Working with well-established community groups with strong community ties is crucial when gaining entry for research and involvement of trusted members gives research local legitimacy and effective data collection. CP/E processes constitute a continuous process which assists in initiating, nurturing and sustaining a desirable relationship with the purpose of securing and sustaining the community’s interest in all aspects of the school health program.

H

Junior Hopwood and Kimorah John

Same Wine Different Wine Skin: An Investigation of the Anti-Woke Movement as a Realignment of White Privilege in the United States

The struggle for justice and peace, socially, economically, politically and spiritually, has imbued the reality of people of color in the African Diaspora. This struggle becomes more acute during times of crisis. In recent times, the American society has seen a number of crises that have brought into question the philosophy of whiteness and access to power. There was the global economic crisis of 2008, the election of the first president in the United State with distinctly black features, and the election of a president that was distinctly white and conservative, and finally the global pandemic. A salient thread that connects these events is the question of whiteness and white privilege. The presence of a crisis often represents a struggle for access to limited resources (economic, racial and political power). The anti-woke movement represents the latest, but not the last, iteration of white privilege. This paper will argue that the anti-woke movement seeks to (a)

reaffirm whiteness as a dominant ideology, (b) protect the social construction of whiteness, and (c) demonize actions and behaviors that do not subscribe to the perception of whiteness. The methodology of this study will be a mix methods approach with the use of content analysis, historical analysis, and in-depth interviews to solicit answers to the following questions: (1) How have the different crises beginning with the economic recession of 2008 impacted the concept of whiteness in the United States? (2) What sociopolitical events precipitated the emergence of the anti-woke movement? (3) How will policy changes proposed by those who are anti-woke impact the lives of people of color?

I

JP Afamefuna Ifedi and Grace Umezurike

Crisis of Democracy in Africa: Linkages to Political Dislocations, the Nigerian Case in Critical Perspective

Democracy and democratization appear to be retrenching in Africa where a spate of military dictatorships has come to power in the recent times in Mali, Guinea, Niger, and Burkina-Faso. Also, the democratic governments, as there are, tend to be autocratic; in general and they are devoid of the essential trappings of democratic dispensation. Central to the crisis of democracy in Africa is the inability of the post-colonial state to reimagine and re-conceptualize democracy to suit its own culture and social structures and circumstances. Although democracies everywhere do share certain universal principles, inter alia, elections, rule of law, etc., it is essential that their basic structures be consonant with and reflect the social and cultural compositions of the countries. Hence, African countries should not have to adopt, in their entirety, European democratic forms, since they do not have similar histories and cultures, political evolution, or even ethnic and religious fundamentals. Adopting Western democratic models without consideration for their cultural variances with European countries is a major cause of the crisis of democracy in Africa. Evidently, while democracy is often the governance inclination of many countries, the most successful ones seem to be in countries that have reimagined their democracy in light to their historical experiences. African countries have largely not done so. Hence, one cannot speak of Nigerian democracy as one would speak of American, Swiss, or British democracy. African countries should evolve African democracy by restructuring their societies to evolve a democratic governance system that can bring democratic stability to their countries. This research would be hoisted on institutional and structural theories as explanatory frameworks. The salient preliminary questions that would be addressed in the study include: Why is democracy failing in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular? What are suggestions on how to achieve democratic stability in Africa and Nigeria?

Nneka Ikelionwu

Exploring the Prospects of Artificial Intelligence for Improved Conflict Management in Africa

Africa is currently enmeshed in enough conflicts to cause concern for the future of the continent. Many of the conflicts could have been avoided with adequate warning. According to the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, there are currently more than 35 non-international armed conflicts taking place in Africa. While there are national, regional, and

other early warning systems in place on the continent, it appears that many of the conflicts still catch African leaders unawares. African states are expending scarce financial resources fighting insurgencies, political conflicts, communal conflicts, and banditry, to name a few, rather than scientifically predicting these conflicts or the changes in conflict dynamics to enable them to manage them effectively. Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents opportunities for enhanced and precise anticipatory conflict management in Africa. This paper attempts an exploration of these opportunities. It applies a qualitative case study approach to explore the potential benefits of AI to conflict management in Africa. It considers the prospects of using AI tools to enhance capacity in managing conflict aspects such as early warning systems; intelligence data led peace operations; intelligent, conflict sensitive messaging; disinformation; and implementation of ceasefires and peace agreements. It highlights the limitations and possible challenges, the legal and ethical concerns, the financial and infrastructural implications, as well as the need for collaborative action in a bid to propose an AI-based conflict management policy for Africa.

Lexington Izuagie

Africa's Quest for Solutions to the Energy Crisis in the Age of Climate Change

This study interrogates the dilemma of Africa in its quest for solutions to the unending power blackout on the continent in the age of climate change. Unequivocally, energy constitutes a perspective of the contemporary African crisis. Reports from both local and transnational agencies continuously chorus the gravity of this crisis, which manifests in the lack of access to power by more than half of the continent's population. The situation is complicated by the climate change that seems to be narrowing alternatives in the policy environment based on concerns for the ideal of common humanity. For instance, the ideology of sustainable development, as an antidote to climate degeneration, advocates for the abolition of fossil fuel regime in preference for clean energy. I argue here that the priority of the continent differs from those of countries which developed from the fossil fuel regime but are now more vociferously clamoring for clean energy. Such prescriptions can only derive inspiration from the Modernization Theory that tends to hold that Africa must do it the Western way. A continent threatened by extinction from penury, contemporary Africa's priority is survival. The overfed West and allies, in contradiction, are worried about luxury for their unborn generation. Consequently, similar solutions to these sharply contrasting geopolitical historical contexts are ineffective. Moreover, the lack of will on the part of the countries of the North to assist the continent, as indicated by the repeated failure to implement assistance promises, makes the ideal of common humanity propaganda, which cannot deter Africa in its quest for energy solutions. Africa needs the freedom to explore alternatives in both fossil and "clean" energy regimes that accommodate the unique realities, first, of individual nations, and then the continent.

J

Udeme Samuel Jacob and Jace Pillay

Music Therapy and Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Systematic Literature Review

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent deficits in social communication, social interaction, and restricted and repetitive behaviors, interests, or activities. This paper presents a systematic review of the literature on the therapeutic

effects of music therapy on individuals with ASD. A search of the literature from 2004 to 2020 was conducted using the databases PubMed, Google Scholar, and Web of Science. A total of 12 articles were identified that met the criteria for inclusion in the review. The literature review showed that music therapy provides unique opportunities for individuals with ASD to access learning opportunities and social skills development. Music therapy was associated with improved interpersonal relationships, better communication, enhanced motor skills, increased attention, and improved overall academic performance for these individuals. This review's findings suggest that music therapy can be a helpful tool in treating individuals with ASD. Implications for practice and research are discussed. Possible areas for further research include exploring the effectiveness of music therapy for different developmental stages and different subgroups of individuals on the autism spectrum, examining the effects of different music therapies, and determining the long-term effects of music therapy on individuals with ASD.

Mohamed Yayah Jalloh, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wan Siti Adibah Wan Dahalan, Assoc. Prof. Dr Rasyikah Md. Khalid

Strengthening Environmental Legislation in Sierra Leone: Addressing Environmental Crimes and Promoting Sustainable Development

Sierra Leone faces an environmental crisis due to inadequate legislation that leads to environmental crimes such as illegal mining, timber logging, and illegal waste dumping. These challenges have detrimental effects on the environment, public health, and sustainable development. The current legal framework, including the Mines and Minerals Act of 2009 and the Environmental Protection Agency Act of 2008, falls short in addressing these issues effectively. This study emphasizes the urgent need to strengthen environmental legislation in Sierra Leone. Through library studies and content analyses of international conventions, statutes, and legislations, the study suggests that a strong legal framework can be developed to mitigate environmental degradation, health crisis, and deteriorating living conditions. Robust enforcement mechanisms and institutional transparency are crucial to investigate and prosecute environmental crimes. The consequences of the regulatory gap are profound, with mining companies operating without accountability, leading to environmental degradation and community displacement. Improper waste disposal worsens health issues. Lack of transparency in political institutions undermines enforcement, leaving affected communities with diminished quality of life and uncertain resettlement status. Prioritizing the strengthening of environmental legislation will safeguard communities, preserve natural resources, and foster a healthier and sustainable future. Efforts must include effective investigation and prosecution of environmental crimes, transparency, and public participation. Sierra Leone can overcome the environmental crisis and progress towards sustainable development by establishing a more robust and accountable legal and regulatory framework.

K

Richman Kadondo

Ethics and Accountability: Issues and Concerns from Africa's Financial Services Sector

There are a paradoxically high number of bank failures in Africa. This is despite the existence of seemingly sound regulatory frameworks and a lot of investment in the compliance divisions of banks. These failures have been attributed to multiple factors including the gross mismanagement

of depositors' funds and insider lending in banks. There has been a lot of research on mining, manufacturing, health and other sectors, but lacking on that radar is modernizing the financial sector in Africa and synchronizing it with the global financial system. If the financial sector is not sound, airtight and completely reliable, all efforts to industrialize (and indeed improve living standards) could be futile. Without sectoral wide amalgamated willingness to act in good faith it will be difficult to create such an air-tight reliable financial sector. There is a general hypothesis that in societies where there are high ethical standards, there tend to be huge bank successes and vice versa. The deplorable collapse of Venda Building Society (VBS) in South Africa recently attracted a lot of media attention, but this is not an isolated case, and it bares all resemblances of bank collapses in Zimbabwe's United Merchant Bank in the 1990s and Namibia's Small Medium Enterprise (SME) bank in 2017. One question that comes to mind is the following: What is/are the underlying causal factor(s) for these dismal bank failures? It is therefore the major thrust of this paper to ascertain if these misappropriations of client funds, whose consequences are far reaching, are a result of lack of moral will to act in good faith or just a result of less education on the best ethical and professional practices. The study was primarily a qualitative one where desktop research through document analysis as well as semi structured in-depth interviews were utilised. An interview guide was used to interview current bank executives as well as former bankers whose banks may have collapsed in selected Southern African countries. The study yielded that despite the existence of sound regulatory frameworks in all three countries (Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Namibia), there is an inherent lack of will to act in bona fide ways while handling client deposits. It also emerged in the study that most of the bank failures in these countries were a result of weak ethical practices by the senior executives. More so, the study established that sound regulatory frameworks on their own without moral willingness to observe the high ethical standards will not stop bank failures in Southern Africa. The study recommended that there is a need for a higher investment in education in high ethical standards for bank executives and other financial practitioners in the banking sector in Southern Africa.

Rachael Kalaba

Unveiling African Women's Leadership: An Afro-feminist and Ubuntu Perspective

Since the world realized the value of gender diversity and the advantages of having women in leadership positions, women have received much attention. Women's leadership positions have significantly impacted several industries, including politics, business, education, and social activism. This research aims to examine African women's leadership using Afro-feminism lenses and Ubuntu to conduct a detailed analysis of women in the Northern Province of Zambia. Within the context of Africa, where women's leadership has often been overlooked, this study seeks to investigate and understand the perception of leadership among women leaders in the Northern Province of Zambia and their conceptualization of Ubuntu leadership. Additionally, the study aims to identify the sources of women's leadership knowledge and analyze the existence of leadership models within the context of Ubuntu. The attainment of these specific objectives will shed light on the multifaceted dimensions of women's leadership experiences in the region and contribute to a deeper appreciation of the role of Ubuntu in shaping their leadership practices. Drawing on the theoretical framework of Afro-feminism, which centers on the experiences and struggles of African women, the research will explore the unique dynamics of women's leadership within the Northern Province of Zambia. The region practices a matrilineal culture; hence, more research on how the culture has continued to influence women leaders will contribute to Ubuntu leadership theory's academic and practical aspects. Through a qualitative research methodology investigating

the factors influencing women's leadership, the barriers they encounter, and the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges are examined. By uncovering the experiences, challenges, and opportunities faced by women in the Northern Province of Zambia and analyzing the influence of Afro-feminism and Ubuntu, the findings of this research will offer valuable insights for advancing women's leadership development and fostering more inclusive and effective leadership practices in African contexts.

Emmanuel Vincent Nelson Kallon

Multilateralism and the Re-emergence of Competitive Bilateral Alliances in Emerging Democracies: Sub-Sahara Africa Case

In the post-World War II era, a unipolar world emerged where liberalism was conceived as the convinced means of governance patterns in which political and economic progression of the Third World countries were considered to have a strong foundation. Particularly, in sub-Saharan Africa, this nascent transformative political restructuring posited a huge political consequence in the form of myriad warfare and military coup d'état. As political stabilization alongside the liberal democratic values appears to be materializing across many of the countries, especially notable from the 1990s to 2000, there has re-emerged a strong wave of a multilateral and bilateral construct intersecting the liberal philosophy. This has gained a marked current and an effect on the political structures, thereby triggering a democratic backsliding. Using a qualitative approach and with pertinent data, this study will situate why and how the emergence of the multilateralism characterized by its inherent myriad political ideologies and diverging interests have impacted the various political systems, particularly using the sub-Saharan Africa region as the case study, and the costs such has created on the political stability and visible development of the region in particular.

Amidu Kalokoh

Towards Effective Anti-money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regimes

This paper is about money laundering and terrorist financing risks (ML risks) and democratic governance. Money laundering and terrorist financing are transnational organized crimes that impact individuals, states, and the international system with high socioeconomic and political costs. Money laundering derives from other offenses, such as trafficking in drugs and humans, tax evasion, corruption, and counterfeiting. Illicit financial flows undermine the legal economy by promoting corruption, breeding a crime culture, and weakening investor and public confidence in the financial system. Money launderers and terrorist financiers follow complex processes to conceal the source of their proceeds while protecting the value of the acquired wealth. There have been enduring efforts to adequately tackle these crimes, with anti-money laundering and countering financing terrorism regimes being domestically and internationally engaged. Advancing democratic governance can tackle these crimes and their related consequences by deepening anti-money laundering and terrorist regimes' effectiveness and efficiency. The study uses quantitative analysis to examine the correlation between democracy and ML risks across 114 countries (n = 114). A multiple linear regression model shows a statistically significant negative association between democratic governance and ML risks and a significant negative association between criminality and ML risks. The results have implications for advancing democratic governance, which will ensure robust anti-money laundering, and terrorist financing regimes to combat money laundering and terrorism.

Alpha Kamara

Sierra Leone's Bloody Democracy: A Reminder of an Ugly Past

This paper is about Sierra Leone's current democracy and issues of gross human rights violations that have occurred in the country from 2018 to 2023. I refer to it as "Bloody Democracy" because the blood of dozens of civilians has been spilled by the government through its forces and allies over the years. Opposition arrests plus silencing of critical voices have also been rampant. These issues have been systemic. All civilian protests in Makeni, Lunsar, Tombo, Kamakwe (in the North), Freetown (Pa Demba Road Prisons) and August 10, 2022 have all been bloody with many civilian lives and few security officials lost. The incident of Satta Lamin, a female opposition party supporter who was raped by ten men in front of her family in Kailahun in the East, is a vivid example. In all these killings and events, no one has been held accountable. The following question therefore remains: Who gave those orders? The events have created fear among most civil society actors, opposition party members and ordinary citizens, and prompting them to speak out and challenge the excesses of the regime. The occurrences made citizens come out in huge numbers to vote on June 24, 2023. But when the polls closed, the elections commissioner gave President Julius Maada Bio a second term win. That result, according to both local and international observers, lacked transparency and best practices. Hence, most of the country's key donor partners (United States, United Kingdom, and European Union) are angry. President Bio is now ruling a divided country after the opposition party boycotted all state activities including parliament. This situation, plus the injustice and continuous human rights violations, has the potential of reversing the country's gains as a post-war nation still trying to recover from its ugly past. Now, Sierra Leoneans living abroad have taken over the protests as protesting back home is now a death sentence.

Ngozi Caleb Kamalu

United States Foreign Policy in Southern Africa (1981–1989) during the Ronald Reagan Era: The Case of Linkage Politics in Mozambique

This paper explores the politics of issue linkage in the settlement of the Mozambican conflict. More especially, it probes how the Ronald Reagan Administration used linkage and communist containment strategies in the conduct of the relations between the United States and Mozambique. The basic research questions which this study purports to address are as follows: First, in international disputes, what are the causes of action relating to a given dispute are mutually acceptable to rival states when made contingent on their overriding concerns? Second, was the United States policy toward Mozambique motivated by its concern to guide the latter into the path of economic, social and political stability, national integration, and consolidation, or to maintain United States economic interests of securing access to strategic minerals like diamond, copper, nickel, and coal? Third, to what extent did ideological concerns to contain the spread of communism in Southern Africa shape United States-Mozambican relations? United States concerns over the presence of Cuban troops in Angola, Soviet influence in Mozambique and the communist bloc support of the Mozambican National Resistance (MNR) and SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) forces fighting to overthrow the Apartheid South African Regime shaped its policies toward Mozambique. With heightened polarization of conflict in the southern African region, the United States government, in order to protect its interests, relied on methods that would bring a peaceful settlement of the disputes between South Africa and Mozambique short of outright violent revolution with the potential to disrupt the Western sources of strategic mineral supply. This goal formed the foundation of the fundamental elements of the Nkomati Accord of 1984 in which South Africa and Mozambique pledged not to interfere in each

other's internal affairs by not supporting any insurgency movements while containing the spread of communism in the Southern Africa region.

Tendai Kambamura

“Building Better Lives for Those with Less”: Evaluating the Impact of Non-governmental Organizations in Africa's Rural Poverty Alleviation

This paper investigates the impact of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on poverty alleviation in Chikomba District, Zimbabwe. The study adopted a triangulated research approach and gathered data from 40 participants. The findings indicate that despite the presence of NGO small scale dairy projects in the community for an extended period, rural poverty remains a significant challenge. The survey highlights that many small-scale dairy projects struggle to sustain themselves due to various factors such as insufficient funds and credits, lack of skills, inefficient transport systems, and limited veterinary services for the dairy cattle. Moreover, the incomes generated from these projects are meager and insufficient to fully support the livelihoods of the rural population. Irrespective of gender and age, participants acknowledge that the unemployment rate in the district remains high, emphasizing the importance of designing NGO programs that address this issue. Additionally, given the ongoing politico-economic crisis in Zimbabwe, NGO income-generating projects continue to play a crucial role in combating poverty in the country.

Emmanuel Kange

Enhancing Cybersecurity in the Face of the Current Global Crisis: Empowering Africa and Its Diaspora

In this paper, I explore the critical role of cybersecurity in navigating the current global crisis, with a specific focus on Africa and its Diaspora. By addressing the subtopics of women and gender, health, politics, education, economics, business, trade, social issues, technology, religion, climate change, environment, peace, and security, I aim to shed light on the intersecting challenges and opportunities within these areas. The African continent and its people have been disproportionately affected by the current global crisis. As a cybersecurity graduate student, my research investigates how cyber threats have intensified during these challenging times. Through an interdisciplinary approach, this paper seeks to propose innovative solutions that can empower Africa and its Diaspora to address the evolving cyber landscape while also mitigating risks. Recognizing the unique vulnerabilities faced by women and gender-related issues, I analyze the gendered impact of cyber threats and advocate for inclusive strategies. Furthermore, I explore the role of technology and its potential to drive advancements in healthcare, education, economics, business, trade, and social spheres, fostering sustainable development across the continent. With a keen focus on political stability, I also examine how cyber threats can undermine governance structures, while also investigating strategies to reinforce cybersecurity measures within political institutions. Additionally, I delve into the intersection of cybersecurity, religion, and peacebuilding, emphasizing the importance of bridging the digital division to ensure equal access and safeguard religious communities. Furthermore, my paper assesses the connections among climate change, environment, and cybersecurity, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable practices and resilient infrastructures. Lastly, I emphasize the significance of collaborations among African nations, the

Diaspora, and the international community to enhance cybersecurity capabilities and promote peace and security.

Gift Kapunura

Building a Robust Agro-industrial Sector in Africa: Analyzing the Effects of Industrial Action in Selected Infant Industries in the Msasa Industrial Area of Harare, Zimbabwe

The agro-industrial sector holds tremendous promise for driving economic growth and poverty alleviation in Africa. This research aims to explore the challenges faced by infant agro-industries in the Msasa industrial area of Harare, Zimbabwe, particularly concerning industrial action and its effects on sector development. The study adopts a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with key stakeholders, including industry representatives, labor unions, and government officials, with quantitative data analysis of industrial action occurrences and their economic repercussions. By investigating selected infant industries, this research sheds light on the broader implications for Africa agro-industrial growth and identifies strategies for building a robust and resilient sector. The findings offer valuable insights into the causes and the patterns of industrial action, highlighting issues such as wage disputes, working conditions and labor rights that significantly impact on productivity and investment in the region. Furthermore, this research underscores the importance of fostering strong and collaborative relationships among industry players, labor unions and policy makers to mitigate the adverse effects of industrial action on sector development. The study's recommendations focus on designing proactive policies to prevent disputes, enhance social dialogue mechanisms, and promote inclusive economic growth to ensure a sustainable and competitive agro-industrial sector in Africa. By fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by infant agro-industries in Zimbabwe and the broader continent, this research contributes to the formulation of evidence-based strategies that can transform the agro-industrial landscape in Africa, leading to increased employment opportunities, enhanced productivity and, ultimately, greater economic prosperity.

Anderson Tinashe Kombe

The Path to Africa's Educational Transformation: A Case Study of the New Curriculum Reform Implementation in Zimbabwe and its Influential Factors

This research delves into the challenges encountered during the implementation of the new curriculum in Zimbabwean primary and secondary schools, with a focus on investigating teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward the curriculum changes. Zimbabwe's recent overhaul of its educational curriculum following independence has been met with various obstacles, prompting the need to explore potential gaps between policy and practice. Understanding these complexities is crucial for advancing the field of curriculum reform, especially given that this is one of the most significant education reform initiatives since 1980. The new curriculum reform, which emphasized information and communications technology (ICT) and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects, sparked widespread criticism on social media platforms from both teachers and parents, subsequently exacerbated by teacher strikes. Concerns raised by stakeholders pertained to the timing and approach of the reform, capacity to handle the changes, resource inadequacies, remuneration issues, increased workloads, and inadequate training. This study aimed

to uncover solutions to the challenges hindering effective implementation by examining the factors influencing curriculum reform from three key perspectives: (1) teachers, (2) schools, and (3) the government. The research was conducted in Harare and Goromonzi District, focusing on public government schools (both urban and rural) and trust schools. The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data were obtained through the Stages of Concern Questionnaire (SOCQ), which illuminated teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward the new curriculum, and underwent analysis using statistical techniques in SPSS, such as independent t-tests, factor analysis, and regression. Also, qualitative data were gathered through interviews and document analysis, which were transcribed and coded into themes. The findings indicated that teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward the new curriculum were generally unfavorable, with concerns still predominantly residing in the lower stages (Stages 1 and 2) even four years after its implementation. These stages demonstrated a lack of adequate knowledge, intense personal concerns, and some uneasiness with the curriculum changes. Several barriers impeding curriculum implementation were identified; they included inadequate capacity to manage the reforms, flawed reform approaches, political and power dynamics, insufficient remuneration, among others. Moreover, the government's current initiatives to support implementation have shown limited impact, necessitating a more inclusive and holistic approach that involves all stakeholders. In light of the study's findings, recommendations are made for the government to reassess the entire educational reform process, promoting greater stakeholder participation, enhancing retraining programs, and fostering collaboration among teachers and schools. Addressing teachers' attitudes requires building trust through inclusive measures, improved welfare, and increased remuneration. Additionally, the government must augment education funding and engage in public-private partnerships (PPPs) to bolster resource provision, support structures, and accountability measures. By implementing these recommendations, Zimbabwe can pave the way for a successful transformation of its educational landscape.

L

Falla Dominic Lamin

Title of the Paper: Decentralization of Education and Radical Inclusion for Sustainable Development in Sierra Leone

This paper is about decentralization in education through free quality education and radical inclusion and the lessons that can be learned from the approach for sustainable education in Sierra Leone. Formal education was introduced to Sierra Leone in 1827 as the first European-style institution for higher education west of the Sahara. The institution was started as a training center for Christian ministers and was later expanded to offer courses in law, medicine, engineering, and the languages. Njala University College, however, was established in 1964, three years after the country's independence as a gift from the people of the United States of America. It was established to train agricultural extension workers and was later incorporated as part of the University of Sierra Leone. In 2005, Njala University College (NUC) became Njala University (NU) and was made an autonomous institution. The University of Sierra Leone now comprises of three constituent colleges: (1) Fourah Bay College (the oldest); (2) Institute of Public Administration & Management (IPAM), which was established in 1980 with the sole aim of training middle-level public servants to promote transparency and accountability in the civil

service; it has now diversified its courses and has become the business wing of the university; and (3) the College of Allied Health Sciences (COAHS) was established in 1988 with the sole objective of the training of medical doctors, nurses, and other health practitioners. Thus, the major research question probed in this paper is the following: Has the decentralization and radical inclusion increased access and improve the quality in education for sustainable development? This paper will employ the mixed method approach with the use of qualitative and quantitative methods. The data collection technique will entail focus group discussions, interviews, and participant observation and a structured questionnaire will be key in the methodology. The expected results from this research will show that decentralization and radical inclusion will increase access to education for all and improve the quality of education in Sierra Leone.

M

Everjoy Magwegwe

An Auto-ethnography Exploration on the Use of Forum Theatre in Gender-based Violence Prevention in Mining Communities

This explorative study delves into the potential of forum theatre as a powerful tool to combat gender-based violence (GBV) in Makusha, a densely populated mining community in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. This community, deeply impacted by rapid mining industry expansion, faces intensifying social tensions, mainly due to the influx of migrant workers and a confluence of conditions that give rise to GBV. This research undertakes an auto-ethnographic approach, a seldom-used methodology in studies involving historically marginalized communities such as those in mining areas. This unique approach permits a comprehensive, intimate understanding of the intricate socio-cultural dimensions of GBV in this context. At the core of the study lies an examination of the influence of forum theatre, a deeply interactive and participatory form of theatre, on community attitudes and behaviors. Particular attention is paid to its role in empowering the most vulnerable segments of the community, predominantly women and marginalized groups, and how it fosters community-wide resilience and resistance against GBV. The study uncovers the transformative potential of non-conventional media like forum theatre in addressing deep-seated social issues. It provides a compelling case for employing innovative, participatory interventions in marginalized settings, contributing to a broader dialogue on prevention strategies that respect and harness local sociocultural dynamics. It advocates for the urgency of creating safe, inclusive, and violence-free spaces in vulnerable communities like Makusha. Emerging from the investigation are valuable insights that contribute to the development of culturally contextualized and participatory approaches to counter gender inequality and violence in mining communities. These include the use of self-help groups, family clubs, the Neighbor's Keeper initiative, traditional methods, social media platforms, and sports initiatives as potential pathways to curb GBV.

Cuthbert Makosa

Techno-economic Evaluation of Solar and Wind Energy Integration into the African Power Grid: A Case Study of Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

This study conducts a comprehensive techno-economic evaluation of integrating solar and wind energy into the African power grid, with a specific focus on the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. Against the backdrop of persistent power outages and load shedding experienced in South

Africa and other countries in Africa, the research investigates the feasibility and potential advantages of incorporating renewable energy sources. By utilizing a case study approach, the technical aspects of integrating solar and wind power, including resource availability, grid stability, and intermittency management, are analyzed. Moreover, the economic evaluation explores the costs, investments, and potential financial returns associated with renewable energy integration. Taking into consideration the unique characteristics of the Eastern Cape Province, along with the broader African power grid context, this research identifies and addresses key challenges and proposes effective solutions. The outcomes of this study provide valuable insights for policymakers, energy planners, and stakeholders in devising strategies to overcome power supply limitations and foster sustainable energy systems. By leveraging solar and wind energy resources, South Africa and other African countries can mitigate power outages, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and enhance the resilience and efficiency of their power grids.

Precious Tariro Makosa

Unveiling the Nexus between Indigenization Policy and Women's Empowerment: A Case of Zimbabwe's Mhondoro-Ngezi District

This research study aims to explore the effectiveness of the indigenization policy in addressing women discrimination and empowering them through the revenue generated by the Community Share Ownership Trust. Drawing on existing literature, it is evident that Zimbabwe is not the first country to implement such a policy, as neighboring countries have also adopted similar measures. The primary objective of the indigenization policy was to disempower foreign investors and uplift the socioeconomic status of marginalized groups, including women. Nonetheless, the findings of this study suggest that the policy inadequately addresses gender discrimination due to several factors such as the underrepresentation of women in law-making bodies, patriarchal dominance, cultural beliefs that hinder women's progress, and a lack of clarity regarding policy objectives. Consequently, a top-down approach was employed to tackle the issue of discrimination faced by women in the marketplace. This approach, however, yielded negative outcomes, as empowering women without their active involvement and input proved to be unfeasible. In this study, I employ the Basic Needs Approach (BNA) and the Capability Approach (CA) as two theoretical frameworks that are relevant to women's empowerment within the context of the indigenization, economic and empowerment policies in Zimbabwe, with a specific focus on the Mhondoro-Ngezi district. The Capability Approach is given greater emphasis due to its ability to elucidate women's capacities and potentials as entrepreneurs, thereby contributing to societal and national development. The study uses a qualitative approach by utilizing a descriptive research design. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions serve as the primary research tools.

Natasha Niam Marere

Assessing the Impact of Voluntary Organizations in Reducing Health-related Inequities in Zimbabwe. A Case of Harare

Health-related inequities are a major issue in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), including Zimbabwe. In this study, I assess the impact of voluntary organizations in reducing health-related inequities in Harare, Zimbabwe. Using a qualitative approach, I conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants from voluntary organizations and the government and employed thematic analysis to analyze the data. The results indicate that voluntary organizations play a vital role in complementing the government's efforts in addressing health-related inequities. Specifically, voluntary organizations have improved access to health services, particularly for

marginalized populations. They have also provided health education and engaged in health promotion activities, which have increased health literacy and promoted healthy behaviors. Moreover, voluntary organizations have advocated for policy changes, which have had a positive impact on health outcomes and reduced inequities. The findings highlight the significance of voluntary organizations in reducing health-related inequities and suggest that further support for these organizations is necessary to achieve greater health equity. These results can be informative to policymakers and stakeholders working in similar contexts.

Faith Mariponde

Lessons from Paris Agreement towards Preservation of Wetlands in Africa

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 parties at the United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France on December 12, 2015. It entered into force on November 4, 2016. This paper is about how the Paris Agreement would preserve the wetlands and rainforests of Africa. The rainforests and wetlands are essential to the indigenous African people as they stabilize climate, provide a home to many plants and animals, support ethnic peoples, and make these area interesting places to visit, among others. The Paris Agreement of 2015 seeks to protect the wetlands and rainforests like the Okavango and Congo basin which have faced serious threats from petroleum exploration, mining, and infrastructure building. Using a qualitative explanatory case study methodology (which emphasizes words, as opposed to numerical values, to answer the questions *how* and *why*), the paper shows that the Paris Agreement saved these jewels of Africa from extinction of flora and fauna which take habitat in these wetlands. African countries therefore need to implement the Paris Agreement to have a unified effort towards climate change, as they suffer more from its effect.

Figio Mariponde

Tribalism in Africa and Threats to Peace and Security

This paper is about how tribalism (or ethnic cleavage) has threatened peace and stability on the African continent over the last four decades. The African population is made up of various ethnic groups that have failed to coexist in some parts of Africa. There have been ethnic cleansing in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Nigeria, among other countries. The notion of tribal superiority has caused instability in many countries as one tribe has more access to resources and political power compared to other tribes. There has been massive displacement of certain tribes in the Democratic Republic of Congo which has led to a refugee crisis in the neighboring countries. The lack of political will to address issues of tribalism threatens peace on the continent. Using the Realist Theories of Peace and a qualitative case study methodology, the paper shows that just like the refugee crisis in Europe the one in Africa could also be due to the effects of tribalism on the continent as some tribes feel excluded from the economic activities and nation building. Some countries have been in a state of civil war as there are groups aligned along tribal lines.

Charles Massimo

Uptake and Implementation of Public Private Partnerships for Educational Infrastructure Development in Zimbabwe State Universities

The use of private-public partnerships (PPPs) has become the most popular alternative model worldwide for the delivery of public infrastructure and services on a cost effective and sustainable basis and some sectors in Zimbabwe have since embraced it. Despite convincing heuristic and

pragmatic evidence that PPPs are feasible and capable of injecting dynamism in the public sector infrastructure development, Zimbabwe state universities appear to be disinterested despite notable visible educational infrastructural gaps and enabling legal, institutional and operational frameworks available. The low uptake and implementation inertia of educational infrastructure PPPs in state universities regardless of the government's relentless efforts indicates that something is amiss in the Zimbabwe PPP matrix in this sector. Guided by the Critical Success Factor Model for PPPs and the Public Choice Theory, this study intends to establish theoretical and empirical insights into the principal factors impeding the uptake and implementation of PPPs in Zimbabwe state universities. This explanatory study shall employ interpretive policy analysis qualitative research methodology, underpinned by constructivism research philosophy and augmented by a multiple case study research design. The participants will be selected through criterion and critical purposive sampling techniques while the secondary data shall be sourced from relevant literature. Data will be collected through in-depth key informant interviews from the relevant public and private involved educational infrastructure development in Zimbabwe state universities. Transcribed interviews, combined with field notes, shall be organized thematically and analyzed using NVIVO. The outcome from the study is expected to inform PPP policy in Zimbabwe, improve the implementation practice of PPPs, and influence the PPPs academic scholarship which is heavily skewed towards economic development sectors. This study shall also ultimately advocate for sector and context specific PPP policies as opposed to the one size fit all approach to PPPs implementation.

Javis Enow Mbu and Ebenezer Lemven Wirba

Impact of Mobile Money Adoption on Financial Behavior in Cameroon: A Gender Perspective

In Sub-Saharan Africa, where access to formal banking services is limited, a significant portion of individuals and households relies on informal methods such as njangi group contributions and keeping money “under a mattress” for savings and borrowing. In this study, we investigate the implications of mobile money adoption for financial behavior in Cameroon using the 2017 FinScope survey. Specifically, the paper examines whether there are gender disparities in the propensity to adopt mobile money services and evaluates the impact of mobile money adoption on the probability of saving and borrowing, both overall and by gender. To address potential biases, we employed the endogenous switching probit regression (ESP) model, which accounts for endogeneity and selection bias arising from unobserved factors and structural differences between users and non-users of mobile money services. Our findings suggest that men in Cameroon are 6.3% more likely to adopt mobile money services compared to women, indicating the presence of gender disparities in mobile money adoption. Moreover, we observed a positive impact of mobile money adoption on saving and borrowing behavior. The effect was more pronounced among men compared to women, suggesting potential gender-specific differences in the utilization of mobile money services for financial transactions. Based on these results, it is crucial to implement consistent policies and regulatory reforms in the mobile money sector in Cameroon. Such measures can facilitate enhanced mobile money penetration, leading to increased financial inclusiveness for most of the population. By promoting access to formal financial services through mobile money platforms, individuals in Cameroon, especially women who may face additional barriers, can benefit from improved financial inclusion and economic opportunities.

Fredline A. O. M'Cormack-Hale

Synergy or Fragmentation? Assessing Sierra Leone's Health Care Initiatives over Time in a Post-COVID-2019 Era

The Global South has long been seen as a place of disaster and pandemics; and at the start of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-2019 outbreak, many were worried about African countries. Modernization Theory has argued that the problem was that so-called developing countries needed to look to developed countries and mimic their development trajectory. Solutions were to be found in these countries, with a bevy of organisations and institutions set up to facilitate this knowledge transfer, including the international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. COVID-2019 appeared to turn this conventional wisdom on its head. Following many doomsday predictions that Global South countries would be devastated by the outbreak, a new narrative soon emerged. As countries in the Global North like the United States, England, Italy and Spain saw death rates rise and struggled to contain the outbreak, countries in the Global South, including in Sub-Saharan Africa, were recording less deaths and increasingly commended for doing better. However, digging a bit deeper in Sierra Leone's response, we encounter several paradoxes. After an initial positive start, like other countries, Sierra Leone was unable to keep up with the rush of containment policy initiatives imposed domestically and internationally. This is particularly puzzling given Sierra Leone's ostensible focus on building synergies between the agendas of health security, health promotion and universal health care. Instead, during the outbreak, the country lacked the resources to implement these interventions adequately and was arguably ultimately ill-prepared. In this paper, I examine the reasons behind this discrepancy. Going beyond the conventional explanations of why international assistance has largely failed to strengthen health systems, the paper focuses on the international relations and diplomacy of preparedness, explored through the prism of dependency and neo-colonialism that continue to underpin international priorities and related assistance when it comes to funding health care as well as local factors and constraints that promote fragmentation and undermine synergies in health care response.

Simbarashe Innocent Mudube

Examining the Implementation of Digital Payments Solutions among Small and Medium Enterprises in the Informal Sector of Sub-Saharan Africa: A Comprehensive Analysis of Harare, Zimbabwe

The widespread use of digital payment solutions (plastic money) and its implications for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been extensively discussed in the literature. Nonetheless, there is a noticeable gap in academic research regarding the specific impact and scope of plastic money among SMEs in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital city. A mixed methods approach was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, for data collection and analysis. Data from 30 SMEs in Harare's Central Business District (CBD) were utilized. The findings revealed that SMEs predominantly adopt Point of Sale (POS) systems, Automated Teller Machine (ATM) cards, Mobile banking, and ZIPIT (ZIMSWITCH Instant Payment Interchange Technology) as their preferred plastic money platforms. Various challenges hindering the effective adoption of these instruments and others were identified.

Wilson Mugizi

Resource Based View Approach in Implementation of E-Learning in Selected Ugandan Public Universities

The reality of the unanticipated COVID-2019 pandemic that led to the shutdown of university campuses is that it resulted in the need for the implementation of e-learning by universities. However, the challenge of implementing online teaching was that universities in Uganda were not prepared and are still grappling to successfully implement it. This study sought to establish the relationship between existing universities' resources and e-learning implementation during and beyond the COVID-2019 pandemic era. Anchoring on the Resource-Based View Theory, the study examined the relationship between universities' tangible resources, intangible resources and capabilities on e-learning implementation during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic era. The study also sought to suggest strategies for managing e-waste resulting from e-learning implementation. The study used a mixed research approach in a cross-sectional survey involving 312 academic staff, eight e-learning technical experts, and 144 students. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and structural equation modelling (SEM), while qualitative data were analysed through content analysis. The findings revealed that tangible resources and universities' capabilities positively and significantly predicted e-learning implementation, but intangible resources positively but insignificantly predicted e-learning implementation. The findings also revealed that e-waste resources can be managed by selling them to those involved in recycling, thereby developing the capacity to recycle and destroying the useless ones in an environmentally friendly manner. It was concluded that tangible resources and universities' capabilities are essential for e-learning implementation, and low intangible resources hinder e-learning implementation. It was therefore recommended that university managers put in place sufficient tangible resources to facilitate e-learning implementation; make an effort to improve their e-learning capabilities; and also enhance their intangible resources. It was also recommended that universities collect e-waste for commercial purposes, develop the capacity to recycle e-waste, ensure academics follow the established policies for e-waste disposal, and sensitise their stakeholders about proper e-waste management.

Mueni wa Muiu

***Politics and Government in South Africa* (book discussion)**

This discussion is about politics and government in South Africa from the colonial period to the present. How often does one get a perspective of *Politics and Government in South Africa* from below (marginalized groups based on economic class, gender and race)? *Politics and Government* begins with an overview of the various theories that are used to study South Africa. This is followed by an examination of the historical foundation of South Africa's political culture and institutions. The next sections cover the following topics: parliament, local, national government and South Africa's foreign policy, as well as its economy, justice system and social movements. A study of South Africa's politics and government would be incomplete without a discussion of the role that artists, authors, film makers and musicians play as social commentators.

Michelle Musamba

Examining the Link between the Environment, Eating and Exercise Patterns in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Qualitative Exploration of Obesity among Adult Women in Harare, Zimbabwe

This qualitative exploratory study aims to examine the links among the environment, eating, and exercise patterns of adult women in Harare, Zimbabwe as a means to understand the factors contributing to obesity in Sub-Saharan Africa. Obesity is a growing public health concern in the region, particularly among adult women. Understanding the role of the environment in shaping eating and exercise behaviors is crucial for developing effective interventions to address this issue.

The study will employ a qualitative approach, utilizing in-depth interviews to explore the perceptions and experiences of adult women regarding how the environment influences their eating and exercise habits. A purposive sampling technique will be employed to recruit a diverse sample of adult women residing in Harare. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted, allowing participants to freely express their thoughts and experiences related to their environment, eating habits, and exercise routines. Thematic analysis will be used to analyze the interview data, allowing for the identification of key themes and patterns related to the impact of the environment on eating and exercise behaviors. Factors such as access to healthy food options, availability of recreational facilities, social norms, and cultural influences will be explored in-depth. The findings of this study have the potential to inform interventions and strategies aimed at promoting healthy eating and exercise behaviors among adult women in Harare. By gaining insights into the perceptions and experiences of adult women, policymakers, healthcare professionals, and community stakeholders can develop targeted interventions that address the specific environmental factors affecting eating and exercise habits. These interventions may include improving access to nutritious foods, creating safe and accessible recreational spaces, and promoting health education programs. Moreover, the study's findings may have broader implications for other regions in Sub-Saharan Africa facing similar challenges related to obesity and environmental influences on health behaviors. By sharing the insights gained from this research, stakeholders can learn from and adapt successful strategies to their respective contexts.

Tinotenda Musamba

Unveiling Africa's Economic Potential: A Comprehensive Analysis of Its Emergence as the Final Frontier in the Global Economy

This research explores why Africa is recognized as the “last frontier” in the global economy and examines its implications. By investigating factors such as economic growth, resource abundance, demographics, investment opportunities, and regional integration, this study provides insights into Africa's potential as a major player in the global economic landscape. It adopts a mixed-methods approach, including a literature review, case studies, expert interviews, and quantitative analysis of economic indicators, demographic data, investment patterns, and regional integration indices. The findings contribute to the existing literature by offering a comprehensive analysis of Africa's economic potential and its impact on multinational corporations, international financial institutions, and policymakers. This research enhances understanding of Africa's economic growth drivers, the significance of regional integration, and the implications for key stakeholders interested in capitalizing on Africa's emergence as the “last frontier” in the global economy.

Gwinyai M. Mutero

Analyzing the Barriers to Success Faced by Africa's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): A Case of Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe

This research aims to analyze the barriers hindering the success of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Africa, with a specific focus on the case of Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe. Despite the use of social media for marketing, SMEs in Africa face significant challenges in achieving sustainable growth and development. The government of Zimbabwe has recognized the importance of SMEs in economic progress and has implemented various support measures, including training programs. Nonetheless, the performance of SMEs in Chinhoyi and across the country remains hindered. This

research adopts a mixed method approach, employing snowball and purposive sampling techniques. Data collection involved the use of questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis, identifying themes and discussing their implications. Demographic data were analyzed using statistical software. The findings of this study provide valuable insights and recommendations for policymakers, governmental bodies, and academic institutions to improve the design and implementation of training programs that effectively enhance the performance of SMEs in Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe.

Tapiwanashe Muvoti

Business Strategies that Will Enable African Small to Medium-sized Enterprises to Improve Performance

Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a critical role in economic revival and growth and can lead countries to increase competitiveness. They are foundational to their industries and promote strong commercial space sectors that encourage innovation and creativity to develop and facilitate industrialization. While SMEs explicitly and implicitly affect a country's economic growth, they also create significant opportunities in the labor market. Globally, SMEs form part of the private sector. The economy and society also depend on SMEs and several factors support and influence their strategies which in turn affect their business development. This study examined the business strategies used by SMEs in Africa in order to improve business performance. Furthermore, the study considered the importance of performance and innovation as mediating variables in the relationship between business strategies and competitive advantage. The findings show that business strategies have a positive impact on competitive advantage. Better business strategies improve the competitive advantage of SMEs. Moreover, business performance and innovation also mediate the relationship between business strategies and competitive advantages. These results provide evidence of the importance of performance and innovation to improve the competitive advantage. It is suggested that SMEs improve their performance and innovation capability in order to strengthen their competitive advantages.

Njoki Mwarumba

Mitigating Disaster Data Gaps: Establishing Local Quick Response Data Teams

Globally, disasters and catastrophes are projected to increase in intensity, frequency, and novelty as extreme events become embedded within the broader climate change phenomenon. Historically, quick response research during extreme events has been pivotal for capturing otherwise ephemeral data. The Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-2019 pandemic, however, severely impeded this process due to globally imposed public health interventions that curtailed travel and methodologies requiring face-to-face interaction. Researchers were not able to access, gather, preserve and verify evaluative social science data critical to disaster decision making, planning, and resource allocation. Quality social science data pre, during, and post disaster remain integral for comprehensive disaster cycle management. My proposed presentation will focus on the rethinking and innovation for disaster quick response research conducted during the pandemic. The emergent approach included collaboration between a local rural youth group based in Kenya and a disaster scholar who virtually trained the youth group on community based participatory action research in the early months of the pandemic, and eventually conducted field research when public health interventions were eased. The conceptualization and actualization of locally trained research teams provides opportunity to mitigate loss of critical disaster data, provides for a decentralized and more

equitable process to data gathering and research, and could narrow the significant gap on Afrocentric produced and contextual data.

N

Judith Irene Nagasha

Fisheries Value Chains and Marketing: Women's Experiences at Masese Landing Site along Lake Victoria Shores in Uganda

Women in Uganda play a significant role in the value chain management of fish. Evidence suggests that improving women's entry point and participation in fisheries, access to markets and value chains in relation to their prevailing gender roles may improve their economic empowerment and livelihoods. This study therefore explored women's experiences in fisheries value chains and marketing at Masese fish landing site along Lake Victoria Shores in Uganda. Precisely, the study investigated the current fish safety practices, constraints, opportunities and strategies for production of safe fish products, value addition, and access to sustainable markets. The study contributes to the theoretical and conceptual discourse on fisheries value chains and women's role and place along fisheries development and economic empowerment. The study used the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) five domain frameworks and the theory of change. Qualitative research paradigm was used that explored focused group discussions, key informants, and observation and photography techniques for data collection. The results indicate that women are at the heart of fish value chains from the boats to the markets. Nonetheless, they lack knowledge, adequate skills and technology to produce quality and safe products. Women are constrained in accessing sustainable markets for their products due to their gender roles and this contributes to market-driven losses that ultimately impact on women's livelihoods. The study recommends an integration of gender concerns within fish value chains using a gender transformative approach in empowering women economically and creating sustainable market linkages for their products to improve livelihoods. Therefore, the study contributes to the body of knowledge in the disciplines of gender, food security, and fisheries value chains by providing realistic and sustainable strategies for all stakeholders.

Hema Narang

China and India in Africa: Soft Power Perspective

The rise of China and India as economic powerhouses in the world has heralded a new era in the international relations of the present century. Both have witnessed accelerated growth rates in the past few decades with a flurry of diplomatic activity around the world. Recalibrating their foreign policies, both the countries are building active robust ties with the developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. A continent with more than fifty countries and home to approximately 900 million people, Africa has abundant natural resources with vast unexplored economic possibilities. Africa has, therefore, assumed strategic importance for both the countries. With the increasing engagements of the Asian powers in Africa, both China and India are also expanding

their soft power capabilities in the African continent. Soft power in the present age of information and technology is an important asset to project a country's image in the world, as opposed to hard power which is increasingly facing the threat of global disapproval. China is actively promoting its soft power through cultural exchanges, expanding its cultural outreach, opening up media bureaus and Confucius Institutes. In case of India, deep-rooted historical connections, language and cultural affinities have been important in building soft power with Africa. The purpose of this study is to assess the soft power aspects of Chinese and Indian engagements in Africa. It will also seek to ascertain how China and India understand this concept and make use of it in their policies, strategies and actions towards Africa in an explicit or implicit manner.

Epeti L. Ndive, Minkande Julien Brice, Ernest L. Molua, Justin E. Ayuk and Majory O. Meliko Access to Finance and Growth of Agricultural Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in a Crisis Context: A Gender Analysis

This paper is about a gender analysis of the effect of access to finance on the growth of agricultural small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in a crises context and how the lessons that can be learned from the study will go a long way to help agribusinesses to have more access to finances and consequently more economically viable agribusinesses. In a context marked by crises that weaken SMEs' growth across the world, for Africa in general, and Cameroon in particular, access to different financing mechanisms seems to be the key to their development based on data collected from 504 agricultural SMEs in the South-west and Littoral regions of Cameroon. An estimate was made using the ordinary least squares (OLS) method. The results show that professional training, company size, legal registration, urban geographical area and informal sources of financing are significantly positive for the growth of agricultural SMEs. On the other hand, the age of the business had a negative impact on SME growth. Moreover, it appears that the growth of medium-sized enterprises is more significant when women are the owners. The study therefore recommends that policy makers should rethink policies that encourage financial institutions to reduce interest rates, lengthen loan terms, and spread repayment over a longer period or increase moratoria.

Samwel Kiuguini Nduati 1

Christian Men in the Anglican Diocese of Nakuru, Kenya Looking for a Sense of Belonging in the African Culture

This paper is about Christian men in the Anglican Diocese of Nakuru, Kenya looking for sense of belonging in the African culture. It is now acknowledged by many Churches especially the mainline denominations in Africa that a sizeable number of Christians are going back to their African cultures. There are those Christians who have decided to abandon and denounce their Christian faith, but others have decided to remain in the church while at the same time practicing some aspects of their African culture. This is not a case of followers only but Christian leaders, whether clergy or lay are equally affected. Why should this be the case? This is the question that this paper seeks to address by looking at literature on Christianity and culture but also bringing in data from an ethnographic study conducted in the Anglican Diocese of Nakuru among men for over ten years. The Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) has a men's department called Kenya Anglican Men Association (KAMA), and it is the space where this ethnographic study was conducted. Conflict theory which was first developed by Karl Marx guided the analysis of data. Although the Diocese is cosmopolitan the study singled out the Agikuyu Christian men because of their sudden relapse into Agikuyu Cultural practices. The Diocese of Nakuru is discontented because while it is preaching the Biblical Jesus, some of the Agikuyu men in the Church are

preaching the historical and cultural Jesus. Through interviews and focus group discussions it emerged that Christian men are looking for a sense of belonging in the African culture. This is partly due to the influence of elders who have come out strongly to advocate for a return to the African culture while claiming that the white man hoodwinked them into 'his' Christian religion during the time of colonialism. Other factors include the crisis of masculinity, desire to control and a sense of achievement.

Samwel Kiuguini Nduati 2

Opportunity of Valued African Communalism in Digital Space in Times of Crisis

This paper is about digital space as an opportunity of enhancing valued African communalism. To say that African communalism is valued is undisputable because at the least it embodies community having more value than an individual. The value of African communalism is embedded in shared interests, goals and values. This value of African communalism is not lost in the times of global crisis because innovations have to find a way of maintaining it. This was the case when the global crisis of the COVID-2019 pandemic disrupted every sphere of human life. Human beings could no longer interact physically as they were used to, world economies were affected, and religious places of worship were closed down. It is during this crisis that digital space became more useful than before and virtual communities maintained communalism and especially in Africa. One area where communalism was maintained is in religion where in some churches worship went on virtually. Such is the case of Christ Is the Answer Ministry (CITAM) in Kenya. By use of ethnography which was conducted at CITAM Valley Road for six months data were collected through participant observation, interviews, focus group discussions and online questionnaires. Qualitative methods of data analysis were employed while paying attention to the African communalism as the conceptual framework. It appeared that African communalism was sustained in CITAM during the time of the COVID-2019 pandemic global crisis through the digital space. The future of the valued African communalism lies in the digital space where virtual communities will sustain interactions and therefore reap the benefits of African communalism.

Lisa Nikol Nealy

A Theory of Economic Globalization: Ghanaian Women Functioning in Restricted Spaces within Religious, Social, Economic, and Politically Underdeveloped Communities

The African continent is characterized by a myriad of very dichotomous cultural elements that often elide common-day practices surrounding gender inequities from land tenure distribution to access to cash crops to access to educational facilities and financial institutions, to health services. These objective realities abound for African women living in Northern rural Ghanaian communities in which this group is restricted religiously, economically, politically, and socially, and are forced to function within a limited space. Although Ghana is one of the most democratized African countries, many communities within the country remain underdeveloped in terms of women equality. Northern rural communities in Ghana have grown very little since the advent of economic globalization as women are denied access to land and education. By contrast, Southern Ghana has witnessed huge growth because of economic globalization that has benefitted women gaining education and access to financial institutions and health services. Hence, this current study seeks to analyze the problems associated with globalization and its negative influence on the religious, political, economic and social realities of Northern rural Ghanaian women. In doing so, the theory

of globalization will be tested. A triangulation methodology would also be employed in this research to test those factors of latent endogenous and exogenous variables that influence the educational and economic empowerment of this population sample. Five theoretically-derived hypotheses will be tested, and one research query will be answered by utilizing primary data collection techniques which will include four heterogeneous cross-sectional focus groups that consist of 5-9 Ghanaian women participants 18 years old and older; a 54-item structured survey research instrument that will be administered to focus group participants post the focus group interviews; and face-to-face interviews with Ghanaian Economic Ministers and Financial Ministers, Parliament Members, and a former President and a presidential candidate. Replete secondary data sources will also be employed in this study that will consist of the Ghana Living Survey Standard (GLSS), the Ghana Twin Standards Survey (GTSS), and the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA). Preliminary findings reveal that religiosity is a key social and cultural deterrent of economic and educational advancement of rural Ghanaian Muslim women.

Steven Taurai Nharara

Uncovering the Post-Pandemic Challenges Faced by Lubricants Enterprises in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Case Study of the North West Province in South Africa

This research study aims to uncover and examine the post-pandemic challenges confronting lubricants enterprises in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a specific focus on the North West Province of South Africa. The coronavirus disease (COVID)-2019 pandemic has had a profound impact on global economies and businesses, and the lubricants industry has not been exempt from its effects. This study will delve into the specific challenges faced by lubricants businesses in the region, seeking to understand the extent of the impact, the strategies implemented to mitigate the challenges, and potential pathways for recovery. To achieve this objective, a comprehensive research approach will be adopted. Primary data will be collected through interviews and surveys with lubricants business owners, managers, farming, mining and motor industries experts in the North West Province. The research will also rely on secondary data sources such as industry reports, scholarly articles, and government publications to gain a broader perspective on the challenges faced by the lubricants industry as a whole in Sub-Saharan Africa. The research findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of the post-pandemic landscape for lubricants businesses in Sub-Saharan Africa, providing valuable insights for industry stakeholders, policymakers, and researchers. The study aims to identify key challenges such as supply chain disruptions, changes in consumer behavior, shifts in demand patterns, and financial constraints. Furthermore, it will explore the strategies and initiatives adopted by lubricants enterprises to adapt to the new normal and mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic. The implications of this research are significant for the lubricants industry in Sub-Saharan Africa, as it will shed light on the specific challenges faced by businesses in the North West Province of South Africa and serve as a basis for informed decision-making and policy formulation. By understanding these challenges, industry players can devise effective strategies to navigate the post-pandemic environment and drive sustainable growth.

Esther Nkhukhu-Orlando

The Economic Relationship between China and Post-independence Botswana: A Focus on the Construction Industry

The Botswana economy, like most parts of the Southern African region, has been growing rapidly over the past 30 years largely driven by Chinese trade and investment. However, there is a growing

body of literature highlighting the negative impact of the ever-increasing Chinese involvement in Sub-Saharan Africa through the channels of trade, investment, and governance, among others. While Chinese involvement in Botswana is beneficial for the development of the continent, there are important debates surrounding this connection which is often seen as a reworking of the colonial style trade system. This paper uses secondary sources of data to attempt to produce an evaluation of current Chinese engagements in Botswana, specifically through textual analysis, comparative studies, interpretive work, and critical analysis. The researcher also reviews literature and critically assesses and explains the engagements of China in Botswana's construction industry. The paper concludes that despite visible traces of Botswana's dependence on China, there are progressive dimensions to the current relationship which could be built on with more robust internal regulation, coordination, monitoring and action from Botswana's policy makers and industry regulators. This paper therefore conceptualizes a set of discourses that may inform certain practices (especially by leadership) that could produce perceptible effects in Botswana's economic liberation and sustainable development. Therefore, the paper also concludes that China's increasing trade with Botswana, although not without challenges, is helpful to Botswana's economic development. The paper contributes to the better understanding of Chinese economic growth and expansion and Botswana as an emerging economic market for Chinese multinational corporations.

Uchenna Nneka Nwankwo, Oluchi Kanma-Okafor, and Dayo Oyeleye
Socioeconomic Change Impact of the COVID-2019 Pandemic Lockdown on the Informal Sector in Non-Mediterranean African Cities

This paper is about the socioeconomic change impact of citizens in some non-Mediterranean African cities during the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-2019 pandemic lockdown. The multifaceted informal sector in Nigeria and other nations were economically and societally severely impacted by the pandemic lockdown. The lockdown measures had a profound impact such as high food price gouging, sickness and/or death of a breadwinner in the family, and loss of jobs which led to a significant decline in incomes. Grounded in the theoretical framework of Conspiracy Theory and Pandemic Behavior (when there is an assumption that many important economic and social trends are the products of deceptive political plots that are largely unknown to the general public), this paper examined five non-Mediterranean African cities to measure their informal sector economic activities, income level, and perceived lockdown measures' impacts. These measures had a profound negative impact on informal sector activities, leading to a decline in business incomes during and after the lockdown. Using descriptive cross-sectional survey methodology, 750 participants were randomly sampled to participate in completing questionnaires. The data obtained from these participants were analyzed using arithmetic mean, Pearson correlation, and Spearman rank correlation with a two-tailed test (P-test) for significance. The analyzed data explored the participants' challenges and government policies for industrial growth in these non-Mediterranean African cities during the lockdown, and findings indicate that there are significant associations among economic activities, income level, and perceived lockdown measures' impacts.

O

Erhenede Okeroghene

Examining Peace and Security Challenges in Nigeria: Causes, Impacts, and Pathways to Sustainable Peace

Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, this study examines Nigeria's insecurity and proposes a sustainable peace approach, focusing on poverty, unemployment, corruption, and inequality through inclusive dialogue, reconciliation, and law enforcement. It also addresses external factors affecting refugees, internally displaced persons, and minority groups. Nigeria ranks as the 149th least corrupt country in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, and its geopolitical location in West Africa affects its ability to support stability and security within and around its borders. A comprehensive approach is needed to promote sustainable peace, including peacebuilding initiatives, dialogue, and negotiation. Regional and international actors are crucial for conflict mediation, peacekeeping, and capacity-building. The United Nations (UN), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Nigeria must prioritise human rights, development, governance, public health, and education for long-term stability and poverty reduction. The Niger Delta region's unequal resource distribution causes conflicts between local communities and multinational oil corporations. Good governance, transparency, and accountability promote peace, trust, poverty reduction, and community engagement. One potential counterargument is that tackling the root causes of conflict, such as poverty and unemployment, may not end violence and instability in Nigeria. Some may argue that a more aggressive military approach is necessary to combat terrorist groups like Boko Haram. Nonetheless, Nigeria needs a multifaceted tackling of security threats to promote stability. Nigeria's civil society organisations are crucial for peacebuilding and socioeconomic development, reducing violence and promoting reconciliation through initiatives like the Jos Peace Dialogue Forum and Interfaith Mediation Centre. The Nigerian Women's Trust Fund supports women-led organisations, but more funding is needed to expand its reach. This paper points out that sustainable peace in Nigeria requires inclusive dialogue, reconciliation, effective law enforcement, socioeconomic development, good governance, and civil society participation to address poverty, unemployment, corruption, and inequality.

Gbemileke Ayomide Olarinde

Gender-Responsive Health Economics: Sustainable Farming for Poverty Eradication through Palm Tree Cultivation

Utilizing a qualitative explanatory case study approach, the purpose of this paper is to explore the potential of oil palm plantations in promoting sustainable economic development within Africa through job creation and increased trade. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the important intersection between gender, health, economics, and sustainable farming in the fight against poverty. This paper explores a comprehensive plan to address these interrelated issues through palm tree cultivation, specifically focusing on the potential benefits and impacts in the context of Benin Republic. The plan entails planting 90,000 palm trees on 600 hectares of land in the country. This initiative aims to contribute significantly to poverty alleviation through the sustained sales of palm oil products, which are in high demand both nationally and internationally. The cultivation of palm trees provides a sustainable and economically viable opportunity, with palm oil being an essential ingredient in various industries, including food, cosmetics, and biofuel production. With this, substantial income can be generated, and can also be reinvested to support poverty eradication efforts. One of the key strengths of this initiative lies in its potential to generate employment opportunities. The project estimates that at least 6,000 individuals will be employed for a period of at least 30 years, encompassing various stages from cultivation to processing and

distribution. This not only creates income-generating opportunities but also empowers individuals, particularly women, who often face greater barriers to employment and economic independence. This research project aims to ensure equal opportunities and benefits for all, promoting inclusivity and economic empowerment. Furthermore, the cultivation of palm trees offers additional health-related benefits beyond poverty alleviation. Palm kernel oil derived from palm trees has a wide range of applications in health-related products and uses. Its potential contribution to addressing health challenges, such as malnutrition, is significant.

Simon Gisege Omare

Navigating the Crisis towards Global Gender Justice: Interrogating Ubuntu for Insights and Practical Application to Women's Equality and Empowerment Globally

This paper is about Ubuntu, an indigenous African value-based worldview, and how it may be applied to promote women's equality and empowerment globally. It is guided by Social Identity Theory to explore the question of whether and how gender injustice against women can be contained as it has persisted for a long time worldwide. Gender injustice is manifested in discrimination, exploitation, and violence against women in different societies and in various situations, including periods of crisis, such as what happened during and Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-2019. The implications of this injustice transcend all aspects of development worldwide; a problem that needs to be addressed urgently. This paper heeds to the United Nations Sustainable Development (SDG) Goal 5, which is one of the 17 goals set by the United Nations in its 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. SDG 5 aims to create a world where women and girls are treated equally, have equal access to opportunities as men, and can wholly participate in and contribute to society, thereby fostering inclusive and sustainable development for all by 2030. Specifically, it focuses on Target 2 which emphasizes the need to promote women's equal participation in decision-making processes at all levels and in all sectors, including political, economic, and public life, by 2030. The paper is also relevant to SDG 10, target 10.2, which aims at empowering and promoting the economic, social and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, tribe/ethnicity, religion, or economic status, by 2030. However, the efforts listed in the SDGs represent a Western-centric approach to providing global solutions to world problems; yet, violence against women continues unabated globally. Using a qualitative explanatory case study methodology (which emphasizes words as opposed to numerical values to answer the questions "how" and "why"), the paper interrogates the Ubuntu philosophy for insights; identifies creative ways in which it may be applied to meet global aspirations for justice while evaluating its limitations. It argues that Ubuntu is crucial for effective an global struggle for not just gender justice but for all forms of justice for equality, inclusion, and integration.

Jeremiah Oluwadara Omotayo

Afro Hip Hop Culture and Youth Resistance of Gerontocracy in Africa

This paper looks at the Hip Hop Culture in Africa (Afro Hip Hop) and how it has helped youth challenge traditional norms, resist gerontocracy, which refers to the dominance of older generations in positions of power, and negotiate their experiences of marginalization, unemployment, poor education, security brutality, among other aspects. Hip Hop is a genre of music and a culture that emerged in the 1970s among youth-driven African Americans and Caribbean migrants in Bronx, New York City, United States. It gave voice to and provided an outlet for disenfranchised youths from low-income and marginalized backgrounds to express their

sociopolitical realities. Nearly a decade later, Hip Hop became widespread in Africa, particularly in Senegal, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria, and Ghana. By localizing its content, African popular artists contributed to raising awareness and mobilizing youth to challenge gerontocratic power structures. Afro Hip Hop culture highlighted the struggles, aspirations, and frustrations of the youth in the face of a system that often disregards their voices. Gerontocracy has been a strongly ingrained component of government and social structure in many African countries. Elders are held in the highest regard, and their knowledge and experience are appreciated. Nonetheless, this conventional structure began to face resistance by African youths, especially in modern democratic Africa due to perceived underrepresentation and corruption. This paper engages the descriptive research design using qualitative methodology to describe emerging themes from purposively selected five Afro Hip Hop songs across Africa to content-analyze patterns of resistance as described in the songs. The paper demonstrates how Afro Hip Hop culture has built a feeling of community among youths, acted as a catalyst for social change, and contributed significantly to the development of a politically conscious generation of young Africans.

Beatrice Nwawuloke Onuoha

Insecurity and Human Right Abuse in Contemporary Africa: An Appraisal of Ahmed Yerima's *Pari* and *Hendu*

This paper explicates aspects of Africa's insecurity and human rights abuse through a close reading of Ahmed Yerima's plays, *Pari* and *Hendu*. In the recent past, African nations have been bedeviled by insecurity challenges that negatively impact their populace with untold hardship that result in economic, political, social, psychological, and humanitarian concerns. Countries such as Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, and Nigeria encounter internal insecurity problems such as kidnapping, rustling, armed banditry, and Boko haram in the case of Nigeria, there are ethnic and religious conflicts that have resulted in the killing and destruction of innocent lives and properties across the continent. Available data on the level and dimensions of insecurity and abuse of human rights in Africa shows an increase over time, which results in serious threats to lives and properties and hinders economic growth, and discourages both local and foreign investors, all of which restrains and retards Africa's socio-economic development. These insecurity challenges and abuse are hinged on several factors such as bad governance, ethnic marginalization, and many more. This paper is informed by a psychoanalytic approach to literature which explores both the physical and the mental behavior of characters to uncover the emotional strife and the traumatic events that cloud the characters' psyche and the determination to suppress the anxiety. This is because trauma, according to both psychoanalysts and psychiatrists, always recollects in the aftermath of the event and sometimes, hunts the individual consciously or unconsciously through dreams or even nightmares. The paper then concludes that the play is a study in psychoanalysis as Yerima's condemnation of the penchant for unjust killings and molestations in many African states, especially Nigeria, is a means of externalizing his innermost feelings. This gives support to the psychoanalytical belief that creative work is the author's dream while the author is the main character.

Omosefe Oyekanmi

Local Inclusion Dynamics of Peacebuilding and Horizontal Inequalities in Cote d'Ivoire

This paper examined the peacebuilding effort in Cote d'Ivoire, with a view to ascertaining how the peacebuilding process promoted local inclusion in addressing horizontal inequalities in Cote d'Ivoire. Historically, a perceived marginalization and exclusion of particular communities has

resulted in tensions and confrontations in Cote d'Ivoire. Policies and resource distribution by the central government have occasionally favored particular regions or ethnic groups over others, causing resentment, inequality and eventually two civil wars in 2002 and 2011. To overcome these obstacles, the Ivorian government began implementing peace-building programmes alongside the United Nations, with attempts made to improve local inclusion. According to a policy statement by the International Peace Institute, international peacebuilding is more likely to succeed when it can connect with local and community-level efforts. In the case of Cote d'Ivoire, which is a diverse country with various ethnic, religious, and regional groups, the inclusion of local communities, civil society organizations, and traditional leaders, in the decision-making processes were critical to addressing horizontal inequalities and achieving peacebuilding. Using an exploratory research design and qualitative methodology (which emphasizes words, as opposed to numerical values, to answer the questions *how* and *why*), the paper reveals that there was insufficient inclusion of traditional leaders, community members and civil society organizations at the decision-making of the Ivorian peacebuilding process. Indigenous capacities for addressing horizontal inequalities were underutilized, because existing religious and traditional methods of peacebuilding were not adequately explored.. This approach led to inadequate grassroot engagement and use of indigenous capacities necessary for addressing horizontal inequalities and an effective peacebuilding process in Cote d'Ivoire. Even though, the United Nations peacebuilding effort in Cote d'Ivoire was successful in restoring fragile peace, it was however not successful in addressing the horizontal inequalities and building a lasting peace.

Q

Ganiyu Oluwaseyi Quadri

Traditional versus Technological Methods of Knowledge Sharing: Experience from Librarians

This study examined the methods of knowledge sharing among librarians in Nigeria with focus on traditional and technological methods. The mixed method research of the embedded type was adopted, while the sample consisted of all 102 librarians in the sampled institutions. A questionnaire and semi-structured interview were the instruments used for data gathering, while the quantitative data gathered was analyzed using SPSS and thematic content analysis was used for qualitative data collected. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) was the theoretical framework used for the study. The study revealed that librarians in the sampled institutions sharing their knowledge through both traditional and technological means, although the traditional methods like face-to-face, meetings, training, mentorship, brainstorming, peer assistance as well as community of practice were mostly used traditional methods. Also, the technological methods of knowledge sharing were confirmed by the librarians relevant to knowledge sharing practices, technological methods such as email, social networking site, instant messaging, Nigeria library online forum, research gate/academia.edu as well as online discussion fora were adopted in knowledge sharing. Furthermore, the librarians ranked the technological methods highest with mean score of 19.83 as against the traditional methods which yielded 9.88 mean score. The study concluded that the librarians are aware of both methods of knowledge sharing and that they prefer using the technological methods. It was recommended that librarians should be appreciated by giving rewards/incentives as motivation to continue sharing their knowledge among colleagues.

R

Aaron Raradza

Frontline States in African Politics: Dynamics, Strategies, and Impacts on Regional Security and Development

This research explores the dynamics, strategies, and consequences associated with frontline states in African politics, which play a crucial role in shaping regional security and development. It examines the hurdles they face and the progress made in addressing them. Frontline states refer to countries positioned at the forefront of regional conflicts or bordering volatile regions. Their close proximity to instability gives rise to various challenges in terms of security and development. Firstly, these states often become targets of cross-border threats, including terrorism, insurgency, and illicit activities such as arms and drug trafficking. Secondly, the influx of refugees and internally displaced persons from neighboring conflict zones strains their resources and social cohesion. Thirdly, the repercussions of regional conflicts, such as economic disruptions and political instability, affect their overall stability and development. To confront these challenges, frontline states have implemented diverse strategies. They have strengthened their military capabilities and border security measures to counter threats posed by armed groups. Additionally, they have fostered regional cooperation through platforms like the African Union, sub-regional organizations, and bilateral agreements to address common security challenges. Moreover, they have engaged in diplomatic efforts to mediate conflicts and promote peacebuilding in neighboring states. Despite these efforts, frontline states continue to grapple with persistent challenges. The porosity of borders, limited resources, and weak governance structures impede their ability to effectively combat transnational threats. Economic disparities, unemployment, and social grievances within their own populations further contribute to potential sources of instability. Furthermore, external factors such as geopolitical rivalries and illicit flow of resources exacerbate existing challenges. Nonetheless, progress has been achieved in enhancing regional security and development. Frontline states have successfully coordinated joint military operations, intelligence sharing, and border control initiatives. They have implemented strategies to address the causes of conflicts, such as promoting inclusive governance, socio-economic development, and reconciliation.

S

Danjuma Saidu

Pathways to Peace: Nurturing Security and Stability in Nigeria for a Prosperous Future

In recent years, Nigeria has faced significant challenges in terms of peace and security. Conflicts, insurgency, and social unrest have hampered the nation's progress and threatened its stability. This paper delves into the multifaceted dimensions of peace and security in Nigeria, exploring the underlying causes of conflict and examining the key factors that contribute to instability. By analyzing historical context, socio-political dynamics, and regional complexities, we gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by Nigeria on its path to peace. To navigate this complex landscape, the paper highlights various pathways to peace that must be undertaken. First and foremost, it emphasizes the importance of inclusive governance and effective institutions. By promoting transparency, accountability, and the rule of law, Nigeria can foster a sense of trust among its diverse population, strengthening the foundation for sustainable peace. Moreover, the paper explores the significance of addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting social cohesion. By investing in education, job creation, and poverty reduction initiatives, Nigeria can

address some of the root causes of conflict and promote a sense of shared prosperity among its citizens. Furthermore, it emphasizes the role of dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation in resolving existing disputes and fostering a culture of peace. Recognizing the interconnectedness of peace and security, the paper emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach. It examines the importance of regional cooperation, collaborative security frameworks, and intelligence sharing to effectively combat terrorism, insurgency, and other threats. In conclusion, this paper presents a roadmap for nurturing security and stability in Nigeria, ultimately leading to a prosperous future. By addressing the underlying causes of conflict, promoting inclusive governance, investing in socio-economic development, and fostering regional cooperation, Nigeria can pave the way for lasting peace. This paper serves as a call to action, urging policymakers, civil society, and the international community to unite in their efforts to support Nigeria's journey towards a peaceful and secure nation.

Hadizat Audu Salihu

The Historicizing of Climate Change and Environmental Degradation in the Niger-Benue Confluence Area of Nigeria

This study examines the historicizing of climate change and environmental degradation of the Niger-Benue confluence area of Nigeria. The area since the precolonial period has been affected by many environmental concerns, however, due to the growth of population, increase in agriculture and construction of infrastructures during the colonial and post-colonial periods. These environmental concerns in the region include climate change, land degradation, water pollution, deforestation, water pollution and flooding and biodiversity loss. In carrying out this study, the research methodology employed is the traditional historical approach which combined the use of secondary and primary sources of information. Results of the study show that the Niger-Benue Confluence area has been experiencing significant environmental degradation over the past years due to climate change. It has been found that climate change has caused a decrease in precipitation and an increase in the frequency and intensity of floods in the area. In addition, soil erosion, deforestation and biodiversity loss are some of the other environmental impacts observed in the region. The Nigerian government and private organizations have not played an impactful role in mitigating the effect of climate change in the region. The study concluded that the Niger-Benue Confluence Area is highly vulnerable to climate change and has been severally affected by long-term environmental degradation which has led to the loss of lives and properties as well as the spread of diseases. The study recommends that the government has a great role to play in ensuring that measures are put in place to mitigate the impact of climate change, further research is also needed to better understand the effects of climate change and other environmental issues in the region so that effective strategies can be developed for mitigating the impact on the region and its people.

Obrein Muine Samahiya and Ebenezer Lemven Wirba

Assessing the Implications of Returns to Education for Wage Inequality: Evidence from Namibia

Wage inequality is a global concern with implications for economic efficiency and living standards. This paper estimates the returns to education and their implications for wage inequality using data from the 2015/16 Namibia Income and Expenditure Survey. The paper employs the recentered influence function regression to analyze the impact of education across the wage distribution and uses a simulation approach to assess the impact of educational equalization on

wage inequality. The findings indicate that women experience higher returns to education compared to men, suggesting a greater increase in wages with each additional level of education for women. This highlights education's potential role in empowering women economically and reducing the gender wage gap. The quantile regression analysis reveals varying returns to education across different percentiles of the wage distribution. Women tend to experience higher returns at lower percentiles, indicating a more substantial impact on reducing wage disparities for women at the lower end of the income scale. Conversely, men observe higher returns at the upper tail of the wage distribution, indicating greater income gains with higher education levels at the higher end of the income distribution. Furthermore, the simulation exercise demonstrates that educational expansion unintentionally widens wage inequality, impacting both men and women. Based on these findings, policymakers should prioritize reducing educational disparities and ensuring equal access to quality education for all individuals. Targeted interventions should address the specific needs of disadvantaged groups, particularly women and individuals from lower-income households. Improving educational quality and supporting vocational training are crucial measures to enhance skills, increase earning potential, and contribute to reducing wage inequality in Namibia. This study underscores the importance of comprehensive approaches that go beyond educational expansion alone to tackle the underlying causes of wage inequality.

Albert Shamuyarira

Unpacking the Ramifications of Non-resident Fathering on African Children: An Investigation into Issues and Implications

This research study delves into the far-reaching consequences of non-residential fathering on African children, aiming to shed light on the intricate issues and implications involved. The absence or limited presence of fathers in the lives of their children can have significant effects on various aspects of child development, such as emotional wellbeing, cognitive abilities, and social integration. By examining the unique cultural and socio-economic contexts of African communities, this investigation seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the specific challenges faced by children growing up without the regular presence of their fathers. Through a review of existing literature, this study uncovers the multifaceted repercussions of non-residential fathering, including the potential impact on mental health outcomes, educational attainment, and interpersonal relationships. It explores the intricate dynamics within African families and communities, considering factors such as migration, economic pressures, and social norms that contribute to the prevalence of non-residential fathering. Moreover, this investigation seeks to identify potential interventions and strategies to mitigate the negative effects of non-residential fathering on African children. By understanding the underlying issues and complexities, policymakers, community leaders, and social service providers can develop targeted programs that promote father-child engagement, strengthen support systems, and foster positive outcomes for children.

Lukong Stella Shulika

Silencing the Gun Agenda and the Changing Politics of Africa's Conflict: What Says the Future?

Over the past decades, Africa has witnessed a complex landscape of conflicts, ranging from interstate disputes to internal insurgencies, and has made significant strides in resolving some of these conflicts. The "Silencing the Guns in Africa" agenda launched by the African Union in 2013 aimed to "end all wars, civil conflicts, gender-based violence, and other forms of violence on the

continent by 2020.” Despite progress made, accomplishing its goals has proven challenging; and post-2020, questions about whether the “Silencing the Guns in Africa” initiative was and is an ambiguous or feasible construct persist. This paper examines the historical and political dynamics that have shaped Africa’s conflicts, how they have evolved over time, as well as their implications for the future of the African Union’s (AU’s) “Silencing the Guns in Africa” initiative. It assesses the effectiveness of the initiative as a comprehensive approach to peace and security in Africa, the challenges associated with the initiative, and the interplay of dynamics such as governance issues, ethnic tensions, resource competition, and external influences, all of which have contributed to the persistence of conflicts in Africa. Using leadership as a conceptual and analytical framework, the paper highlights the complexities involved in addressing the root causes of these conflicts and explores potential strategies for enhancing the feasibility of silencing the guns as a flagship project under the AU’s “Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want” in the long-term. The paper concludes with an emphasis on the need for and importance of multidimensional approaches to conflict prevention, management, and transformation that promote good governance, respect for the rule of law and human rights, and foster regional cooperation, which are crucial for attaining sustainable peace and security in Africa.

Emmanuel ‘Toye’ Sobande and ²Wendy M. Edmonds
The Institutionalist Lenses of Leadership Behavior and Social Organization in African Societies

This research paper addresses a critical gap in the understanding of leadership behavior and social organization within African societies. Employing an institutionalist lens, it explores the intricate interplay between historical, cultural, and institutional factors that shape leader-follower dynamics and societal structures across diverse African cultures. By investigating the historical foundations that have shaped leadership roles, this study aims to uncover how cultural norms and values influence leadership behavior and the formation of social hierarchies. Additionally, it examines the role of both traditional and contemporary institutions in shaping leadership practices and contributing to social order. Through an analysis of primary sources, ethnographic accounts, and scholarly literature, this study emphasizes the significance of contextualizing leadership within broader cultural and institutional contexts. By doing so, it contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between culture, history, and institutional frameworks in shaping leadership within African societies. The findings underscore the importance of adopting an institutionalist perspective when examining leadership and social organization, shedding light on how these elements are intertwined and influenced by contextual factors. This research enriches discussions in leadership studies and cultural sociology, offering insights that have implications for leadership development, organizational behavior, and cross-cultural studies. Furthermore, it highlights the necessity of considering contextually sensitive approaches when analyzing leadership within diverse cultural settings. The paper thus offers a comprehensive and contextually informed view of leader-follower dynamics, contributing to a deeper comprehension of the intricate relationships between leadership behavior and social organization in African contexts. This paper extends the scholarly discourse on leadership by providing a holistic framework that incorporates historical legacies, cultural norms, and institutional mechanisms. It underscores the value of integrating these factors when examining leadership within African societies, ultimately fostering a more nuanced appreciation of the multifaceted nature of leadership behavior and social organization.

Henry Ssali

Indigenous African Philosophies and Women’s Empowerment: Intersecting Ubuntu and Obuntu Bulamu in Modern Politics

The depth of Africa’s indigenous wisdom, especially as embedded in the Ubuntu and Obuntu Bulamu philosophies, presents invaluable insights for reimagining leadership in today’s interconnected era. Both philosophies underscore humanity’s interconnectedness, shared responsibility, and community values—tenets critical for addressing the contemporary political landscape and its inherent gender disparities. The Southern African Ubuntu principle champions a universal bond of shared humanity, while Buganda’s Obuntu Bulamu reinforces mutual respect and responsibility among its people. These frameworks converge to suggest a potent model for advancing women’s empowerment in politics. Historical and contemporary leaders from both traditions—ranging from Africa’s first elected female head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, to Buganda’s Nnaabagereka Sylvia Nagginda—offer tangible examples of this transformative leadership. In this presentation, I will weave the shared ethos of Ubuntu and Obuntu Bulamu to advocate for a leadership style that is deeply rooted in African cultural identity. Such leadership, I suggest, is pivotal for promoting gender equality, justice, and sustainable political development.

T

Tyraé R. Tanner

Why Oakland Was Right: A Pragmatic Overview of Literacy Education and Ebonics

This paper is about the literacy rate of students who identify as African American in the United States and the importance of leveraging African American Vernacular English (AAVE) or Ebonics. The exclusion of AAVE in the Home Language Survey as a primary language and the improper acknowledgement of Oakland Unified School District’s request in 1996 to acknowledge Ebonics as a Home Language created a space for long-term continued illiteracy in Oakland, California, and the United States. Currently African American children are the lowest performing demographic in the country according to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). The Stono Rebellion of 1739 instilled fear into slave owners that literate slaves would forge their own freedom documents. African American literacy has not recovered since the enactment of the wide-ranging anti-literacy laws enacted in the antebellum Confederate states. The illiteracy rate for African American students in the United States presently sits at 85%. The acknowledgement of AAVE in reading education allows for students to meet the demands of Standard American English and acknowledge the differences wherein. Student Using a qualitative explanatory case study methodology (which emphasizes words, as opposed to numerical values, to answer the questions *how* and *why*), the paper shows the connections to anti-literacy laws, the Ebonics debate of 1996, the actions taken to include AAVE in the past, and practices for Educators to improve the literacy rate of African children within the United States and the diaspora.

Francis Tazoacha

Re-imagining Democratic Practices in Africa: a Panacea to Political Insecurity

This paper is set to draw the attention of African policymakers in particular and the international community in general to rethink reshaping Africa for Africans by re-imagining and rejuvenating the African style of democracy which is best understood by them as a panacea to political crisis fomenting insecurity and war in the continent. Western democratic tenets and practices originating

from ancient Greece are believed to be the quintessence of democracy in the world. Before colonization, these Western forms of government were superimposed on the African people without taking into consideration Africa's existing democracy. We can manifestly see that even before the coming of Europeans to Africa, Africans had run political systems that built strong institutions. Before Europeans and the Western World began to impose their model of democracy on Africans, they had practiced one form of "democracy" or the other in the ways fitted to their cultural and traditional contexts, and they veritably thrived under these systems. These democracies operated strong, resilient and well-respected institutions that set the pace for transparency, peace, security, and social cohesion. The coming of the imported Western democratic tenets and the African democratic principles seem to be worlds apart and have been some of the fundamental causes of conflicts in contemporary Africa. This paper applies a qualitative research methodology to sample and analyze and give recommendations on how **Africans should rethink and reshape the democratic and political processes following their historical past in order to mitigate insecurity in the continent.**

Babajide Adetunji Tella

Women Participation in Politics: The Case of the National Assembly in Nigeria

African states are increasingly becoming influential actors in international politics and major contributors to global development in the 21st Century. However, countries in the continent can neither experience sustainable peace nor fully realize their development potential by inhibiting the participation of women in politics and ascension to leadership positions. In Nigeria, women's participation in politics and occupation of leadership positions have been abysmal since the start of the fourth republic in 1999, which is at variance with the prominent roles that women played in the governance of their societies before the advent of colonial rule. Efforts to increase the participation of women in politics, such as the 35 percent affirmative action and the attempts of women groups and various NGOs to promote women's involvement in politics, have failed to achieve the desired results. Notably, the number of women elected to the National Assembly in Nigeria has consistently declined in the fourth republic, with the 2023 general elections recording one of the lowest representations of women in the National Assembly. This study employs a feminist lens and adopts a historical descriptive method to review the participation of women in politics in Nigeria, with a specific focus on their representation in the National Assembly since the commencement of the country's fourth republic in 1999. The study will identify the major barriers to women's election to the National Assembly and suggest ways of addressing the underrepresentation of women in the country's legislative branch.

Alice K. Thomas

The Wakanda Idea: A Pan-African Dream Deferred?

While many see superheroes as fictional superhuman personalities conjured up in the creative minds of artists and storytellers, notwithstanding, the Black Panther, and the world of Wakanda from where the character heralds, earned a special place in the hearts and minds of many Africans and their descendants across the globe. For many, particularly Africans abroad, the Black Panther film was the first time they saw a strong and beautiful Africa. If there is any truth in the old adage a picture is worth a thousand words, how much more power might moving pictures have especially when accompanied by sound and vivid color. Released in February of 2018, Black Panther opened with great anticipation and ended with record breaking earnings at box offices worldwide. The fictional world and character with its magical herb left an indelible mark on many throughout the

African Diaspora, sparking much conversation and debates, as well as celebrations. Some debated the historical accuracy of such minute details as the costumes and others discussed whether Wakanda was a real place. Arguably the Black Panther movie is probably the first event in the current century to prompt wide-ranging attention to be given to Africa. The fervor around Black Panther and now Wakanda Forever, its sequel, has given Pan-Africanism an air of realism. Olsanwuche Esedebe (1994) offers a conceptual framework for Pan-Africanism informed by decades of transcontinental movement by Africans born in Africa and abroad. Esedebe defines Pan-Africanism as a political and cultural phenomenon that regards Africa, Africans, and African descendants abroad as a unit. Accordingly, it seeks to regenerate and unify Africa and promotes a feeling of oneness among the people of the African world; and it glorifies the African past and inculcates pride in African values. This paper explores how the Black Panther film is illustrative of a Pan-African dream deferred. In doing, so I examine the historical contexts that shaped both Pan-African ideas and movements and the Black Panther character created in 1966. In Langston Hughes poem titled “Harlem,” he asks the rhetorical question: What happens to a dream deferred? While, of course, the question is never answered, at the end Hughes suggests good and bad possibilities. For some, Pan-Africanism remains a deferred dream for those who believe that a strong Africa is a key to the future of African people.

Chenjerai Tsatsi

The Role of Small to Medium Enterprises in Revitalizing African Economies

This paper seeks to logically and critically analyse the role that small to medium enterprises (SMEs) play in the vitalization and overall wellbeing of African economies. The fundamental position is that the majority of African economies are motivated toward growth, and this growth which hinges on localized SMEs calls for an intellectualized understanding of how these entities can be nurtured toward their full potential. For instance, in Zimbabwe and the majority of Sub-Saharan Africa economies, SMES are envisaged to account for at least 85% of the economic activity and, as such, their existence and coexistence with large corporate entities need not to be understood. In the firmest of the senses that can be put across, it has to be appreciated that all large corporations today are yesteryears’ SMEs and this school of thought has prompted the writer to engage in this research. Furthermore, and as a follow-up to the upsurge of these SMEs, governments across Africa have invested quite some substantial amounts in trying to provide fiscal support to these institutions as well as enacting a myriad of laws and legislations designed toward strengthening the operations, stability and growth of these entities. These fiscal and budgetary accommodations of SMEs need to be looked into and evaluated in terms of their objectivity and resultant outcome being derived therefrom. Employing various qualitative and quantitative research methods this paper seeks to examine a cross-section of SMEs in selected African economies in order to determine how they are faring in terms of contributing to the gross domestic products and economic status of the various countries in which they are domiciled.

U

Matthew Uzukwu

The Balanced Score Card Management Model as a Tool for Private Healthcare Services Providers in Nigeria to Improve Profitability and Healthcare Outcomes for Patients

Private clinics and hospitals exist as businesses to provide healthcare services to the public and to make a return on investment for the owners. This study applied the Balanced Scorecard Management model to assess the effectiveness and profitability of private clinics and hospitals in Nigeria. Using a descriptive statistical methodology comprising of quantitative and qualitative elements, six private clinics and hospitals were selected from three regions of the country for this study. Financial performance in 2022, the year of the study, was measured relative to three financial outcomes—breaking even, making a profit, or sustaining a loss. Healthcare delivery effectiveness was measured through a random survey of patients to rate their healthcare outcomes at these hospitals on a range of being strongly satisfied to strongly dissatisfied. The study showed most of the healthcare businesses breaking even, and most of the patients being averagely satisfied with their healthcare outcomes. The study also found that many of the businesses were unaware of the balanced scorecard business model, even though they unknowingly applied aspects of it in their operations, albeit ineffectively. The study concludes that thorough knowledge of the Balanced Scorecard model and its diligent application could improve healthcare services outcomes for patients and improve the bottom line for private clinics and hospitals in Nigeria.

V

Progress Kim Vera

Effects of COVID-2019 on Youths: The Case of Mbare

The implications of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-2019 global pandemic have been felt worldwide. The social and economic wellbeing of nations were interrupted as the education, health, tourism, agricultural supply chains, manufacturing and transportation were abruptly impacted as a result of the World Health Organization (WHO)-regulated lockdown mechanisms. This study, therefore, adopted an interpretative research approach. The study sought to examine the effects of the pandemic upon the youths in Mbare, exploring both negative and positive impacts of the pandemic, examining the availability of essential health services with regards to the pandemic, and evaluating the significance of the lockdown protocols on the youth in Mbare. The theoretical framework was guided by the Positive Youth Development Theory and the Development Welfare Theory. The study employed the mixed research methodology whereby qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used to gather primary data from the target population. As a survey, the study made use of the purposive sampling frame. The data gathering instruments used included questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The study's results indicated that the youths in Mbare experienced both positive and negative implications of the pandemic, there were numerous essential health services as mechanisms to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, and lockdown protocols were critical in the preservation of youths in Mbare. Therefore, the study recommended that the Mbare youths and the Government of Zimbabwe embrace innovative digital technologies to ensure sustainable business transactions even under emergency-situations, industries employ technologically proficient employees who are able to work as contingency employees in the event of another life-threatening pandemic, and the government should also set up safety nets aimed at making sure that the youths are given alternative sources of income during a pandemic.

W

Ibilate Waribo-Naye

Positioning and Identity Construction in Posts on Nairaland on the Proscription of Twitter in Nigeria

Studies on Nairaland posts have focused on linguistic and pragmatic elements. Attention has not been given to how the discursive practice on the forum is used to represent social actors. Therefore, this paper investigates how Tweeters on Nairaland (General), henceforth NG, position self and other and the identities thereby constructed while foregrounding actions of social significance. Data comprise 161 tweets on the day the Nigerian government proscribed Twitter operation in the country. The study applies qualitative methodology by subjecting the data to a discourse analysis approach which relies on positioning theory and supplementary use of concepts of speech acts and common ground. The positions and identities constructed are data-driven and motivated by the subcategorization namely epistimization, labelization, voicing, and dis/solidarity which are derived from the micro context—i.e. the ban of Twitter in Nigeria. The paper finds that Tweeters assume reflexive positioning while positioning other interactively to realize identities which include knowledge provider, accountability seeker, altruistic, “Us,” and patriotic in reflexive positioning; and ignorant, answerable, incompetent, “Them,” Machiavellian, and prejudiced via interactive positioning. The paper argues that NG Tweeters employ different modes of positioning in interpreting the behaviour of other (the government) and invoke knowledge from macro (external) contexts to substantiate their positions. It concludes that social media have become an integral part of society which justifies NG as a discussion forum of social relevance, and therefore recommends an interface between government and citizens on the optimal use of social media for the promotion of national unity and advancement.

Eyerusalem Amare Wolde

Access to Land and Equal Distribution of Resources: A Gender Perspective of Land Reform in South Africa

Land is an important security source against poverty across Africa and the developing world. Unequal rights to land put women at a disadvantage, perpetuate poverty and entrench gender inequality in Africa. Although African women contribute the majority of the labour used to produce food for household consumption and sale, women's access to and control over land in Africa still needs to be improved. This has become a critical issue in women's land rights since there is a direct relationship between accessing land resources, securing land rights, and achieving food security and overcoming poverty. Accordingly, securing land rights can have a significant impact on economic development. Therefore, the contemporary gender inequality in access to and control over land is an obstacle to achieving sustainable socioeconomic development. This study contributes knowledge about the effectiveness of national gender machinery in advancing women's interests, particularly on the issues of land access and women's land rights. Through a systematic review of relevant literature and purposive unstructured interviews in KwaZulu-Nata province South Africa, this study examines the role of government in promoting gender equality within the Provincial Department of Rural Development and Land Reform Gender Unit.

Handel Kashope Wright

The Awkwardness of Africa(ns) in Black Canadian Studies

In this essay I follow the modesty of Stuart Hall (who declares that one needs to speak autobiographically in order to avoid speaking authoritatively) and offer an autobiographical

argument for the establishment and substantial support for Black Studies at Canadian institutions of higher education. As someone from what V. Y. Mudimbe has called an invented Africa, who was not Black there but rather was interpellated into Blackness upon arrival in North America, I have continually found that it is hard being Black in the United States and harder still being Black in Canada, and perhaps hardest being Black in the Province of British Columbia. While I appreciate Canadian institutions' attempts at undertaking anti-Black racism work, one of my central arguments in this paper is that such work is insufficient in the face of the gross underrepresentation of Blackness on university campuses and in academia in the Canadian context (where we do not have Historically Black Colleges and Universities for example). I point to diversity and politics of difference within Blackness, a variety of approaches to conceptualizing Black Studies and to the need for and characteristics of a critical Black Canadian Studies. My conclusion is that the robust presence of Blackness (people, bodies of knowledge, ways of knowing, culture/s) in Canadian academia, including Africa(ns) in critical Black Canadian Studies, is the more comprehensive goal in and of itself which will in turn contribute to addressing anti-Black racism and the evolution of what is being called "inclusive excellence" at Canadian institutions of higher learning.