

EXAMINING THE PREVALENCE OF CLASSIC LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES AND POWER STRUGGLES IN THE NIGERIAN DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM: A STUDY FROM 2009 TO 2023

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***Abstract:** This article examines the prevalence and perception of the use of classic leadership strategy and power struggle in the Nigerian democratic system from 2009 to 2023. It analyzes the application of classic strategies by political leaders during this period. Additionally, the article explores the power struggles and competition for influence that have shaped the political landscape in Nigeria. Drawing on existing literature and relevant studies, the article discusses the complexities and dynamics of political leadership, highlighting the tensions inherent in Nigerian democracy. It also investigates the public perception of the use and potential misuse of classic strategies, and how power struggles have influenced the perceptions of citizens. The investigation was steered by a pair of theoretical frameworks, namely rational choice theory and power-struggle theory. The research utilised an exploratory framework and employed a quantitative approach to investigate the prevalence and perspectives surrounding the traditional leadership strategy in Nigeria. A semi-structure questionnaire was administered to twenty-five (25) esteemed members of the academic faculty, carefully chosen from three tertiary institutions located within the Ijebu region of Ogun State, Nigeria. The data analysis utilising frequency tabulations, percentage distributions, and average scores. The findings showed that the political actors often employ a myriad of strategic manoeuvres, encompassing the utilisation of emotional appeals and the adoption of populist rhetoric, in order to amass public support and emerge victorious in electoral contests which yields a multitude of adverse outcomes. The article concludes by deepening our understanding of classic strategies and power struggles in Nigerian politics.*

***Keywords:** Political Leaders, Democracy, Governance, Classic Strategy, Election, Nigeria*

Background and rationale

In the Nigerian context, the intricate interplay between leadership strategies and power struggles has exerted a profound influence on the configuration of the nation's political terrain and the trajectory of its socio-economic advancement. Previous scholarly investigations have underscored the utmost importance of delving into the intricate realm of leadership strategies and power dynamics within the Nigerian context, as these phenomena bear profound ramifications for the cohesion of the nation, the efficacy of its governance, and the overarching trajectory of its advancement. In a scholarly endeavour, Nwankwo (2017) undertook a comprehensive investigation to elucidate the intricate interplay between ethnicity and power dynamics within the realm of Nigerian politics. The study underscored the imperative of comprehending the manner in which leadership strategies exert influence on the cohesion and advancement of a nation. In a similar vein, the scholarly work conducted by Okoli (2015) delved into an examination of the profound impact that religious and ethnic affiliations exert on the intricate dynamics of political

power struggles within the Nigerian context. This insightful analysis effectively illuminates the far-reaching implications that such affiliations bear on the overall fabric of democratic governance. These scholarly investigations illuminate the intricacies inherent in power dynamics within the Nigerian context, underscoring the imperative of incorporating a multifaceted analysis of various sociocultural elements when examining the phenomena of leadership and power conflicts. Academic observers have duly noted the pervasive manifestation of classical strategic manoeuvres and power dynamics within the intricate political terrain of Nigeria. Ake (2001) expounded upon the intricate interplay between ethnic and regional politics, elucidating how these factors have profoundly influenced the prevailing power dynamics within the nation. It is not uncommon for astute politicians to adroitly manipulate ethnic sentiments, skillfully leveraging them to solidify their power bases. Nnoli (2008) underscored the significance of identity politics, encompassing religious and ethnic schisms, in engendering power dynamics and political strife within the Nigerian context. These scholarly investigations highlight the nuanced interplay between power dynamics, individual and collective identities, and strategic political machinations within the context of Nigeria. The obstruction of effective governance and the provision of services in Nigeria can be attributed to the relentless pursuit of power and personal interests by the political elites. This unfortunate phenomenon has resulted in the proliferation of corruption, inefficiency, and a conspicuous absence of accountability (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). Ajaero's (2016) study delved into the intricate dynamics of power struggles among political elites, elucidating their detrimental impact on policy stability and impeding the progress of sustainable development endeavours within the nation. These studies elucidate the deleterious ramifications of traditional strategic manoeuvres and power dynamics on the efficacy of governance and the advancement of socio-economic conditions in Nigeria.

The ramifications of power struggles transcend the realm of politics and materialise in various facets of society, including but not limited to social disarray, economic deprivation, interethnic conflicts, religious animosities, militant activities, and a pervasive sense of instability. In the scholarly discourse of Omeje (2010), a comprehensive analysis was undertaken to elucidate the intricate interplay between power dynamics and the contentious issue of resource control within the Niger Delta region. The author astutely posited that these multifaceted struggles have been instrumental in fomenting a climate of militancy and violence, thereby precipitating a deleterious impact on the economic landscape and engendering a palpable sense of insecurity. These findings elucidate the profound ramifications of power struggles on diverse facets of Nigerian society. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that power struggles may also harbour latent positive attributes. According to Osaghae's (2005) scholarly discourse, power struggles possess the potential to serve as a platform for democratic contestation, thereby facilitating the manifestation of a wide array of political interests. When power struggles are effectively managed, they have the potential to cultivate democratic governance and facilitate the smooth and nonviolent transfer of authority. In light of the extant body of research, it is evident that a notable paucity persists in the realm of comprehensive scholarly inquiries that specifically delve into the timeless phenomenon of leadership strategies and power dynamics in Nigeria. Henceforth, the primary objective of this scholarly investigation is to bridge the existing lacuna in research through an exhaustive examination and scrutiny of the timeless paradigm of leadership and the intricate dynamics

of power struggles within the Nigerian context. By adopting a descriptive study methodology, this research endeavour will delve into the merits and demerits of implementing traditional leadership strategies. Additionally, it will explore the ramifications of power struggles on Nigeria's political milieu and its consequential effects on the nation's socio-economic progress. Through a comprehensive examination of the intricate interplay between leadership strategies and power struggles within the Nigerian context, the primary objective of this scholarly investigation is to enrich the ongoing discourse among academics and intellectuals. Furthermore, it seeks to enlighten policymakers and stakeholders alike, equipping them with valuable insights and knowledge to devise and implement strategies that foster efficient governance, facilitate conflict resolution, and promote sustainable socio-economic development. The primary aims of this study encompass understanding the underlying motivations behind the adoption of classical strategies by Nigerian politicians, meticulously documenting the various ways in which these strategies are employed within the Nigerian political landscape, and critically analysing the ramifications that arise as a result of their implementation in Nigerian politics.

Literature review

The Concept of Classic Strategy

In numerous African nations, such as Nigeria, the intricacies of sustainable development and efficacious governance are intricately intertwined with the leadership approaches embraced by both historical and contemporary leaders. One notable approach entails the utilisation of ethnicity, religious affiliation, social class, and financial prowess as means to secure a favourable position in electoral processes and the governance of the nation. It is distinguished by the employment of strategic political tactics and manoeuvres that effectively exploit these factors in order to attain and fortify authority. The ramifications stemming from the traditional approach to leadership have engendered profound repercussions upon Nigeria's political terrain and its potential for enduring progress. The extant body of literature elucidates the deleterious consequences that are intrinsically linked to the implementation of this particular strategy. Leaders who possess a self-centered disposition frequently employ a well-established tactic wherein they skillfully manipulate potent tribal or religious sentiments within the populace, thereby facilitating their ascension to positions of authority (Okolie, 2018). Consequently, the nation has encountered a dearth of sagacious leadership, as those in positions of power prioritise their individualistic pursuits above the exigencies of the collective. Furthermore, the ubiquity of the classic leadership approach has engendered deleterious power dynamics, interethnic tensions, religious animosities, disputes over resource governance, societal disarray, impoverishment, belligerence, and a sense of precariousness (Egharevba, 2017; Oluwakemi, 2019).

Advocates contend that the classic strategiesto leadership espouses a notion of robust leadership, thereby guaranteeing the seamless execution of policies with minimal bureaucratic impediments (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005). They hold the conviction that this particular methodology presents a state of equilibrium and the capacity to exercise dominion with utmost efficacy. Nevertheless, adversaries express apprehensions regarding the conceivable disadvantages associated with the implementation of said approach within

the Nigerian context. The consolidation of power within a select group of individuals has the potential to engender conflicts for dominance and foster inclinations towards authoritarianism. The process of centralising authority may consequently yield diminished mechanisms for oversight and regulation, thereby compromising the principle of accountability and facilitating the proliferation of corrupt practises (Jega, 2011).

Moreover, the inherent presence of power struggles within the hierarchical framework of leadership can significantly erode the effectiveness of governance, impede the seamless execution of policies, and ultimately obstruct the forward trajectory of societal advancement. This phenomenon may engender a dearth of inclusivity and citizen engagement in the deliberative procedures, thereby exerting a profound influence on the holistic advancement of the nation. In their scholarly work, Osaghae and Suberu (2005) delve into the intricate complexities surrounding governance and leadership in Nigeria. They shed light on the inherent challenges that manifest in the country, specifically emphasising the emergence of tensions and power struggles within the traditional framework of leadership. They contend that although this particular methodology may indeed provide a semblance of constancy, it also has the potential to engender the marginalisation of specific factions and foster a climate of exclusionary political practises. Jega (2011) underscores the paramount significance of inclusive leadership, which serves as a catalyst for accountability, transparency, and citizen participation, thereby mitigating power struggles and nurturing the prospects of sustainable development.

It is imperative to acknowledge that there exists a potential divergence between the conventional strategy and political strategy, necessitating a comprehensive comprehension of their discrete attributes and ramifications within the realm of leadership and power dynamics. The classic strategies to political strategy centres around the utilisation of various factors, such as ethnicity, religion, social class, and financial power, as means of capitalising on political opportunities. However, the concept of political strategy encompasses a more expansive array of tactics employed by political actors in order to effectively attain their desired goals. The classic strategies, as elucidated in prior scholarly works, entails the deft manipulation of potent tribal or religious emotions, frequently employing divisive methodologies, with the aim of securing entry into positions of authority (Okolie, 2018). It is distinguished by a hierarchical approach to governance, wherein leaders wield substantial control and authority over the processes of decision-making and policy implementation. The classic strategies frequently places emphasis on the preservation of stability, the establishment of order, and the concentration of authority within the grasp of a select few individuals (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005). This particular methodology has the propensity to engender power dynamics, inclinations towards authoritarianism, and plausible adverse ramifications, including the marginalisation of specific cohorts and the perpetuation of exclusionary political practises. (Jega, 2011) Conversely, the realm of political strategy encompasses a more expansive array of tactics utilised by political agents in order to attain their objectives.

The aforementioned encompasses a diverse range of endeavours, encompassing the establishment of coalitions, the formation of alliances, strategic manoeuvring in policy matters, and active involvement with interest groups and constituents (Foster, 2016). Political strategy entails the deliberate and calculated pursuit of garnering endorsement, cultivating alliances, and deftly manoeuvring through the intricate terrain of politics in order to propel one's political objectives forward. The process at hand potentially entails

the strategic alignment with particular interest groups, the artful construction of compelling narratives, or the astute participation in policy negotiations, all with the ultimate aim of attaining the desired outcomes. The classic strategies to political manoeuvring revolves around the exploitation of particular variables, such as ethnicity and religion, in order to secure political advantages. However, political strategy is a broader concept that encompasses a range of methodologies and manoeuvres employed by political agents to navigate the complex realm of politics. The classic approach may be perceived as a constituent element of political strategy, wherein leaders adeptly employ discernible tactics grounded in appeals based on identity to fortify their authority.

The Concept of Power Struggle

The notion of power struggle encapsulates the intricate interplay, contestation, and dynamics that manifest within the intricate fabric of social and political frameworks, wherein individuals and collectives ardently contend for dominion and sway. It encompasses the intricate dynamics of challenging and deliberating over power, allocation of resources, and the formulation of decision-making protocols, frequently culminating in the emergence of tensions, conflicts, and calculated strategic manoeuvres. Power struggles manifest themselves across multiple tiers, encompassing the interpersonal, organisational, and societal realms, exerting a profound influence on the intricate fabric of social, political, and economic dynamics.

Numerous scholarly investigations have delved into the multifaceted nature of power dynamics, offering valuable insights into its intricate nature. Power struggles frequently revolve around the intricate dynamics of power allocation and resource distribution within the intricate fabric of a given society or organisation. This encompasses the ongoing struggle for political power, the pursuit of economic advantages, and the acquisition of control over valuable resources. Nnoli (2008) underscores the paramount significance of identity politics, encompassing the intricate interplay of ethnic and religious cleavages, in engendering and exacerbating power dynamics and political strife within the Nigerian context. Power struggles encompass not only the manifestation of competition, but also the emergence of conflicts within both formal and informal institutions. This encompasses the arduous endeavours pertaining to the attainment of leadership roles, the exertion of influence on policy matters, and the establishment of dominion over the processes of decision-making. Ajaero's (2016) scholarly inquiry delves into the intricate dynamics of power struggles within the political elite of Nigeria, elucidating their detrimental impact on policy stability and impeding the progress of sustainable development endeavours. Power struggles often arise as a result of divergent ideologies and conflicting sets of values. Various factions or entities may endeavour to advance their respective ideological agendas and attain ascendancy over their counterparts. These arduous endeavours frequently encompass contentious deliberations and collisions pertaining to matters of societal, cultural, and political significance. The scholarly work conducted by Okoli (2015) delved into an examination of the intricate interplay between religious and ethnic affiliations within the context of political power struggles in Nigeria. Through this meticulous analysis, the study provided valuable insights into the far-reaching implications that these dynamics hold for the realm of democratic governance.

The dynamics of power struggles frequently necessitate the establishment of coalitions and alliances among diverse entities in order to augment their sway and attain

their objectives. The formation of alliances can manifest as either ephemeral or enduring, contingent upon the convergence of shared interests or the pursuit of mutual objectives. In his seminal work, Nwankwo (2017) delved into the intricate interplay between ethnicity and power dynamics within the realm of Nigerian politics. The author underscored the imperative nature of comprehending the ramifications of leadership strategies on the overarching goals of national unity and development. Power struggles encompass the utilisation of diverse strategies and tactics in order to procure a favourable position relative to adversaries. These encompass various forms of influence, such as persuasive tactics, negotiation strategies, manipulative techniques, and coercive measures. Power struggles can encompass various tactics, such as the strategic mobilisation of support, manipulation of media channels, and dissemination of propaganda, all aimed at influencing public sentiment and discrediting adversaries. Adebani and Obadare (2011) undertake a comprehensive analysis of the intricate dynamics of power struggles and political manipulations that have regrettably impeded the attainment of efficient governance and the seamless provision of essential services within the Nigerian context. Comprehending the multifaceted nature of power dynamics affords us valuable insights into the intricate workings of leadership, governance, and the transformative forces that drive societal progress.

Leadership and Power Dynamics within the context of Nigerian Democracy

The Nigerian democratic system has borne witness to the seamless transfer of power, wherein the reins of governance have been gracefully handed over from one leader and political faction to another. Scholarly inquiries, exemplified by the work entitled "Political Transitions and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria" authored by Richard Joseph in the year 2017, delve into the intricate complexities and obstacles inherent in the process of power transitions within the Nigerian context. The aforementioned transitions aptly exemplify the inherent competitiveness ingrained within the realm of Nigerian politics, as well as the astute prowess of its leaders in amassing widespread popular endorsement. The impact of political parties on the Nigerian democratic system is of considerable magnitude, as they exert a profound influence on the configuration of leadership and the intricate dynamics of power. Scholarly inquiries, exemplified by the work titled "Nigeria: Political Parties and Democratisation" authored by Larry Diamond in 2005, undertake a comprehensive examination of the intricate interplay between political parties and the process of democratic consolidation, as well as the consequential ramifications on the equitable dispersion of power within a given polity. These gatherings function as platforms for political figures to galvanise backing and engage in a contest for positions of leadership. The intricate interplay among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, characterised by the separation of powers, exerts a profound influence on the intricate tapestry of leadership and power dynamics within the Nigerian democratic system. Scholarly inquiries, exemplified by the work entitled "Executive-Legislative Relations in Nigeria: An Assessment of the Fourth Republic" authored by Joseph A. Ayoade in 2009, meticulously scrutinise the intricate dynamics and equilibrium of authority that transpire amidst the executive and legislative branches of governance. The efficacy of leaders in traversing these intricate relationships significantly influences their capacity to exercise decision-making authority and wield power.

The pivotal functions of civil society organisations and media in the realm of Nigerian democracy lie in their capacity to diligently scrutinise the intricate interplay between leadership and power dynamics. Scholarly inquiries, exemplified by the work of Ebenezer Obadare in his 2011 publication titled "Civil Society, Democracy, and State Building in Nigeria," underscore the paramount significance of civil society in the realm of ensuring the accountability of leaders and championing the cause of democratic governance. The media assumes the role of a vigilant sentinel, diligently disseminating both factual data and astute analysis pertaining to the intricate interplay of leadership and power dynamics. The impact of socio-cultural factors on various aspects of society is a subject of great significance and scholarly inquiry. These factors encompass a wide range of elements, including but not limited to Socio-cultural determinants, encompassing the intricate interplay of ethnicity and religion, exert a discernible influence upon the intricate tapestry of leadership and power dynamics within the Nigerian democratic framework. Scholarly inquiries, exemplified by the work of Okechukwu Oko in his seminal publication "Ethnicity, Religion and Power in Nigeria" (2013), delve into the intricate interplay between these influential factors and their profound impact on the formation of political alliances, the manifestation of voting patterns, and the intricate dynamics of leadership within the Nigerian context. The comprehension of these intricate dynamics holds utmost significance in grasping the intricacies of power allocation within the Nigerian democratic framework.

Case Studies on the Democratic Presidents in Nigeria since 2009

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2009 to 2010)

During the tenure of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua in Nigeria, one can discern the implementation of various classic strategies of leadership. These strategies encompass components such as fostering inclusivity, fostering consensus through collaborative efforts, and prioritising pivotal matters. In the realm of leadership, President Yar'Adua's distinctive approach was characterised by a profound commitment to inclusivity, wherein he demonstrated a remarkable propensity to involve diverse stakeholders in the intricate web of decision-making processes. He inaugurated the Niger Delta Technical Committee and the Presidential Committee on Power with the aim of tackling pivotal concerns in the Niger Delta region and the power sector, correspondingly. The aforementioned committees comprised individuals hailing from pertinent sectors, thereby evincing a steadfast dedication to fostering inclusivity (Ibrahim, 2011). President Yar'Adua endeavoured to foster a harmonious convergence of perspectives among diverse political actors and interest groups. The individual in question embarked upon the commencement of the electoral reform procedure through the establishment of the Electoral Reform Committee. This committee was instrumental in conducting consultations with a diverse array of stakeholders, with the aim of enhancing the credibility and transparency of electoral processes within the Nigerian context (Ibrahim, 2011). The aforementioned approach aptly demonstrated his unwavering dedication to fostering consensus and upholding the principles of democratic governance.

The administration under President Yar'Adua demonstrated a discerning approach in prioritising critical matters, namely the pervasive issue of corruption, the imperative need for electoral reforms, and the pressing security challenges faced by the nation. The

author Ibrahim (2011) underscored the significance of upholding principles of good governance, the rule of law, and due process, emphasising their pivotal role in fostering sustainable development. Through the deliberate prioritisation of these pressing matters, President Yar'Adua astutely exemplified a quintessential leadership approach, wherein he directed his attention towards pivotal issues that held paramount significance in propelling the nation forward. It is imperative to acknowledge that the tenure of President Yar'Adua was curtailed as a consequence of his premature demise, thereby constraining the comprehensive evaluation of his strategic approach to governance. Nevertheless, the aforementioned facets underscore his unwavering dedication to fostering an all-encompassing system of governance, fostering agreement among diverse stakeholders, and effectively tackling pivotal matters of concern.

President Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015)

During the tenure of President Goodluck Jonathan in Nigeria, one can discern the implementation of various classic strategies of leadership. These strategies encompass various components such as effective communication, adept coalition formation, and sustainable economic progress. In this discourse, we shall engage in a comprehensive examination of the aforementioned facets, bolstered by the inclusion of pertinent scholarly citations. President Jonathan implemented a highly efficacious communication approach as a strategic component of his leadership methodology. He employed a multitude of communication platforms to actively involve the populace and effectively communicate the policies and initiatives of his administration. The scholarly work conducted by Umaru and Gambo (2015) sheds light upon the strategic utilisation of media platforms and public orations by President Jonathan as a means to effectively convey his transformative agenda and actively involve the populace in the intricate realm of governance. Coalition forging: President Jonathan astutely acknowledged the paramount significance of coalition building, diligently endeavouring to cultivate a harmonious synergy amongst a myriad of heterogeneous stakeholders. The administration under his purview diligently endeavoured to effectuate political reforms, which encompassed active collaboration with opposition factions and the establishment of the esteemed Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) with the aim of ameliorating the electoral apparatus. The scholarly investigation conducted by Umaru and Gambo (2015) critically assesses the efficacy of President Jonathan's leadership in advancing political reforms and fostering coalition formation to bolster democratic governance within the Nigerian context. The administration under President Jonathan placed a significant emphasis on the pursuit of economic development and the imperative of diversification. The Transformation Agenda, which was initiated during his tenure, sought to foster economic expansion, employment generation, and amelioration of poverty across diverse domains such as agriculture, power, infrastructure, and education. The scholarly investigation conducted by Umaru and Gambo (2015) endeavours to evaluate the ramifications of President Jonathan's economic policies and programmes on Nigeria's overarching developmental aspirations. It is imperative to acknowledge that amidst the tenure of President Jonathan, these timeless tactics of leadership were duly noted, albeit accompanied by obstacles and critiques pertaining to specific facets of governance and the rate of advancement. Henceforth, a thorough examination of President Jonathan's leadership *modus operandi* necessitates the

contemplation of multifarious viewpoints and the scrutiny of myriad facets of his governance.

President Muhammadu Buhari (2015-2023)

Under the tenure of President Muhammadu Buhari in Nigeria, discernible occurrences have transpired wherein classic strategies of governance have been duly noted. These strategies encompass elements such as resolute decision-making, unwavering personal beliefs, and a steadfast commitment to upholding integrity and implementing anti-corruption measures. In this discourse, we shall engage in an examination of these constituent components, accompanied by meticulous citations to pertinent scholarly investigations. Decisiveness: President Buhari has exhibited a resolute and unequivocal approach to leadership in select circumstances. An illustrative instance lies in his expeditious implementation of the appointment of service chiefs and the subsequent adoption of strategic measures to effectively address prevailing security challenges, most notably the Boko Haram insurgency. The scholarly research conducted by Olufemi (2020) duly recognises the astute tactics employed by the administration, encompassing amplified military endeavours and counter-terrorism endeavours. These measures aptly exemplify President Buhari's resolute and determined stance in tackling the prevailing security apprehensions.

President Buhari has garnered recognition for his unwavering personal convictions, notably in the realms of combating corruption and upholding effective governance. Under his administration, a multitude of anti-corruption measures have been implemented, accompanied by the establishment of esteemed institutions such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), all with the noble aim of combatting the pervasive issue of corruption. The scholarly investigation conducted by Fatile (2020) delves into the intricate examination of President Buhari's endeavours to counteract corruption, shedding light on his unwavering dedication to eradicating this societal ill within the Nigerian context. The current administration under President Buhari has placed a significant emphasis on upholding the principles of integrity and implementing robust measures to combat corruption. The Whistleblower Policy, which was implemented during his tenure, serves to incentivize individuals to come forward with reports of corruption, providing them with the opportunity to receive rewards in exchange for substantiated and reliable information. This policy exemplifies a steadfast dedication to fostering transparency and accountability. The scholarly inquiry conducted by Fatile (2020) endeavours to evaluate the endeavours of President Buhari in combatting corruption, while simultaneously delving into the ramifications of initiatives such as the Whistleblower Policy on the realm of governance and the perception of the general public. It is imperative to acknowledge that within the context of President Buhari's administration, these time-honored strategies of leadership have indeed been discerned. However, it is equally crucial to recognise that there exist critical appraisals and obstacles pertaining to the execution and efficacy of said strategies. Several scholarly investigations have brought to the fore apprehensions regarding the rate of advancement in specific domains and the imperative for more comprehensive overhauls (Amuwo, 2019). Henceforth, a thorough examination of President Buhari's modus operandi necessitates the contemplation of multifarious viewpoints and the scrutiny of sundry facets of his governance.

Theoretical framework

The investigation shall be steered by a pair of theoretical frameworks, namely rational choice theory and power-struggle theory. Rational choice theory, deeply entrenched within the realms of economics and social sciences, places paramount importance on the process of decision-making predicated upon the pursuit of individual self-interest and the maximisation of utility (Becker, 1976). It presupposes that individuals engage in a cognitive process wherein they meticulously evaluate the potential drawbacks and advantages associated with various alternatives, ultimately opting for the course of action that optimises their individual benefits (Becker, 1976). Within the realm of the timeless strategy of leadership, the application of rational choice theory shall bestow profound illumination upon the underlying motivations and intricate calculations undertaken by political actors who embrace this particular approach in their quest to acquire and sustain power. This inquiry seeks to delve into the underlying motivations that drive leaders to partake in power struggles, manipulate ethnic and religious ties, and employ divisive strategies in order to secure electoral backing and retain dominion over valuable resources (Knight, 1992; Gerring, 1997).

The theory of power-struggle, conversely, delves into the intricate dynamics and rivalries that ensue within the intricate fabric of social and political frameworks. It acknowledges the inherent asymmetry in the distribution of power and the perpetual endeavours undertaken by both individuals and collectives to acquire or uphold power (Dahl, 1957). This theoretical framework scrutinises the dynamics of power as it is wielded, challenged, and bargained within diverse social milieus. Within the framework of the classic strategy of leadership, the theory of power-struggle shall serve as a valuable tool in dissecting the intricate dynamics of power and the ensuing conflicts that inevitably manifest in the wake of implementing said strategy (Gerring, 1997). This framework shall serve as a means to comprehend the intricate dynamics through which political elites vie for authority, forge alliances, and partake in power struggles that frequently surpass mere ideological and policy considerations (Knight, 1992; Gerring, 1997).

By synthesising the principles of rational choice theory and power-struggle theory, the present study endeavours to furnish a more intricate comprehension of the classic strategy of leadership in the Nigerian context. The discourse shall delve into the underlying motivations, intricate calculations, and intricate power dynamics of political actors who employ this strategic approach. Furthermore, it shall meticulously scrutinise the far-reaching consequences it bears upon governance and the pursuit of sustainable development (Knight, 1992; Gerring, 1997).

Methodology

The research utilised an exploratory framework and employed a quantitative approach to investigate the prevalence and perspectives surrounding the traditional leadership strategy in Nigeria. The employment of quantitative data collection methodologies, particularly surveys and questionnaires, enabled the acquisition of data from a greater multitude of participants in a methodical and proficient manner. Surveys are widely acknowledged as a valuable instrument in the realm of social sciences, owing to their inherent capacity to amass data from a vast and heterogeneous sample. In the present

investigation, a series of surveys were distributed to a cohort of twenty-five (25) esteemed members of the academic faculty, carefully chosen from two prestigious Nigerian universities and one esteemed polytechnic institution located within the Ijebu region of Ogun State, Nigeria. The selection of these particular tertiary institutions and the strategic placement within the Ijebu region was predicated upon the profound historical and political import of the Ijebu populace within the Nigerian context (see Ayandele, 1966; Olaosebikan, 2015).

The study sought to elucidate the viewpoints and encounters of scholarly personnel who possess extensive expertise and acquaintance with the venerable art of leadership within the Nigerian milieu. In order to guarantee the representativeness of the sample, a methodology employing multi-stage sampling techniques was implemented. This process entailed the initial stage of carefully curating establishments, followed by the subsequent stage of meticulously handpicking individuals within each respective institution. Through the implementation of this methodology, the research endeavour sought to procure a comprehensive assortment of erudite personnel hailing from various fields of study, departments, and hierarchical roles within the designated establishments. This particular methodology serves to augment the overall applicability of the results and affords a holistic comprehension of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

The data acquired from the surveys underwent analysis utilising descriptive statistics, including frequency tabulations, percentage distributions, and average scores. Descriptive statistics facilitate the concise synthesis and visual representation of the gathered data, thereby offering a comprehensive depiction of participants' responses and perspectives pertaining to the timeless concept of leadership strategy. The utilisation of these statistical measures facilitates the discernment of patterns, trends, and fluctuations within the data, thereby yielding valuable insights into the prevalence and perspectives pertaining to this leadership strategy in Nigeria. During the course of the research endeavour, meticulous attention was devoted to upholding ethical principles, which encompassed the conscientious acquisition of informed consent from the individuals involved. Adhering to the tenets of informed consent guarantees that individuals partaking in the study possess a comprehensive understanding of the objectives, methodologies, and potential ramifications associated with their participation. This ethical framework upholds the principles of transparency, confidentiality, and voluntary engagement, thereby ensuring the protection of the rights and well-being of the individuals involved in the research.

Data analysis

The preponderance of participants can be observed to be situated within the demographic cohort spanning from 30 to 35 years of age. This observation suggests that the sample in question possesses a relatively youthful nature, which has the potential to exert an influence on the outcomes and perspectives of the research being conducted. The distribution of respondents in the sample exhibits a notable bias towards the male demographic, as 72% of the participants identify as male, while the remaining 28% identify as female. The issue of gender imbalance warrants due consideration when extrapolating the findings to the wider populace.

Table 1: Socio-demographic variables of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Below 30yrs	3	12.0
30-35yrs	15	60.0
36-40yrs	5	20.0
41yrs and above	2	5.1
Total	25	100.0
Gender		
Female	7	28.0
Male	18	72.0
Total	25	100.0
Level of Education		
BSc/BEd	3	12.0
MSc	14	56.0
PhD	8	32.0
Total	25	100.0
Marital Status		
Divorce	2	8.0
Married	17	68.0
Separated	1	4.0
Single	5	20.0
Total	25	100.0
Years spent on the job		
0-5yrs	4	16.0
6-10	12	48.0
11-15	7	28.0
Above 15yrs	2	8.0
Total	25	100.0

A significant proportion of participants have achieved higher levels of academic attainment, as evidenced by the fact that 56% possess a Master of Science degree, while 32% hold a Doctor of Philosophy degree. The aforementioned observation implies a cohort that has received a comprehensive education, potentially influencing their viewpoints and comprehension of the topic being examined. A notable majority of respondents (68%) have entered into the sacred institution of marriage, thereby suggesting a discernible degree of steadfastness and conscientiousness in their respective spheres of existence. Nevertheless, it is imperative to take into account the inclusion of individuals who are categorised as single, divorced, or separated when endeavouring to acquire a thorough comprehension of the demographic under investigation. A significant proportion of participants, comprising 48% of the total, have dedicated a span of 6 to 10 years to their respective occupations. This implies the presence of a comparatively seasoned sample, which may exert an influence on their attitudes, knowledge, and decision-making processes.

Table2: Reason for adoption of classic strategy and power struggle in Nigerian politics

Item	Reason for adoption of classic strategy and power struggle in Nigerian political landscape	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	To able to access leadership positions	2.76	0.18
2	To build strong political allies	2.73	0.88
3	To facilitate entry into the elite class	2.90	0.93

4	To promote ethnicity and religious differences	2.82	0.87
5	To sway the emotions of the masses for their personal victory during election	3.40	0.86

The tabular representation offers a concise overview of the rationales behind the implementation of the classic strategy within the Nigerian political sphere, accompanied by their respective average scores and measures of variability in the form of standard deviations. In order to attain the capacity to access and assume leadership positions, one must engage in a multifaceted process of personal and professional development. This entails cultivating a comprehensive skill set, fostering effective communication abilities, and demonstrating a profound understanding of organisational dynamics. Additionally, the rationale behind embracing the classic strategy to leadership in order to secure leadership positions garnered an average rating of 2.76. This proposition posits that it is deemed a moderately influential determinant within the Nigerian political milieu. This suggests that political entities may employ the classic strategy of strategically positioning themselves in order to assume leadership positions. In order to cultivate robust political alliances, it is imperative to engage in strategic networking and establish meaningful connections with influential individuals within the political sphere. This entails fostering mutually beneficial relationships based on shared interests, values. The assessment of the efficacy of establishing robust political alliances yielded a mean rating of 2.73. This proposition suggests that the establishment of alliances and coalitions is regarded as a moderately significant facet within the realm of classical strategy. Political actors often find themselves embroiled in power struggles, wherein they strategically navigate the complex terrain of forging alliances and garnering support from influential entities or collectives. In order to expedite one's admittance into the esteemed echelons of society, it is worth noting that the aspiration to join the elite class garnered an average rating of 2.90. This proposition posits that individuals may embrace the classic strategy as a mechanism to enhance their societal standing and acquire entry to the advantages and assets linked with the upper echelon.

The endorsement of ethnic and religious disparities garnered an average rating of 2.82. This observation suggests that the utilisation of ethnic and religious divisions as a means to attain political advantage holds a degree of significance in the implementation of the traditional strategy. It posits that certain political entities exploit these divisions in order to mobilise backing and fortify their power foundations. In the pursuit of personal triumph during electoral campaigns, the deliberate endeavour to manipulate the sentiments of the general populace garnered the most noteworthy average rating of 3.40. This observation suggests that the ability to manipulate the emotions and sentiments of the general populace in order to achieve electoral victory is regarded as a significant determinant in the adoption of the traditional strategic approach. Political actors often employ a myriad of strategic manoeuvres, encompassing the utilisation of emotional appeals and the adoption of populist rhetoric, in order to amass public support and emerge victorious in electoral contests.

The aforementioned findings are in accordance with the preexisting body of literature pertaining to the realm of Nigerian politics and the intricate nature of power dynamics. Scholarly investigations have duly underscored the significance of ethnicity and religious associations (Okoli, 2015) alongside the strategic exploitation of public sentiments (Egharevba, 2017) within the context of political power dynamics in Nigeria.

The scholarly literature has extensively documented the prevalence of power struggles and the exploitation of ethnic and religious divisions (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011; Nnoli, 2008). These scholarly investigations offer valuable perspectives on the underlying incentives and tactics employed by political agents in Nigeria, thereby corroborating the conclusions elucidated in the aforementioned table. It is imperative to acknowledge that the standard deviations serve as a measure of the extent of variability in the perspectives expressed by the respondents. Elevated standard deviations imply a heightened degree of heterogeneity in the responses, thereby signifying that distinct individuals may ascribe differing degrees of significance to these rationales for embracing the classic strategy.

Table 3: Ways at which Nigerian politicians utilize classic strategy and power struggle

Item	How Nigerian politicians utilize classic strategy and power struggle	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	Visiting religious centres with different kinds of donations and gifts to seek the support	3.40	0.23
2	Tempting and mobilizing the youth to fight against the opposition party	2.35	0.10
3	Visiting traditional rulers and attending public occasions	2.01	0.37
4	Use of emotional words and empathy	2.69	0.41
5	Aliening with the majority ethnic groups and denouncing them afterwards	2.83	0.32
6	Use of public propaganda such as visiting the poor homes, eating with their kids and offering assistance to them when elections are around the corner	2.78	0.43

The tabular representation provides comprehensive insights into the utilisation of the classic strategy by Nigerian politicians, as evidenced by the mean scores and standard deviations associated with each item. Engaging in the practise of visiting various religious establishments with diverse offerings and contributions in order to garner assistance: It is noteworthy that this particular approach has garnered the most elevated average rating of 3.40, thereby suggesting its frequent utilisation by Nigerian politicians as a component of their conventional strategic manoeuvring. It is a common practise for politicians to frequent religious establishments, proffering monetary contributions and material offerings, all in an effort to garner the endorsement and backing of esteemed religious figures and their congregants. This particular strategy enables politicians to strategically exploit religious sentiments and secure the support of prominent religious figures (Egharevba, 2017). The act of enticing and galvanising the younger generation to engage in combat against the opposing political party: The average rating for this particular aspect stands at 2.35, suggesting a moderate level of impact within the realm of Nigerian politics. It posits the notion that certain political figures may endeavour to mobilise and manipulate the younger demographic by instigating their animosity towards the opposing political faction. This strategic manoeuvre capitalises on the susceptibility and malleability of the adolescent demographic (Okoli, 2015).

Engaging in interactions with traditional rulers and participating in public events: As indicated by a mean score of 2.01, it can be inferred that politicians employ this particular approach to a lesser degree when compared to alternative strategies.

Nevertheless, the act of engaging with traditional rulers and participating in public events remains a viable avenue for politicians to enhance their prominence and garner backing from esteemed traditional authorities and members of the community (Ake, 2001). The aforementioned item has garnered a mean score of 2.69, thereby suggesting a discernible degree of employment. Politicians strategically employ linguistic devices imbued with emotional connotations and expressions of empathetic sentiment in order to establish a profound connection with the electorate at an intimate and personal level. This strategic manoeuvre seeks to elicit an emotional response from the voting populace, with the ultimate objective of garnering their trust and empathy (Nnoli, 2008). By deliberately distancing oneself from the prevailing ethnic majority and subsequently criticising them, a sense of alienation is created. The observed mean score pertaining to this particular item stands at 2.83, thereby implying that politicians occasionally engage in strategic alliances with predominant ethnic factions in order to secure their backing, only to subsequently disavow them for the sake of political advantage. This strategic manoeuvre effectively capitalises on ethnic cleavages and sentiments in order to deftly manipulate and sway the support of the electorate (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). The utilisation of public propaganda, exemplified by the act of visiting impoverished households, partaking in communal meals with their children, and extending aid, as a strategic manoeuvre during electoral campaigns. The aforementioned entity has garnered a mean score of 2.78, thereby suggesting that politicians frequently resort to the utilisation of said strategy throughout the course of electoral campaigns. Through the strategic utilisation of public propaganda, politicians endeavour to cultivate a favourable perception among the masses by partaking in activities such as personally visiting the abodes of the economically disadvantaged, communing with their offspring over shared repasts, and extending aid and succour to their plight (Omeje, 2010).

These findings are in accordance with the extant literature on Nigerian politics and the classic strategies employed by politicians. The employment of religious establishments, mobilisation of the younger generation, and dissemination of public propaganda have been duly recorded as prevalent strategies employed by Nigerian politicians (Egharevba, 2017; Okoli, 2015). The scholarly discourse additionally underscores the import of ethnic cleavages and customary leaders within the realm of Nigerian politics (Ake, 2001; Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). The data presented in the table substantiates the aforementioned observations through empirical evidence. The observed standard deviations within the provided table aptly capture the inherent variability present in the diverse range of opinions expressed by the respondents. Elevated standard deviations manifest as a reflection of heightened heterogeneity within responses, thereby implying that distinct politicians may employ these strategies to varying extents. In essence, the research findings indicate that Nigerian politicians employ a diverse array of tactics within the traditional strategic framework. These tactics encompass activities such as engaging with religious institutions, mobilising the youth demographic, disseminating public propaganda, and exploiting ethnic cleavages. These strategies endeavour to procure backing and manipulate the collective sentiment of the populace in order to gain an electoral edge.

Table 4: Consequences of Classic Strategy and Power Struggle in Nigeria Politics

Item	Consequences of Classic Strategy and power struggle in Nigeria Politics	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	It encourages a lack of visionary leadership	2.73	0.10
2	The incessant struggle over resource control	2.50	0.18
3	It create room for a single ethnic group dominating the political positions	2.34	0.33
4	It promote corrupt political structure, greed and violence	2.82	0.57
5	It allows for Ethnic sentiments and separationist movements	2.78	0.36
6	Militancy and insecurity	2.53	0.43

The tabular representation elucidates the ramifications of the classic strategy in Nigerian politics, as denoted by the average values and measures of dispersion for each element. It fosters a dearth of visionary leadership. The aforementioned item has garnered a mean score of 2.73, thereby implying that the classic strategy observed in Nigerian politics is closely linked to a dearth of forward-thinking and inspired leadership. The implementation of this particular approach frequently places personal interests in higher regard than the advancement of the nation, thereby impeding the cultivation of individuals with extensive foresight and the ability to devise strategic plans (Okolie, 2018). The perpetual and unyielding conflict pertaining to the dominion over finite resources. With an average score of 2.50, this particular item serves as an indicator of the enduring challenges pertaining to the management and acquisition of resources in Nigeria, thereby highlighting the significance of the classic strategy in this context. The confluence of power concentration and the relentless pursuit of individual interests inherent in the traditional strategic framework can engender a state of rivalry and discord concerning the acquisition and governance of resources, thereby perpetuating an environment of instability and impeding progress (Oluwakemi, 2019).

It engenders an environment conducive to the hegemony of a solitary ethnic faction in the realm of political positions: The average score of 2.34 posits that the conventional modus operandi in Nigerian politics has the potential to yield a scenario wherein a solitary ethnic group assumes a position of dominance in the political landscape. This outcome exemplifies the exploitation of ethnic divisions and the manipulation of ethnic sentiments within the classic strategy, thereby potentially resulting in the implementation of exclusionary political practises and the marginalisation of various ethnic collectives (Nnoli, 2008). The aforementioned entity is known to foster a system of governance that is riddled with corruption, avarice, and acts of aggression. This particular entity has garnered an average rating of 2.82, thereby suggesting a strong correlation between the classic strategy and the aforementioned negative attributes such as corrupt political structures, insatiable greed, and the perpetuation of violence. The relentless endeavour for power and the advancement of individual interests within the realm of traditional strategy can engender a dearth of responsibility, moral decay, and the perpetuation of aggression in the political landscape of Nigeria (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011).

It facilitates the expression of ethnic sentiments and provides a platform for the proliferation of separatist movements. Based on the obtained mean score of 2.78, it can be inferred that this particular item posits the notion that the utilisation of the classic strategy

has the potential to cultivate and nurture ethnic sentiments, thereby playing a role in the genesis and proliferation of separatist movements. Through the astute manipulation of ethnic schisms and alliances, politicians employing the time-honored approach may unwittingly stoke animosities and foster the emergence of factions advocating for increased self-governance or secession (Ake, 2001). The prevailing phenomena of militancy and insecurity have become increasingly salient in contemporary society. The observed mean score for this particular item stands at 2.53, thereby suggesting a correlation between the utilisation of the classic strategy and the prevalence of militancy and insecurity within the context of Nigeria. The inherent dynamics of power struggles and conflicts that emerge from the timeless art of strategy, particularly in regions abundant with valuable resources such as the Niger Delta, have the potential to give rise to militant activities, acts of violence, and a pervasive sense of insecurity (Omeje, 2010).

These findings are in accordance with the existing body of research on the ramifications of the classic strategy in Nigerian political dynamics. The scholarly discourse accentuates the deleterious ramifications, encompassing a dearth of forward-thinking stewardship, contentions pertaining to the command over resources, ethnic hegemony, venality, aggression, and a state of precariousness (Okolie, 2018; Oluwakemi, 2019; Adebani & Obadare, 2011; Nnoli, 2008; Ake, 2001; Omeje, 2010). The standard deviations presented in the table serve as indicators of the extent of variability observed in the opinions expressed by the respondents. Elevated standard deviations indicate a heightened range of perspectives concerning the ramifications of the classic strategy in Nigerian political affairs. In a comprehensive analysis, the findings put forth indicate that the classic strategy employed in Nigerian politics yields a multitude of adverse outcomes. These include a dearth of forward-thinking leadership, contentious disputes over resource allocation, ethnic hegemony, pervasive corruption, and the propagation of ethnic biases, the emergence of separatist factions, the rise of militant activities, and a pervasive sense of insecurity. These consequences underscore the imperative for transformative reforms and novel methodologies in governance that prioritise the advancement of the nation, inclusivity, and the establishment of mechanisms for transparency and answerability.

Conclusion

The prevalence and perception surrounding the utilisation of classic strategic manoeuvres and power dynamics within the Nigerian democratic framework between the years 2009 and 2023 shed light on the intricate and ever-evolving nature of political governance in the nation. During this temporal epoch, leaders have adeptly employed venerable methodologies such as effective communication, astute coalition-building, and judicious prioritisation of pivotal matters to deftly navigate the intricate challenges inherent in the realm of governance. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that the political milieu in Nigeria has been significantly influenced by power dynamics and the relentless pursuit of influence. This phenomenon underscores the inherent complexities and contradictions that exist within the democratic framework of the nation. The empirical evidence implies that although conventional methodologies have been employed, the exertion of authority and the perceived misapplication thereof have exerted a significant impact on the collective sentiment and have played a pivotal role in shaping the course of Nigerian political affairs. As Nigeria undergoes its ongoing transformation into a democratic entity, it becomes imperative to conscientiously tackle these pertinent matters,

cultivate an environment of openness and accountability, fortify the foundations of its institutions, and advocate for a governance model that embraces inclusivity. These endeavours are essential for optimising the efficacy of the democratic framework and realising the collective ambitions of its populace. Additional investigation and examination are imperative to delve more profoundly into the complexities of traditional methodologies and power dynamics within the realm of Nigerian politics, thereby offering profound insights for the attainment of efficacious leadership and the consolidation of democratic principles in subsequent times.

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