

THE IMPACT OF NIGERIAN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN ON CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: A CASE OF AFRICAN INDIGENOUS CHURCHES

By

Prof. Afolorunso Dairo
Department of Religious Studies & Philosophy
Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun State.

dairoa@run.edu.ng

&

Abolaji, Tosin Success
Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy
Redeemer's University, Ede.
successabolaji@gmail.com

Abstract

Man desires the uttermost link with his creator and through this medium, he maintains his relationship to get maximum satisfaction in terms of provisions, protections, guidance and peace in his lifetime. This link is what can be termed worship. Worship is a way man keeps a close contact with his Creator. Christian worship takes different modes and practices depending on the system adopted in various denominations today. For instance, African Indigenous Churches (AICs) have a flare for worship as they are seen to portray their sincerity through rigorous dancing, clapping, and tapping of their feet, contrary to some Pentecostal churches where worship is Eurocentric. Similarly, economic realities in the Nigerian society have impacted Christian worship especially in the attitudes of AICs members. Therefore, the aim of this paper was to examine the impact of the Nigerian economic realities on Christian worship: A case of AICs. Thus, the paper adopted historical, descriptive and participatory observation methods. It was discovered that the economic realities in the Nigerian society has made many of the AICs members to look after making more income to relieve the economic burden, thus, resulting into members absenteeism from Churches, and having divided attention during worship. The study recommended that AICs members should be industrious and cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit to combat economic maladies, and should not jeopardize the true form of Christian worship due to the economic downturn.

Keywords: African Indigenous Churches, Christian Worship, Nigeria Economic downturn.

Introduction

Worship is one of the core practices in every belief system. The idea of worship is not peculiar to Christianity alone rather in every religion of the world there exists a platform where worship is seen as a connection established to foster communion between man and the Divine. Thus, the worshippers in the worship system yearn and desire the response and fellowship of the Supreme Deity during worship session. Davies (1967) affirmed that worship is primarily something that God does, in the sense that it is Christ who baptizes through the Spirit and it is Christ who through the Spirit presides at the Eucharist, thus it is a mistake to think of worship exclusively as something addressed by man to God; it is first and foremost God's approach to man which then elicits man's response. It must be noted that the Davies' conception of worship is deeper than the way people view worship in the contemporary Churches as he classified worship under theocentric and anthropocentric.

Hitherto the chapter of Genesis 4:26 which indicates that men began to call upon the name of the Lord, it can be traced to the creation account that man was in cordial relationship with His Maker who he revered, honour and communed with and after the fall, Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God as a way of worship. Thus, the act of calling on the name of the Lord as recorded in Gen 4:26 was not an independent passage of the previous passages that indicated God's relationship with man, rather a re-emphasis on the concept, idea and mode of worship. It can be deduced that the concept of worship during the time of Adam and Eve was different from the ways subsequent generations conceived and practised it. During the time of Noah (Gen 6), Noah found grace in the sight of God as others have forsaken to commune with Him. Through communion Noah understood the voice of God and His guidance and thus began His campaign of the coming flood. In the biblical record, Noah built an altar to God and offered a burnt sacrifice to Him (Gen 8:20-21). Afterwards, Genesis 11 opens with the account of people who wanted to gain access to God through a tower. All these indicated that each generation has its own peculiar way of communicating, fellowshiping and relating with God –worship.

Christian worship has its ideology from the ancient times of the biblical period. It was built on the biblical foundation of the Old and the New Testaments. However, as civilization becomes the mother of all changes and the driving forces to new knowledge, Christians in the contemporary age usually view worship to mean the act of singing and clapping and it has been viewed to mean songs with slow tempo. This is indeed a misconception of what worship means in the real sense.

Christian worship and economic stability in Nigeria has become something of striking importance in Christendom. Most Christians have narrowed worship to church attendance and paying of offerings and making donations in the Church and are thereby affected negatively in the face of economic downturn and financial crisis in the country. On some occasions, Christians would rather sit at home than to be in the church for worship due to lack of money for offerings or other church commitments. Christians believe that it is inappropriate to be come to church without money hence, wherever there is economic crisis in the country they tend to withdraw from every form of worship.

However, with the erroneous conception on worship, Christians show low attitude whenever they are financially incapacitated and are elevated in Spirit when there is availability of funds from stable income, increase in salary and balancing in the economic situation of the country. Thus, is it right to view worship as Christian gymnastics? Is it appropriate to allow economic stability to determine Christian attitudes during worship? What are modes and practices in Christian worship? What are the effects of Nigerian economic stability on Christian worship? In lieu of the questions raised, this paper examined the concept of Christian worship, mode and practice of Christian worship, Survey on Nigerian Economic situation between 2018 till date, the effects of Nigeria Economic stability on Christian worship and Conclusion.

The concept of Christian Worship

Christian worship is different from every other form of worship in the world. It has the basis of service to God as its underlying principle for its practices. That is to say that in Christendom only God is to be worshiped. Kendrick (1988) stated that worship is for God. He is the Creator and the worship of His creatures is both His right and His pleasure. In the view of Kendrick, it can be deduced that Christian worship is solely God's right and pleasure as our Maker and since man cannot denied God of His prerogative of Creation, thus Christians must worship Him alone. God takes delight in His people who worshipping Him.

Michael (2007) confirmed that the earliest written text about Christian worship was written around AD 100. The Didache provides a brief account of a worship service, which it seems every week includes the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Thanksgiving was a part of the main movements in worship. The worshipers give thanks to God for the gifts of the bread and wine and the acts of Jesus which they represented, for God's holy name and the knowledge of faith, for God's might and power. Martin (1983) asserted that worship is a noble word. According to him, the term comes into our modern speech from the Anglo-Saxon *weorthscipe*. This later developed into *worthship*, and then into worship which implies 'to attribute worth' to an object. Worship in general terms is considered as "devotion" to a deity or even just the practice of attending religious services. Worship is a feeling of profound love and admiration or adoration (Emmanuel, 2020). James (1996) stated that true worship is the participation through the Holy Spirit in the incarnate Son's communion with the Father. James' view on worship places Christian's core belief at the center of worship, that is Jesus Christ communion with the Father through the Holy Spirit thus establishing the communion of the triune God whenever worship is being observed.

The idea of worship in the contemporary churches is contrary to what worship means and entails. Allen and Borrer (1982) cited Robert Webber of Wheaton College on worship that;

Worship is the weakest area of evangelical Christianity. We are strongest in the areas of evangelism, teaching, and fellowship. We are improving greatly in the area of servanthood (application of the gospel to social needs) and the ministry of healing (counseling and care for the emotional needs of people). But depth in the area of worship is badly lacking. We hardly know where to begin because we have lost nearly all contact with the past.

From the foregoing, it can be said that Allen and Borrer rightly acknowledged the problem surrounding the misconception of worship, and that is the inability to identify the origin of worship. However, Allen and Borrer noted that where Christians ought to begin is with the Scriptures and more particularly the book of Psalms. Worship must be seen as an important tool to church growth and development.

Mode and Practice of Christian Worship among the African Indigenous Churches (AICs)

A cursory look at churches in the contemporary Nigerian society will give a light on what worship is conceived to entail. There are various modes and practices of Christian worship which are common in churches today. These modes include:

a. Praise

Praise is one of the common mode and practice of Christian worship. Davies (1967) emphasized that since worship is in part a response to what God has done in Christ, one of its keynotes is praise or adoration. Paul speaks therefore of the Gentiles glorifying God for His mercy and he quotes Psalms 117:1, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles and let all the peoples praise Him' (Romans 15:9, 11). Martins (1983) clearly states that it is the note of corporate praise which opens the service, and this is in accord with the principle laid down in Talmud, "Man should always first utter praises and pray." This was underlying in the statement of 1 Corinthians 14:26 which offers that, at the head of the list of Christian corporate worship at Corinth, 'a psalm' of praise should be sung. Among the African Indigenous Churches, songs of praise are rendered during the service to honour God. It is usually accompanied with energetic atmosphere where the worshippers danced, clapped and shout for joy.

The theology behind the practice of praise in worship begins with the realization that man is a mortal, limited creature in relationship with an eternal, powerful, awe-inspiring God. Reflection on God's awesome power often brought biblical people to their knees. The New Testament hymn in Philippians 2:10-11 sings that at the name of Jesus "every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Michael, 2007). Among the AICs today, there are songs which are usually used to praise God. Some of these songs are: Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus our blessed Redeemer, Praise the Lord let the earth hear His voice amongst others. The Yoruba called Songs of Praise *Orin Iyin*, *Otuto* is the Igbo word for Praise, and worthy of praise is expressed as *Cancanci yabo* whereby the *yabo* is translated as praise.

b. Prayer

One of the common attributes of the African Indigenous Churches is prayer. In fact, they are called with the Yoruba nomenclature "Ijo Alaadura" –prayer warriors. Due to the business of prayer which these churches are known for, it led to the eventual formation of the praying band called *Afaadura Jagun* –Prayer Warrior. Prayer is a key aspect of Christian worship since most Christian denominations pay keen interest in the prayer life of the members of their congregations. Prayer is seen as a way of communicating to God in terms of expressing pains and or joy to the Maker. Prayers in Jewish worship fall into two parts. The first group comprises two lovely utterances –the *Yotzer* which means 'He who forms' and takes up the theme of God as Creator of all things, and the second *Ahabah* which means 'Love' and is concerned both to recall God's love for His people and to pledge their obligation to love Him in return (Martins 1983). According to Jen (2018) the model of prayer can be brought under the acronyms A.C.T.S meaning Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication. Most churches today usually start their prayer by first reverencing God and then ask to plead for forgiveness of sins. The Lord's Prayer found in Matthew 6:9 opens with 'Our Father who art in Heaven' then proceed to 'Hallowed be your name, your kingdom come' no doubt that the passage recognizes the Supremacy of God and thus worship Him in high regard (adoration).

c. Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving from the words 'thanks' means to feel grateful, expression of gratitude and 'give' which means to provide, let go, offer among others. Therefore, thanksgiving means giving or offering of gratitude to one who deserved it for something done or received from that person. In Christian worship, thanksgiving means the exclusive expression of gratitude or feeling of gratefulness to God who alone deserves to be appreciated for all His goodness and benefits upon mankind. In the Bible, thanksgiving means devotion, sacrifice, praise, or an offering. Thanksgiving is to glorify God as an act of worship, giving thanks for all things as part of God's providence (Noyes, n.d). Christian worship is usually characterized by different forms of thanksgiving as worshippers tend to have many reasons for giving thanks to God. Christians give thanks to God for breath of life, protections, and provisions. In fact, it is a common practice in Christian services that members bring a token to appreciate God for His immeasurable love and mercy, protection from accident, safe child delivery, promotion at work, employment, or appointment, healing among others.

d. Baptism through immersion

Among the African Indigenous Churches, baptism takes an important place in its belief and practices. Baptism among this strand of Christian faith, takes the form of immersion which is known as *Iri bomi*. *Iri bomi* as the name suggests "the act of putting, digging deep in to the water", is a common form of baptism among the AICs to imitate Jesus' form of baptism at Jordan (Matthew 3). Baptism is an act of obedience of the believer in symbolizing his faith in the cross, Jesus' atoning death and the resurrection. It is the identification with the Triune God and confession of the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life and the resurrection to walk

in newness of life (Hobbs, 1987). Christians believe that a genuine believer must undergo the baptismal process before such individual can be fully recognized as a believer. Baptism in churches today can be classified under sprinkling of water and immersion as well different criteria for baptism such as age bracket (12years) for Christ Apostolic Church and some other orthodox churches, infant baptism for some neon-Pentecostals. It is also common among Nigerian churches to have classes before the actual baptism which is usually called baptismal classes for new or potential Christians who await the experience of baptism. No doubt Jesus was not a sinner yet was baptized to fulfill all that the scripture has said and thus Christians identify with Jesus Christ through undergoing the baptismal process.

e. Melodious Hymns and Spirit-filled Songs

The term hymn is derived from the Greek *hymnos* meaning festive song or ode in praise of gods or heroes, used in the Septuagint (earliest Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures) to translate several Hebrew words meaning “song praising God.” A hymn is a religious song or poem of praise to God sung during Christian worship, typically by the whole congregation. The singing or composition of hymns is called hymnody (Carter, 2018). In the order of service today, churches usually have hymnal sessions and thus device names for these sessions. Some of these names include opening hymn and closing hymn and at times there are mid-service hymns. AICs observe hymn Sunday which can be done during the Sunday service or in the evening of that Sunday. Common hymns in AICs today includes Rock of Ages cleft for me, Blessed Assurance, what a friend we have in Jesus, Amazing Grace, Praise Him! Praise Him! To God be the Glory among others are famous hymns in Churches today used in worshipping God.

An Overview of Nigerian Economy Between 2015 till date

The Nigerian economy since 2015 has not been improving rather characterized with ups and downs thus affecting the citizens negatively and the sectors within the society religious inclusively. Hornby (1995) opined that economy is the relationship between production, trade and the supply of money in a particular country or region. It is also the use of available resources in a way that saves money, time, avoids waste and wrong use of resources. Alamu (2021) lamented that there is nothing to applaud about the Nigerian economy because it is branded by economic instability, hyper-inflation, and policy somersault. He went on to confirm that, there are signs of decay and extinction from the political sphere to the religions’ environment and from economy to morality.

According to Clement (2022), Nigeria’s inflation rate in 2015 was a single digit of 9.01 per cent. A breakdown of inflation figures year on year showed that the inflation rate at the end of 2015 was 9.01 per cent. In 2016 at the thick of the recession, it sky-rocketed to 15.68 per cent. In 2017, it further moved up to 16.52 per cent. It however slowed to 12.09 per cent in 2018 and later 11.40 in 2019. It again rose to 15.75 per cent in December 2020 which is the highest recorded in the past three years. In 2021, inflation rate rose for the first time in eight months to 15.63 per cent, the reason attributed to the high yuletide spending. Clement further confirms that on debt level, as of 2015 before President Buhari took over power, Nigeria’s debt revenue stood at N8.8 trillion according to the Debt Management Office (DMO). However, recent statistics from the DMO showed that Nigeria’s debt sky-rocketed from N8.8 trillion in 2015 to N41 trillion as at June 2022. This represents an increment of over 500 per cent. The country’s debt rose from N39.56 trillion in December 2021 to N41.60 trillion in the first three months of 2022 alone.

A country’s economy is determined by the level of poverty. Siason (2012) cited Todaro (1977) that “development must therefore be conceived of as a multi-dimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes, and institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and

eradication of absolute poverty”. It can be categorically stated that poverty is one of the measures of economy stability and hence the Nigerian society is not independent of this since the rate of poverty continues to increase on regular bases and this hold to the increase in price rate and amount of unemployment in the country. According to the National Bureau Statistics (2022), sixty-three percent (63%) of persons living within Nigeria (133 million people) are multidimensionally poor. The National MPI is 0.257, indicating that poor people in Nigeria experience just over one-quarter of all possible deprivations. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the poor (86 million people) live in the North, while 35% (nearly 47 million) live in the South. Poverty levels across States vary significantly with the incidence of multidimensional poverty ranging from a low of 27% in Ondo to a high of 91% in Sokoto. Alamu (2021) agreed on this as he captures starvation, destitution, hunger, suffering and lack under the ideology of poverty.

It is disheartened to note that Nigerian economy has been unstable since 2015 till date. The fuel price per liter was recorded at 87 naira as at early 2015 but moved to 145 naira per liter in May 2016. Fuel rate in Nigeria is not stable; the amount fuel was sold differs from state to state. National Bureau of Statistics (2017) confirmed that average price paid by consumers for premium motor spirit (petrol) increased by 0.3% year-on-year and increased by 0.5% month-on-month to N150.7 in May 2017 from N149.9 in April 2017. States with the highest average price of premium motor spirit (petrol) were Gombe (N172.5), Taraba (N162.00), and Adamawa and Borno (N160). States with the lowest average price of premium motor spirit (petrol) were Abuja, Delta, Ekiti, Katsina, Ogun, Lagos, and Osun (N145.3), Ondo (N145.31) and Edo and Oyo (N145.33).

In 2020, a litre of fuel was sold at N162 per litre and that same year, the product sold for between N165 per litre and N220 per litre at the fuelling stations. This was further compounded by the unavailability of the product with the major oil marketers saying they could not continue selling fuel at N165 per litre (Clement, 2022). Between 2021-2022 fuel prices ranged between N225-N245. In early 2023, fuel was sold at the rate of N225-N230 per litre but immediately after the inauguration and handling over ceremony of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on May 29th, 2023, starting from May 30 fuel price rose to N500 and above thus leaving every other price of commodities to increase. Fuel alone isn't the inflated aspect of Nigerian economy rather it cut across other things such as foodstuff such as rice, beans and cassava flakes, gas, kerosene, diesel among others. Alamu (2021) noted that money has lost its meaning to the average earner. In the face of all these, the majorities of Nigerians have lost their patriotic verve and now see the nation as an oppressor.

Impact of Nigerian Economic downturn on Christian Worship: A Case of AICs

General Impact

1. **Indulgence:** The decapitated economy has provided rooms for every Nigerians to be more selfish. The religious spaces are not independent of this act as many adherents of these religious groups pay for favour or church positions such as deacon/deaconess, elders and pastoral leadership. The church has ‘special members’ who receive special treatment due to the members’ financial status and contributions to the church purse.

2. **Poverty:** To Ukpong (1995), poverty is a condition whereby the victim is alienated from access to resources that would enable him/her to live a fully human life in the society. Alamu (2021), says poverty is the lack of basic needs of life such as shelter, feeding, unemployment and lack of livelihood. Due to Nigerian economic situation, the poor continues to remain poorer while the rich grow richer. Hence the class distinction within the Nigeria society is growing wider day-by-day in the face of religion.

3. Unemployment: KPMG has stated that the Nigerian unemployment rate had increased to 37.7per cent in 2022 and would further rise to 40.6per cent due to the continuing inflow of job seekers into the job market (Anozie, 2023). The Nigerian tertiary institutions usually provide the society with graduates from different academic disciplines and most of these graduates turn-out to be unemployed citizens. Many Nigerian graduates for decades have remained unemployed due to Nigeria’s economic imbalances and has given rise to increase in crime rates in the Nigerian society. Alamu (2021) buttresses further that year-in and year-out, the numbers of unemployed graduates were overwhelming. The aftermath of these unemployed teeming youths is to engage in non-meaningful ventures, while some would be mobilized with some peanuts to cause violence and make some areas ungovernable.

4. Wealth Creation: This involves the process of growing money through financial engagements. These financial engagements are carried out through concrete and visionary decisions, investing and saving. The goal of wealth creation is to expand the financial territory through assets accumulation. Nigerians over the years have been scammed by different ‘money making channels’ such as ‘MM’, ‘Pink Nation’, ‘GMR’ and other online money outlets. The desire to make wealth has caused some to invest in legitimate businesses such as land purchase, opening of cafeteria, clothing venture and school enterprise amongst others.

Specific Impact

It is not far-fetched in churches today that Nigerian economy has caused more harm than good on Christian worship. The Economic stability in Nigeria is nothing but bunch of instability and inconsistency therefore has created different changes which can be seen in the church structure of worship today. Below are the corresponding effects:

a. Low attendants: Money is one of the motivating factors why Christians attend Church services. This doesn’t rule out the fact that there are committed Christians despite the economy instability who still worship God in spirit and in truth. From the researchers’ observation, the flood of non-committed members filled the church today, thus, gave different excuses why they are not present in some church activities such as Bible Study, Prayer meetings and Special programmes during the mid-week. Due to economic instability, members can decide not to come to church for some reasons such as increase in transport rate, the ideology of no money to pay as offering has also made some Church members to jilt Sunday service, and special programmes under the context of not coming to the house of God in vain and possible not to be the last man standing while offering is being giving.

b. Divided Attention: There is usually a divided attention caused by economic downturn in Nigeria. Christian worship entails worshipping God in spirit and in truth, but this has been unrealistic in the face of Nigerian reality. Members’ minds are divided though been in the presence of God yet thinking of the debt to pay, how to raise fund to pay children’ school fees, feed the family and even transportation fees, all these make the heart of members to be far away from God even though they are physically present yet they are spiritually absent. One of the ways to get connected to God during worship is through the spirit but then Christians minds are usually wandering during prayer, praise and even sermon, thinking of what to do and how to do it.

c. Profit-minded: Church services are not usually organized without the motivation of making profit thus construing the church as a business enterprise or affiliate. It was observed that preachers and church founders today are too engrossed on the amount of money realized after a particular service rather than the number of soul won hence weigh the cost over the souls. There is no doubt that a corresponding effect of the Nigerian

economy instability on Christian worship is the transformation of the church into a business forum where members met for the aim of transacting and generating money for personal needs and gains.

d. Faith waxing cold: Christians begin to doubt the existence of the true God who cares for His children as depicted in biblical narratives. Christians tend to conceive God as father and a miracle worker thus expect instant miracle whenever they call on Him. It was observed that when a Christian prays for God's blessing and doesn't come through such person tends to grow cold in his faith to Him therefore creating skepticism between him and his Maker. Over the years, the economic crises and its brouhaha in Nigerian has made many to disbelieve Him thus denying Him of valuable worship.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion on Christian worship and Economic Stability in Nigeria has shown that concept, mode and practice in Christian worship is not a new phenomenon to the contemporary Christian gatherings. Worship in Christendom in the 21st century is a practice that has been in existence long time ago. However, due to certain changes in ideology, technology and doctrines, people tend to narrow worship to the gymnastics of clapping, jumping, singing, shouting, payment of tithe, partaking in Holy Communion among others which have contributed to Christians' attitude to worship. It is quite unfortunate that the Nigerian economic condition is deteriorating and unstable thus the corresponding effects on the church especially on the aspect of worship. Christians are now controlled by the tides of Nigerian economy. It is therefore recommended that Christian worship should be seen as one of the best channels in communicating with God and that through genuine worship and involvement in financial engagements, Nigerian Economic situation can regain its vitality.

Reference

- Alamu, A.G. (2021). *Religion and Public Affairs in Nigeria*. K-Success Prints Media.
- Allen, R. & Borrer, G. (1982). *Worship Rediscovering the Missing Jewel*. Multnomah Press.
- Anozie, E. (2023). "Nigerian Unemployment Rate to Hit 41% in 2023 –KPMG". Retrieved August 1, 2023 from <https://punchng.com/nigerian-unemployment-rate-to-hit-41-in-2023-kpmg/#:~:text=Although%20the%20National%20Bureau%20of,40.6%20per%20cent%20in%202023.%E2%80%9D>
- Carter, J. (2018). *9 Things You Should Know About Christian Hymns*. Retrieved June 8 from <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/9-things-know-christian-hymns/>.
- Clement, P. S. (2022, June 22). *Is Nigeria's Economy In Better Shape Than In 2015 As Claimed By President Buhari?* Retrieved June 8 from <https://dailytrust.com/is-nigerias-economy->
- Davies, J. G. (1967). *Worship and Mission*. Association Press.
- Elmer, L. Towns & Vernon, M. Whaley (2012). *Worship Through The Ages*. B & H Publishing Group Nashville.
- Emmanuel, K. (2020). "Worship: A Biblical Perspective." Retrieved 1st, June 2023 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339240912_WORSHIP_A_Biblical_Perspective.
- Hobbs, H. (1987). *The Baptist Faith and Missions*. Convention Press.
- James, B. (1996). *Worship, Community & The Triune God of Grace*. Downers Grove, Inter-Varsity Press.
- Jen, M. (2018, March 24). "How to Pray –A Simple Prayer Structure," Retrieved June 7, 2023 from <https://www.jenmerckling.com/how-to-pray/>.
- Kendrick, G. (1988). *Worship*. Kingsway Publications.
- Michael, H. (2007). "Theology of Christian Worship a Journey through the Movements of Worship Background material for Sardis Academy" in Oct./Nov. and the Church Retreat with Michael Hawn on Nov. 17 & 18, 2007.

National Bureau Statistics, (2017). “Premium Motor Spirit (Petrol) Price Watch”. Retrieved June 8, from [https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/download/571#:~:text=Average%20price%20paid%20by%20consumers,petrol\)%20were%20Gombe%20\(N172](https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/download/571#:~:text=Average%20price%20paid%20by%20consumers,petrol)%20were%20Gombe%20(N172).

--(2022, November 17). “Nigeria Launches its Most Extensive National Measure of Multidimensional Poverty”. <https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/news/78#:~:text=Highlights%20of%20the%202022%20Multidimensional,quarter%20of%20all%20possible%20deprivations>.

Noyes, P. (n.d). “The Meaning of Thanksgiving Day and History of the Holiday”. Retrieved June 7, 2023 from <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.christianity.com/wiki/holidays/meaning-of-thanksgiving.html%3famp=1>

Siason, M. A. (2012). “Development: A Look at Definitions and Models and the Philippine Experience”. Retrieved on March 12, 2024 from SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2130216> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2130216>

Ukpong, Justin S. (1995). “The Poor and the Mission of the Church in Africa”. In Ukpong, J. S. (ed.) *New Testament Essays*. Campbell Publishing 31-43