



Russo-Ukraine war: an ethical re-evaluation of its impact on the Nigerian state

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Abstract

The paper examined the effect of the Russo- Ukraine on the Nigerian domestic food and energy chain. It identified the nexus of this war on a Nation like Nigeria. The researcher interrogated the nature of this war and its impact cum the ethical re-evaluation on the policymakers of that country.

The study relied heavily on documentary data and lightly on oral data. The oral data were based on newspapers. The documentary data were subjected to textual and contextual analysis.

The researcher found out that the policy makers can partly be blamed on the dwindling economy and not necessarily the war itself.

Keywords: ethics, war, food chain, energy chain

Introduction

The Russo policy established by the Old Russian Empire enticed and encouraged the assimilation of the Ukrainian population into the Russian economic structure, socio- cultural cum language, and political system. This established some form of degradation of the Ukrainian language, identity and the Socio- cultural attitudes; and a Russo-culture was forced on Ukrainians (Miller, 2016) ^[1]. The push for self-identity gave rise to Ukrainian patriotism integrating intellectualism that supports the push for self-identity and Ukrainian independence and the preservation of their language and culture as compared with the Afrikaner and Scottish nationalism in South Africa and Scotland (A. Kuznetsov & I. Bremmer, 2018) ^[1]. This pushed to almost an extremist case the agitation for self-recognition, social-cultural and economic identity of the people in Ukraine. The Serfdom, through the economic commune correlating to their rural traditions also played a significant role in shaping the aspiration for Ukrainian self-determination (P. D'Anieri, 2017) ^[12]. The Russo-Ukraine war was therefore an evolution of the evolving distrust and hatred between the Russia and Ukrainian nationalities.

Examining the impact of the war on a global economic scale

This mistrust had also entangled the dimension of rivalry between United States of America (including the allies) and Russia, which had since become a geopolitical quagmire during the Cold War prior to 1991. Former Soviet republics joined NATO to protect themselves from potential Russian control and the Russians saw them as its own 'Monroe doctrine' (Sphere of Influence). As a European state in that continents bloc, Ukraine or any other former Soviet Republic qualifies for NATO or EEU membership, as the treaty that

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established these organizations grants these nations the choice to pursue such an aspiration. The strategic encumbrances' of NATO expansion has undeniably facilitated the integration of former Warsaw Pact nations into Europe, reduced the risk of conflicts between former communist countries in Central Europe, and enabled new member states to expend fewer material resources towards past behaviors like war while modernizing and improving land, sea, and air platforms (E. Gnedina & S. Naryshkin, 2017) ^[9]. Joining NATO membership simply acts as a means to deter Russia from intimidating or invading their countries during the cold war and also in the geopolitics of the 21st century. The 21st century war for instance the conflict between Russia and Ukraine also harmed neighboring Eastern European, Central Asian and African countries due to its evolving impact on these continents. Economic disruptions will affect their growth of nations in the rest of the world, while Europe's dependence on Russian petroleum will also cause challenges in the supply of oil hereby increase the prices of Petroleum. The wars' global impact calls for an ethical understanding and re-evaluation that influences the slow growth of the global economy. Russia and Ukraine's war had proven the vulnerabilities of states and the ethical need to restructure global trade within the context of geo-politics. Specialized economic sectors such as agricultural processes and production, construction, petrochemicals, and transportation could easily be disrupted due to interlink and interconnections in international trade in the availability of key inputs. Given the interconnectedness of the global economy, the effects of the Russia-Ukraine war are not limited to the involved countries but have far-reaching consequences on other continents far away from them. The escalation of prices and disruptions in commodity supply chains can have

implications for inter-trade, importation and exportation of goods, and affects the enabling developmental economic chains. Decision makers as in terms of politicians, scholars must closely monitor these interlinks in trade and implement measures to mitigate the adverse effects, promote resilience in affected industries, and support global economic recovery. The war has raised risks to global economic growth, causing impact in finance and uncertainty in inflation hence increase insecurity in terms of banditry, terrorism, etc. Persistent conflict could lead to lasting fragmentation of global networks and poverty increase among citizens. International economy, manpower and capital access, affects states with a potential for consequences for growth, poverty, and inequality. Policymakers must recognize and address these risks through financial stability, inflation control, and measures to ease insecurity. Policy of states must identify the need to be self-sufficient in agricultural produce and supply to its citizens and not depend on supplies from other states basics such as food, and basic itinerates. This is the ethical aspect associated with governance which policy makers must revisit, the mirage of a global village; that is ethically flawed when nations refuse to feed its citizens depending on so called developed states to bail them out. Governments especially those from Africa tends to portray themselves and their economies as poor nations seeking aid from developed economies (E. Gnedina & S. Naryshkin, 2017) ^[9]. Instead, targeted support should be provided to vulnerable households and the middle class, and social and economic safety nets should be expanded to alleviate their financial burdens. It is imperative to protect and identify significant economic activities such as agriculture and cottage industries to boost the middle class, particularly for disadvantaged citizenry of the lower class. Economic and Monetary policy efforts should focus on moderating inflation expectations and reinforcing commitment to a credible monetary framework. Given the posit to seek cleaner energy prioritizing non pollutants rather than dirty products like oil and coal markets, there is a pressing need to prioritize energy efficiency and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

The study aims to assess the economic impact of the conflict, including changes in balancing trade volumes, deflation and inflation, insecurity increase, and overall economic performance. The conflict has necessitated and aggravated already weak states whose dependence upon developed states as turned its citizen into dire and critical needs for food. It is imperative to evaluate the effectiveness and implications of these policies, including trade restrictions, sanctions, and trade agreements, on global trade and economic instability. Given the dynamic nature of the conflict, understanding the potential long-term effects on developing economies are crucial. The study seeks to provide insights into the challenging impact of war on the economic dynamics in the trade relations between states, including potential opportunities for trade diversification, regional integration, and the rebuilding of trade networks defined in the context of the war. The study aims to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the effects of the Russia-Ukraine war on Nigeria. This paper examined the profound economic consequences of global trade on Nigeria

and also made an ethical re-evaluation on its impact on Nigeria. As the global landscape evolves, the intricate interplay between economic activities and political objectives on an international scale becomes increasingly interesting. With globalization serving as a driving force, international economies have emerged as a cornerstone of the modern global economy.

The impact of the Russo-Ukraine war on the Nigerian state

This study aims to explore the effects of the war on key economic indicators, focusing on the decline in economic growth, investment and business confidence, and the overall regional and global economic stability. The Russo-Ukraine war commenced logically in 2014 impacted on Nigeria from 2022 onwards onto trade, investment, and economic activities. The armed conflict and geopolitical tensions have had a profound impact on various sectors, leading to economic contraction and hindering prospects for growth. As the war continues, its economic repercussions have been deeply felt, affecting businesses, households, and even governments in Nigeria and beyond. The conflict's uncertainty and geopolitical risks have deterred both domestic and foreign investors, influencing investment decisions and hindering business expansion and development in Nigeria. The interconnectedness of the Russo Ukraine wars on regional conflicts as that of the Wagner group interceding in already spelt out conflicts such as the Boko Haram threat in West Africa (Including Nigeria) escalated and affected trade relationships, financial markets, and investor sentiment worldwide (Miller, 2016) ^[11]. Russia's role as a primary gas exporter to Europe underscores its influence on global energy markets. Nigeria felt the impact due to its interconnectedness in the global energy landscape. Ethically, Nigeria should benefit from the crisis after all it should be a major oil producer, in spite of the fact that Nigeria is a major producer of gas and petroleum. Ironically due to policy failure Nigeria can no longer produce oil for its citizenry domestic consumption hence an ethical question on the quality of governance in that state. Why should an economy expected to benefit from the war, devastated by the war. The disruption in its gas and petroleum supplies through vandalism exerts additional pressure also on the already intricate energy dynamics of poor infrastructures in its energy structure. Russia's response to economic blockades and sanctions from the European Union underscores its pursuit of asserting its presence and influence on the global stage. This approach introduces a layer of complexity, as it triggers a strategic recalibration of power dynamics and alliances across regions. Ukraine is a leading global producer of wheat and holds a prime position in the global market. However, the ongoing war has disrupted Nigerian dependence on Agricultural production and influence in the oil and agricultural market. For instance, during periods of conflict, such as the Fulani rampage in the North, agricultural activities like farming were hindered. The war in Ukraine has similarly devastated the Nigerians needs for agricultural products, worsening the situation, moreover, the conflict has led to the blockage of crucial land and sea routes, making it difficult for Ukraine to ship out its agricultural products to Africa, essentially populous Nigeria.

The reliance on Ukraine and Russia for the supply of grains, particularly essentials like wheat, grains, maize, holds important has an effect on Nigeria when war began in those country. This dependence has triggered a high cost and inflation in the Nigerian state, resulting in notable repercussions for the pricing of essential goods and household consumables. Furthermore, the impact resonates within the realm of foreign exchange markets more so with the government policy of allowing market forces to direct the market, causing notable volatility, particularly in relation to major currencies like the Dollar and Euros. The value of the Naira to the dollar worsened and increased events of war on the Nigerian economy. More importantly, these have extended to the domain of past cold war politics in arms and ammunition importation which adds to more insecurity in the Nigerian land space. Insight from analysts suggests a correlation between the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the series of coup d'états and terrorist activities witnessed across West Africa. The events in Libya coupled with Wagner activities in West Africa reiterated and established new routes for small arms and ammunitions into West Africa which allowed increase in insecurity. The potential scenario of NATO's presence in Ukraine holds immense consequences, as NATO's proximity could profoundly impact Russia hence a new Cold War scenario has reappeared. The ongoing diplomatic rout between the Economic Community of West Africa and Niger further accentuates the intricate web of interconnections. The impact for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with Nigeria at the forefront, intertwines with the Russian-Ukraine conflict. The complexity arises from the interplay between regional interests, state sovereignty and the global crisis. Nigeria possesses abundant gas resources, surpassing even its crude oil reserves. Nigeria's aspirations coincide with an intriguing development: Niger's initiative to construct a gas pipeline to Europe. This white elephant project would involve multiple countries such as Niger, Chad, Mali, and Morocco before linking with Europe. However, the question emerges: Would Russia, which suspended its gas supply to Europe, is amenable to the emergence of a new player in the market, especially one that holds vast gas reserves like Nigeria? This conundrum intertwines with the Ukraine-Russia conflict, raising concerns that the crisis's tendrils might extend to West Africa, positioning Nigeria as a potential epicenter of conflict.

The dilemma prompts contemplation within Nigeria and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) regarding their engagement in the Niger crisis. Nigeria's perspective is multifaceted: On one hand, there's an opportunity to tap into a burgeoning new market for gas export; on the other hand, this venture could potentially thrust Nigeria into the geo-politics of the Ukraine-Russia conflict. The gravity of the situation is further underscored by the potential transformation of Nigeria into a significant battleground. The nexus between the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its ripple effects across Africa materializes in various dimensions. Arms and ammunition trade, exacerbated by the crisis, has far-reaching implications, with a belief among many that some

domestic terrorist like Boko Haram may have procured weaponry from the black market as a direct consequence of the Ukrainian crisis. For instance, the coming of Wagner into West Africa could also inflame security concerns and magnifies the challenges of regional stability. As the crisis's cuts across the African landscape, the narratives of terrorism and coup d'états intertwine with its broader impact. This leads to a prevailing belief that these upheavals are, in part, a byproduct of the far-reaching Russia-Ukraine crisis. For Nigeria, the implications are vast and diverse, demanding a cautious assessment of opportunities, risks, and the complex intersections between regional aspirations and global crises.

According to Uzor John Nwachukwu, in Nigeria, the Ukraine conflict has been used to explain and espoused certain economic challenges, but this can sometimes mask underlying governance issues (John, 2023) ^[10]. William Abiodun Duyile *et al* in a paper titled Russo- Ukraine War: Drawing a Parallel with the Second World War and Cold War; the article extensively explores the parallels that exist between the Russo-Ukraine war and two significant historical periods: the Second World War and Cold War (Duyile, Ethno-Religion Cum Geo Political Background to the Russo Ukraine War, 2023) ^[2]. The authors further discussed a way out for this war. The authors way out was the concept: 'Honorable Peace and not Humiliation Peace' is the way out of this war. Honorable Peace is making Putin feel he has won so Ukraine can live in Peace'. Humiliation Peace is supporting Ukraine with the necessary ammunitions to go it alone or NATO coming to the war to defeat Russia conventionally (Duyile, Ojo, Soboyejo, & Jegede, 2022) ^[8]. Both options may be considered wishful. For instance, individuals and businesses in the baking and confectionery sectors have reported scarcities due to the conflict. While the war indeed has rippling effects on the global economy, it's essential to acknowledge that governance challenges within Nigeria also contribute to these economic difficulties. Ethically a nation far away from Nigeria shouldn't assert its influence on issues such as the domestic food chain supply and even petrol that Nigeria produces. Another ethical question to be asked: Nigerian citizens are also attached to places like Ukrainian educational activities; Nigeria reportedly has about 12000 of its youths studying in Ukrainian universities, Nigerians are attracted to Ukraine because of the relatively good quality yet cost effective, tertiary educational opportunities (Duyile & Nwachukwu, 'Japa' Phenomenon and Nigeria Students In The Mix Of A Proxy War in Ukraine, 2023) ^[6]. Nigerian infrastructures may be considered poor. However, infrastructure can be categorized into three: Economic infrastructures are those infrastructures put in place to help solve economic problems (Duyile, Ediagbonya, Buhari, & Nwachukwu, 2020) ^[7]. Social Infrastructure can be regarded as those infrastructures that are meant to attend to the need of social problems in a given society. Political Infrastructure is known to be a political administration. This political infrastructure has been structured into three arms and three tiers of political administration (Duyile, Infrastructural Development in Nigeria, 1960-2015: An interrogation of Nigeria Socio Economic Growth, 2020) ^[3]. Poor infrastructure

has encouraged migration of Nigerians and allowed for more importation than exportation hence the impact of the Russo-Ukraine war on a nation like Nigeria.

At this juncture, Nigeria predominantly leaned towards Western nations for trade and alliances, a trend that had been consistent since their attainment of independence. This inclination towards the West marked an era that eventually led to what is known as the "new scramble for Africa," as rightly observed by Ahmed Tinubu (Nigeria's President), where global powers sought to exert influence over the continent. However, the Russia-Ukraine conflict must not influence Nigeria's food supply chain and energy supply chain in the domestic system. Consequently, the Nigerian dynamics must from now on not give a rise to a triangular contest for influence over Nigeria, involving Russia, China, and the United States. Nigeria, a prominent African nation, is actively pursuing engagement with BRICS, an association that also counts Russia as a significant ally. This trend is echoed by over 15 other African countries, demonstrating a discernible movement towards the BRICS coalition. A notable transformation is underway in which African nations are increasingly turning their attention towards forging alliances with Eastern partners. This shift is reshaping food and trade dynamics, with a review towards assessing trading partners from the East. Nigeria, in particular, has experienced a significant evolution in its trading patterns, with a substantial proportion of its exports and imports now being closely linked to China. Interestingly, historical records reveal a pivotal period during the civil war when Nigeria's trade landscape exhibited a pronounced alignment with Russia hence enjoyed arms support from the old Soviet Union. In the midst of limited support from traditional Western partners such as the UK and the United States, Nigeria found itself engaging more extensively with Russia and Ukraine. Nigeria is grappling with the financial challenges arising from the Russia-Ukraine conflict, while also striving to ensure the continuity of economic and commerce operations. Within the intercontinental relation, Nigeria's status is primarily characterized by importation dependence, which has contributed to the recurring poor showing of the Naira. The complexities of these situations underscore the necessity for Nigeria to find avenues for sustainable commercial relations to cope with the economic consequences of the crisis. The exchange rate between the Naira and the dollar is intrinsically linked to the interplay between demand and supply dynamics. The more individuals and entities require dollars, coupled with the quantity of available dollars, influences the exchange rate. However, this process is not contingent upon import and export; but hinges on transitional trade. The denomination of transactions predominantly involves dollars and pound sterling. Unfortunately, Nigeria's export portfolio remains limited, largely consisting of crude oil. As a result, the availability of dollars is diminished, impacting the nation's economic framework.

Nigeria is 90% import-dependent economy, the need for foreign exchange persists due to the requirement for dollars for importation of goods. The Ukraine wars compounded this situation by reducing the avenues for selling Nigerian goods in

the global market especially its exports to Russia and Ukraine. Navigating this complex scenario demands strategic consideration in balancing the import-export equation and diversifying and seeking new avenues to export its goods. As Nigeria strives to retain a stable financial footing and ensure its trade continuity, diplomatic and economic efforts will play a pivotal role in charting the course forward amidst the intricate interplay of global dynamics. In terms of trade, the path forward remains uncertain. The evolving situation prompts questions about the feasibility of Nigeria's strategic ambitions and the potential obstacles it may encounter. The intersection of geopolitical interests, historical allegiances, and regional power dynamics renders the situation intricate and the outcomes unpredictable. As the crisis continues to unfold, it underscores the intricate dance of diplomacy, strategic maneuvering, and the careful consideration of national interests in the face of complex and evolving geopolitical landscapes.

Conclusion

The Russia-Ukraine war reevaluates ethical concerns cum diplomatic and economic consequences affecting agricultural produce chain in the vast fertile land available in the nation. The uncertainty established by the war had deterred investors and businesses from making long-term commitments, leading to reduced capital flows and sluggish economic growth. Trade, being a critical driver of commercial endeavors has been significantly impacted by the conflict. Ukraine and Russia are major players particularly in sectors like agriculture, education, petro-chemicals, metals, and energy. The war's disruption of supply chains and trade flows has not only affected Nigeria but also had implications for commercial inter-links worldwide. This has led to market uncertainties, price fluctuations, and reduced access to critical resources. Energy markets have also been affected, with concerns arising over energy security for European countries that rely on Russian gas supplies transiting through Ukraine. The potential for disruptions in energy supplies has raised questions about stability and reliability, influencing energy prices and investment decisions. The conflict has highlighted the potential for spillover effects and tensions between major global players, which could have broader consequences for international trade and financial markets. Foreign investor confidence in Nigeria has been dampened due to the lingering impact of the war and the uncertainty regarding its resolution. Ongoing geopolitical risks could lead investors to adopt a cautious approach, affecting capital flows and the attractiveness of investing into Nigeria. On the positive side, the conflict may spur efforts towards better regional economic cooperating among neighboring countries. Strengthening cooperation ties can help mitigate the impact of disruptions caused by the war and foster a more stable economic environment. The war has emphasized vulnerabilities in global supply chains, especially in sectors heavily reliant on Ukrainian and Russian exports. Companies may reevaluate their supply chain strategies to enhance resilience and reduce dependency on regions with geopolitical risks. It leads to the restoring of diplomatic relations which will be critical for promoting commercial stability and

collaboration. A peaceful settlement may lead to increased investor confidence, trade opportunities, and support for reconstruction efforts, contributing to the region's economic recovery.

Russia and Ukraine war disrupts in supply chains and fluctuations in commodity prices due to the conflict's impact on global trade; for instance, Nigerians exporting agricultural products to Russia might face challenges in shipping and payment arrangements during the conflict. African states may align themselves with different international stances on the conflict, leading to diplomatic challenges and potential shifts in regional political dynamics. Some countries might express support for Ukraine, while others align with Russia, influencing regional geopolitics. African countries reliant on Russian energy supplies might face concerns about energy security and price fluctuations due to potential disruptions in Russia's energy exports during the conflict. For instance, African nations heavily dependent on Russian oil imports could face supply shortages or higher energy prices.

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