

Russo-Ukraine War: Ethics cum Impact on the Food and Energy Supply Chain in Nigeria

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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 roots of the Russian-Ukraine crisis can be traced back to the policies and actions of the Russian Empire towards Ukraine. The Russification policy implemented by the Russian Empire and its policy aimed to assimilate the Ukrainian population into the Russian culture, language, and political system. Ukrainian language, identity and the Socio- cultural attitudes were suppressed, and Russian culture was forced on Ukrainians (Miller, 2016). This gave rise to Ukrainian patriotic activist with the intellectuals advocating for Ukrainian independence and the preservation of their language and culture as compared with the Boer nationalism in South Africa (A.Kuznetsov & I.Bremmer, 2018). This pushed social and economic identity of the people in Ukraine. The peasantry, predominantly Ukrainian-speaking tied to rural traditions, also played a crucial role in shaping Ukrainian identity and aspirations for self-determination (P.D'Anieri, 2017).

The Russia-Ukraine was an evolution of the evolving hatred between the later nationalities. It also revived a rivalry between United States of America (including the allies) and Russia, which had reduced in 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). Consequently, as a European state, Ukraine or any other former Soviet Republic qualifies for NATO membership, as the treaty grants them the choice to pursue such an option. The expansion of NATO 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 allocate fewer resources

towards security while modernizing their defense forces (E.Gnedina & S.Naryshkin, 2017). Most importantly, it signals that small and militarily vulnerable Baltic States can reasonably rely on NATO membership to deter Russia from intimidating or invading their countries during the current tensions between Russia and NATO. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine also harmed neighboring Eastern European, Central Asian and African countries due to trade and migration links. Economic disruptions will affect their growth, while Europe's reliance on Russian energy will also cause problems hence increase the prices of Petroleum. The wars' global impact calls for an ethical understanding which must factor in, the lapses clearly identified in the rising cost in food prices and energy prices all over the world. Russia and Ukraine's global value calls into attention, the ethical need to restructure global and food trade within the context of international politics.. Sectors such as food production, construction, petrochemicals, and transportation could face challenges due to disruptions 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 most especially Russia. The escalation of prices and disruptions in commodity supply chains can have implications for global trade, economic stability, and growth. Policymakers need to closely monitor these developments 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 financial stress in emerging economies and uncertainty in inflation and food/energy insecurity. Persistent conflict could lead to lasting fragmentation of global networks. Beyond

economics, human capital and education in neighboring countries are at risk, with potential 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 food supply to its citizens. This is the ethics, governance and policy makers must revisit, the mirage of a global village; that is ethically flawed when nations refuses to feed its citizens awaiting others to play that role. At the national level, policymakers need to refrain from implementing distortive measures in response to soaring commodity prices (E.Gnedina & S.Naryshkin, 2017). Instead, targeted support should be provided to vulnerable households, and social safety nets should be expanded to alleviate their financial burdens. It is imperative to protect essential services such as agriculture and healthcare, particularly for disadvantaged citizens. Monetary policy efforts should focus on moderating inflation expectations and reinforcing commitment to a credible monetary framework. Given the disruptions in oil, gas, 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 trade volumes, price fluctuations, investment patterns, and overall economic performance. The conflict has necessitated the implementation of various trade policies and measures by countries involved in the conflict and their trading partners. It is imperative to evaluate the effectiveness and implications of these policies, including trade restrictions, sanctions, and trade agreements, on international trade and economic stability. Given the dynamic nature of the conflict, understanding the potential long-term effects on international trade is crucial. The study seeks to provide insights into the future prospects of trade relations, including potential opportunities for trade diversification, regional integration, and the rebuilding of trade networks affected by the war. By delving into these problems, 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 international trade on Africa's most populous Nation, Nigeria. It also made an ethical assessment on its implication on Nigeria. As the global landscape evolves, the intricate interplay between economic activities on an international scale becomes increasingly interesting. This paper delves into how these dynamics reverberated on the Nigerian state, exploring the intricate relationship between international trade patterns and the Nigerian state. With globalization serving as a driving force, international trade has emerged as a cornerstone of the modern global economy. However, the effects of this trade are a disadvantage to Nigeria. Nigeria's unique socio-economic, geographic, demographic and developmental characteristics established some form uniqueness from which to analyze the impacts of Russo- Ukraine war on the internal economic system inside Nigeria. This paper seeks to unravel the multifaceted impacts of international trade on Nigeria, both in terms positive and negative impact. It also shades an assessment to examine the ethics in Nigeria failed economy, exposed increasingly by the war.

The paper examined the geo-politics of the war that includes enhanced economic growth and increased access to markets. Furthermore, it exposed the negatives in depending on other nations in the aspect of trade, reiterated in the dynamics in resource exportation and the

potential for a dwindling economic. It assessed a sector such as agriculture, also considered the strategies and policies that Nigeria adopted to gain leverage in circumventing the mitigating effect from the sanctions. By delving into the nuanced economic consequences of international trade from a Nigerian perspective, this paper would contribute to a more holistic understanding of the global economic system and its impact on diverse regions more so units from these regions. It sheds light on the intricate interplay between trade, development, and sustainability, offering insights into how States can harness the potential of international trade to foster inclusive growth, address socio-economic challenges, and position itself within the evolving global order.

THE IMPLICATION OF THE WAR ON NIGERIA

The Russia-Ukraine War has triggered significant economic consequences with far-reaching implications for the region and the global economy. This study aims to explore the effects of the conflict on key economic indicators, focusing on the decline in GDP and economic growth, job losses and unemployment, investment and business confidence, and the overall regional and global economic stability. The conflict's escalation in 2014 brought about disruptions to trade, investment, and economic activities in both Russia and Ukraine. 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 governments in the region 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 global economy makes the consequences of regional conflicts like this far-reaching, potentially affecting trade relationships, financial markets, and investor sentiment worldwide (Miller, 2016).

Simultaneously, the ripples extend beyond Europe's borders, significantly affecting diverse regions, including the Nigeria State. 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, it should be a major oil producer, in fact Nigeria is a major producer of gas and petroleum. Ironically could not produce oil for its citizen domestic consumption hence an ethical question on the quality of governance in that state. The disruption in its gas supplies 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 dominant position in the market. However, the ongoing war has disrupted its smooth production and market dominance. 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 country's agricultural sector, worsening the situation. Moreover, the conflict has led to the blockage of crucial transportation routes, making it difficult for Ukraine to ship out its agricultural products.

The reliance on Ukraine and Russia for the supply of grains, particularly essentials like wheat, holds significant implications for Africa. This dependence has triggered a crisis across many African nations, resulting in notable repercussions for the pricing of essential goods and household consumables. Furthermore, the impact resonates within the realm of foreign exchange markets, causing notable volatility, particularly in relation to major currencies like the Dollar. The value of the Naira to the dollar had favored the latter. The Nigerian state depends on imported goods rather than the nation exporting domestic goods. The dollar effect presented yet another layer of the rippling effect stemming from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine Crisis. Importantly, the ramifications extend to the domain of arms and ammunition importation which adds to more insecurity in the Nigerian land space. This factor deepens the crisis's connection to Nigeria, as these repercussions magnify in scope. Insight from analysts suggests a correlation between the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the series of coup d'états witnessed across West Africa hence drawing a parallel into the Nigerian land space. Small arms and ammunitions infiltrate and allow increase insecurity; drawing parallels to the historical Cold War era, where a major standoff between the USSR and the USA unfolded, one can discern the foundations for the current scenario. The creation of entities like NATO and the Warsaw Pact emerged from this period, and despite the USSR's dissolution, Russia retains a significant role. The potential scenario of NATO's presence in Ukraine holds immense consequences, as NATO's proximity could profoundly impact Russia.

The ongoing crisis in Niger further accentuates the intricate web of connections. The implications for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with Nigeria at the forefront, intertwine with the Russian-Ukraine conflict. The complexity arises from the interplay between regional interests and the global crisis. Nigeria possesses abundant gas resources, surpassing even its crude oil reserves. Seeking avenues to export this gas, Nigeria's aspirations coincide with an intriguing development: Niger's initiative to construct a gas pipeline to Europe. This ambitious project would traverse multiple nations—Niger, Chad, Mali, and Morocco—before reaching Europe. However, the question emerges: Would Russia, which suspended its gas supply to Europe, be 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). 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). The writers further spoke of the way out for this war. The writers 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). 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). 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). 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). 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 trade dynamics, with a distinct pivot towards trading partners in 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. This deviation from the norm was largely attributed to the circumstances of the time. 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. This shift was accentuated by a greater focus on extending support to the Biafrans during the conflict.

African countries, including Nigeria, are grappling with the financial challenges arising from the Russia-Ukraine conflict, while also striving to ensure the continuity of trade operations. Within the global framework, Nigeria's status is primarily characterized by import reliance, which has contributed to the recurring slide of the Naira. The complexities of this situation underscore the necessity for Nigeria to find avenues for sustainable trade to address 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 magic 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.

Given the nature of Nigeria's import-dependent economy, the need for dollars persists due to the requirement for foreign exchange for imports. The Ukraine crisis compounds this situation by constraining the potential commodities that Nigeria could export. The outcome is a dual challenge: reduced avenues for selling Nigerian goods in the global market and heightened demand for dollars to facilitate imports. Navigating this complex scenario demands strategic consideration. African countries, including Nigeria, are faced with the imperative of managing their economic vulnerabilities in light of the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Balancing the import-export equation and diversifying the nation's export portfolio emerge as essential strategies. 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.

Amidst the ongoing crisis in Niger, Nigeria perceives a strategic opportunity emerging. This comes against the backdrop of Nigeria's own economic challenges and Russia's strategic decision to curtail its gas supply, thereby creating potential gaps that Nigeria could fill. Yet, the feasibility of this endeavor remains uncertain. The complexities of the situation are exemplified by recent events, such as the coup in Mali. Mali's historical ties with France, including the control of its central bank from Paris, have led to the presence of French military forces in the region. Notably, the Malian soldiers expelled French troops to Niger, prompting intricate questions about their next steps.

Navigating these complexities presents a multifaceted challenge for Nigeria. The pivotal question arises: How can Nigeria potentially advance its interests without engaging in a multi-front conflict? The prospect of a "tripod war" involving Nigeria, Niger, and Russia necessitates careful consideration. Moreover, aligning with France, a historical player in the region, raises its own set of strategic dilemmas. Nigeria's aspirations for regional dominance within West Africa have, at times, been stymied by French influence. An illustrative instance lies in Nigeria's persistent push for a common currency among ECOWAS member states, hindered by France's intervention. The crisis in Niger thus embodies a multifaceted dilemma for Nigeria. On one hand, the departure of French influence could potentially pave the way for Nigeria to assert itself in the region. On the other hand, this scenario could introduce uncertainties and complexities that might not necessarily align with Nigeria's best interests. Furthermore, the potential role of Russia adds another layer of intricacy to the equation, particularly given the military junta's presence in Niger.

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 has had profound economic consequences cum ethical concerns affecting food supply chain amidst large expanse of arable land available in the nation; investment, and production. The uncertainty and geopolitical risks associated with the war have deterred investors and businesses from making long-term commitments, leading to reduced capital flows and sluggish economic growth. Trade, being a critical driver of economic activity, has been significantly impacted by the conflict. Ukraine and Russia are major players in global trade, particularly in sectors like agriculture, metals, and energy. The war's disruption of supply chains and trade flows has not only affected Nigeria but also had implications for trade partners 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.

Looking to the future, geopolitical risks remain a significant concern. 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. Investor confidence in the region 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 the region for investments. On the positive side, the conflict may spur efforts towards regional economic integration among neighboring countries. Strengthening economic ties and collaborations 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.

Resolving the conflict and restoring diplomatic relations will be critical for promoting economic 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.

Some African countries with trade relations with Russia or Ukraine experience disruptions in supply chains and fluctuations in commodity prices due to the conflict's impact on global trade. For example, African nations 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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