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Russo-Ukraine War: Ethics Cum Impact On the Food and Energy Supply Chain in Nigeria

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Abstract: This research paper investigates the ethical considerations and impact of the Russo-Ukraine war on the food and energy supply chain in Nigeria. Against the backdrop of the geopolitical tensions, the study aims to assess the ethical dimensions surrounding the global supply chain disruptions emanating from the conflict and their consequences with ethical reevaluation on the policymakers. Employing a comprehensive methodology that combines literature review, documentary data analysis, and case studies, the research sheds light on the ethical dilemmas faced by stakeholders in the Nigerian supply chain. The findings reveal the vulnerabilities and disruptions caused by the war, affecting the ethical sourcing, distribution, and pricing of essential goods in the Nigerian market. The implications of these disruptions extend to the ethical considerations within the global supply chain and Nigeria's resilience in the face of external shocks. The paper discusses potential strategies to address ethical challenges, enhance supply chain resilience, and ensure the ethical and sustainable flow of food and energy resources in the aftermath of the Russo-Ukraine conflict. In conclusion, this research contributes to the understanding of the ethical dimensions of supply chain disruptions caused by geopolitical events. The outcomes provide valuable insights for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers interested in navigating these challenges associated with global crises and their impact on developing economies like Nigeria.

Key words: ethics, war, food chain, energy chain, Nigeria

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The origins of the Russo-Ukraine crisis can be traced back to the policies and actions of the Russian Empire toward Ukraine. The Russification policy, implemented by the Russian Empire, aimed to assimilate the Ukrainian population into Russian culture, language, and political structures. This involved the suppression of the Ukrainian language, identity, and socio-cultural attitudes, while imposing Russian culture on Ukrainians (Miller, 2016). Consequently, Ukrainian patriotic activists and intellectuals emerged, advocating for Ukrainian independence and the preservation of their language and culture, drawing parallels with Boer nationalism in South Africa (A. Kuznetsov & I. Bremmer, 2018). These movements significantly influenced the social and economic identity of the Ukrainian people. Notably, the predominantly Ukrainian-speaking peasantry, deeply rooted in rural traditions, played a pivotal role in shaping Ukrainian identity and fostering aspirations for self-determination (P. D'Anieri, 2017). This historical context underscores the complex interplay between cultural suppression, nationalist sentiments, and the socio-economic dynamics that have contributed to the ongoing crisis between Russia and Ukraine.

Geopolitical Tension and Global Repercussions

The Russo-Ukraine conflict represents the culmination of deep-seated animosities between the involved nations. It also reignited a historical rivalry between the United States of America (along with its allies) and Russia, a rivalry that had diminished since 1991. In response to potential Russian influence, former Soviet republics sought protection by joining NATO, viewed by Russians as their own version of the 'Monroe Doctrine' (Sphere of Influence). Consequently, as European states, Ukraine and other former Soviet Republics are eligible for NATO membership, granting them the choice to pursue such an option. The expansion of NATO has undoubtedly facilitated the assimilation of former Warsaw Pact nations into Europe, mitigated the risk of conflicts between former communist countries in Central Europe, and allowed new member states to allocate fewer resources to security while modernizing their defense forces (E. Gnedina & S. Naryshkin, 2017).

Crucially, NATO membership signals that smaller and militarily vulnerable Baltic States can reasonably depend on it to deter Russia from intimidating or invading their countries amid current tensions. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has also negatively impacted neighboring Eastern European, Central Asian, and African countries through trade and migration links. Economic disruptions will affect their growth, while Europe's reliance on Russian energy will pose challenges and raise petroleum prices. The global repercussions of the war necessitate an ethical understanding that must address the identified shortcomings leading to the surge in worldwide

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food and energy prices. The global significance of Russia and Ukraine prompts a critical examination of the ethical imperative to restructure global food and trade within the framework of international politics.

Sectors such as food production, construction, petrochemicals, and transportation may encounter challenges due to disruptions in the availability of key inputs. Given the interconnected nature of the global economy, the effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict extend beyond the involved countries, but have far-reaching consequences on other continents far away from them.

Navigating the Challenges

The increase in prices and disruptions within commodity supply chains carries potential repercussions for global trade, economic stability, and overall growth. Policymakers must vigilantly monitor these developments and institute measures to alleviate adverse effects, foster resilience in affected industries, and bolster global economic recovery. The ongoing war introduces heightened risks to global economic growth, leading to financial strain in emerging economies and generating uncertainty regarding inflation and food/energy security. If conflict persists, it could result in a lasting fragmentation of global networks. Beyond economic concerns, neighboring countries face risks to human capital and education, with potential ramifications for growth, poverty levels, and inequality. Policymakers are obligated to recognize and address these risks through financial stability measures, inflation control, and strategies to alleviate insecurity. States must acknowledge the imperative of achieving self-sufficiency in food supply for their citizens. This is a matter of ethics, governance, and policymaking that necessitates a reevaluation of the notion of a global village. The concept is ethically flawed when nations neglect to provide sustenance for their citizens and instead await others to fulfill that role. At the national level, policymakers should refrain from implementing distorting measures in response to soaring commodity prices (E. Gnedina & S. Naryshkin, 2017). Instead, targeted support should be extended to vulnerable households, and social safety nets must be expanded to alleviate their financial burdens. It is crucial to safeguard essential services, particularly in agriculture and healthcare, for disadvantaged citizens. Monetary policy efforts should concentrate on moderating inflation expectations and reinforcing commitment to a credible monetary framework. Given the disruptions in oil, gas, and coal markets, there is also an urgent need to prioritize energy efficiency and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

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The objective of the study is to evaluate the economic repercussions of the conflict, encompassing alterations in trade volumes, price fluctuations, shifts in investment patterns, and overall economic performance. The conflict has compelled countries involved and their trading partners to implement diverse trade policies and measures. It is crucial to scrutinize the effectiveness and consequences of these policies, such as trade restrictions, sanctions, and trade agreements, on international trade and economic stability. Given the dynamic nature of the conflict, understanding its potential long-term effects on international trade is of paramount importance. The study aims to offer insights into the future trajectory of trade relations, including potential opportunities for trade diversification, regional integration, and the reconstruction of trade networks impacted by the war. By addressing these issues, the study seeks to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war on Nigeria.

This study thoroughly examines the profound economic consequences of international trade on Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation. It also conducts an ethical assessment of its implications for Nigeria. As the global landscape evolves, the intricate interplay between international economic activities becomes increasingly intriguing. This paper delves into how these dynamics reverberated within the Nigerian state, exploring the intricate relationship between international trade patterns and the unique characteristics of Nigeria. With globalization acting as a driving force, international trade has become a cornerstone of the modern global economy. However, the effects of this trade present disadvantages for Nigeria. Nigeria's distinct socio-economic, geographic, demographic, and developmental characteristics establish a unique framework for analyzing the impacts of the Russo-Ukrainian war on Nigeria's internal economic system. This paper aims to unveil the multifaceted impacts of international trade on Nigeria, examining both positive and negative aspects. It also provides an assessment to scrutinize the ethical dimensions of Nigeria's struggling economy, increasingly exposed by the war. The paper investigated the geopolitical aspects of the war, encompassing heightened economic growth and expanded access to markets. Additionally, it brought attention to the drawbacks of relying on other nations in the realm of trade, emphasized in the dynamics of resource exportation and the potential for a declining economy. The examination extended to sectors such as agriculture, analyzing the strategies and policies Nigeria employed to navigate the mitigating effects of sanctions and gain leverage. By exploring the nuanced economic implications of international trade from a Nigerian standpoint, this paper aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the global economic system and its impact on diverse regions, particularly units within these regions. It illuminates the intricate interplay between trade, development, and sustainability, providing insights into how

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states can leverage international trade to promote inclusive growth, address socio-economic challenges, and position themselves in 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

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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 vet 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.

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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

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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.

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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

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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 economic repercussions and ethical concerns resulting from the Russia-Ukraine war have significantly affected the food supply chain, despite the vast expanse of arable land in the nation, as well as investment and production. The war's associated uncertainty and geopolitical risks have discouraged long-term commitments from investors and businesses, leading to diminished capital flows and sluggish economic growth. The conflict has notably impacted global trade, given the crucial role it plays in economic activity. Ukraine and Russia, major players in global trade, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, metals, and energy, have experienced disruptions in supply chains and trade flows, affecting not only Nigeria but also trade partners worldwide. This has resulted in market uncertainties, price fluctuations, and limited access to essential resources. The energy markets have also been affected, raising concerns about energy security for European countries reliant 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 ahead, geopolitical risks remain a significant concern. The conflict has underscored the potential for spillover effects and tensions between major global players, with broader

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consequences for international trade and financial markets. The lingering impact of the war and the uncertainty surrounding its resolution have dampened investor confidence in the region. Ongoing geopolitical risks may prompt investors to adopt a cautious approach, impacting capital flows and the region's attractiveness for investments. On a positive note, the conflict could stimulate efforts towards regional economic integration among neighboring countries. Strengthening economic ties and collaborations could help mitigate the impact of disruptions caused by the war and foster a more stable economic environment. The war has highlighted vulnerabilities in global supply chains, especially in sectors heavily reliant on Ukrainian and Russian exports, prompting companies to reconsider their supply chain strategies to enhance resilience and reduce dependence 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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