



Proliferation Of Non-Governmental Organizations and Effects on Nigeria's Public Policy

Adekunle Alaye^{1*}, Boike Rehbein²

¹Department of Political Science, Olabisi Onabanjo University, AGO-IWOYE, Ogun state, Nigeria.

²Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany.

Article Info

Received: October 01, 2025

Accepted: October 10, 2025

Published: October 15, 2025

***Corresponding author:** Adekunle Alaye,
Department of Political Science, Olabisi Onabanjo
University, AGO-IWOYE, Ogun state, Nigeria.

Citation: Alaye A, Rehbein B., (2025). "Proliferation Of Non-Governmental Organizations and Effects on Nigeria's Public Policy". International Journal of Business Research and Management 3(1); DOI: 10.61148/3065-6753/IJBRM/057.

Copyright: © 2025. Adekunle Alaye, This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstract:

Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999 marked a pivotal and new era for non-governmental organizations (NGOs). After decades of military rule, the new democratic environment enabled greater freedom and advocacy roles for civil society groups. NGOs proliferated rapidly, driven by younger Nigerian professionals seeking change. The number of registered NGOs grew exponentially, facilitated by liberalization of the civic regulatory environment. NGOs diversified across diverse policy issues from poverty reductions to human rights to service delivery. However, despite the critical roles, NGOs have played in advocating for policy reforms and delivering essential services, their contributions are often underappreciated or misunderstood within the broader context of governance in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has, at times, viewed NGOs with suspicion, perceiving them as foreign agents or political adversaries rather than partners in development. This study therefore, examined the effects of the proliferations of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on public policy, in Nigeria's fourth republic with a view to analysing and identifying the challenges encountered by the groups (NGOs) on public policy advocacy and assessing the strategies and mechanism through which NGOs influence public policies. Qualitative design was used. Data was collected using interviews conducted by 28 interviewees from BAOBOB for Women's human Rights. Max Webber's Institutional Theory and Wright Mill's Elite Theory served as the framework. Data were analysed qualitatively. NGOs' ability to operate were met with the challenges of limited capacity and dependence on external funding. Though, they operated under restrictive regulatory environment. The investigation of NGO's influence on public policy provides a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics of the Nigerian government, revealing both collaborative and adversarial relationships. This study provides valuable insights for policymakers, scholars, and civil society actors interested in advancing the effectiveness of NGOs.

Keywords: Non-Governmental Organizations, Public Policy, Proliferation, Democracy, Nigeria

Introduction

Sequel to the birth of the fourth republic in May, 1999, the number of registered Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) grew exponentially as this was facilitated by liberalization of the civic regulatory environment (Bello, 2021). NGOs diversified across several policy issues, from poverty reduction to human rights as well as service delivery. Improved funding access enabled growth, including from international donors, private sector partnerships and Nigeria's oil wealth. However, dependence on limited donor resources also posed financial constraints (Ayeni, 2016).

More educated Nigerians formed and oversaw the creation of numerous new NGOs. Their zeal was matched by their expertise in fields such as policy analysis, journalism, law, and technology. Professional organizational growth and strategic participations around national changes were facilitated by this influx of local talents (Murtala, 2015). NGOs made investments in systems, research capability, and training. NGOs underwent structural changes that led to more formalization, such as financial controls, organizational procedures, and registration requirements (Bello, 2021). Locally and nationally, umbrella organizations and self-regulatory bodies arose in an effort to improve NGO cooperation and accountability. NGO reputation and expertise were enhanced through partnerships with think tanks and universities. The use of digital tools for data collecting, mobilization, and communication has also increased. Scholars evaluating their 21st-century evolution highlight the ability of Nigerian NGOs to take advantage of the emerging democratic environment (Ibeanu & Egwu, 2007). To advance advocacy and benefit communities, organizations expanded their sources of income, strengthened their organizational capabilities, found gifted young leaders, and used technology. After 1999, NGOs were able to make the most of the political space that was accessible thanks to this quick professionalization.

Nigeria's 21st-century NGO boom expanded civil society's scope, variety, and professionalism. As a result, groupings were positioned as crucial players in the development of national policy and democracy. Ongoing restrictions on rural access, financial limitations, and organizational development, however, provide difficulties. Maintaining momentum will rely in part on NGOs' ability to adapt and keep coming up with new ideas in the face of Nigeria's changing environment.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played very crucial roles in shaping Nigeria's public policies by providing direct social services to citizens. Since the 1980s, NGOs have delivered programs in areas like health, education, water and sanitation, agriculture, and microfinance (Bello, 2021). These services fill critical gaps that are unmet by government agencies. By reaching Nigeria's most underserved populations, NGOs draw attention to shortcomings in existing policies and thus advocate implicitly for needed reforms

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is a critical component of any research, as it provides the lens through which the study's variables and relationships are examined. In the context of understanding the impact of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on public policy in Nigeria from 1999 to 2019, two prominent theories offer valuable insights: Elite Theory and Institutional Theory. These theories help to explain the dynamics between NGOs, government entities, and other stakeholders in the policy-making process, and how these interactions influence public policy outcomes.

Elite Theory

According to the theory of elites, a small, well-organized group of influential people controls most of the decision-making processes in a society, frequently at the expense of the general populace. This theory is based on the writings of academics such as Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, and C. Wright Mills, who contend that a minority group, consisting of social, political, and economic elites, has an outsized influence on how public policy is developed and

carried out (Mosca, 1939; Mills, 1956). This viewpoint holds that the interests and preferences of these elites, rather than the will of the people as a whole, determine public policy.

In the Nigerian context, Elite Theory is particularly relevant given the country's political history and socio-economic structure. Nigeria has long been characterized by the concentration of power within a small group of political and economic elites who have significant control over the state's resources and decision-making processes. These elites often include politicians, business magnates, and traditional leaders who, through their wealth, connections, and influence, shape public policy to reflect their interests (Odukoya, 2006).

Understanding the difficulties NGOs encounter in trying to influence public policy in a setting where elite interests predominate is where Elite Theory's significance to this subject lays. NGOs must negotiate a political environment where elite interests frequently take precedence, even if they frequently support measures that help marginalized or underrepresented populations. For instance, elites with a stake in keeping things as they are may thwart the work of an NGO pushing for land reform laws that help smallholder farmers since they frequently own sizable land holdings or have investments linked to the status quo. Moreover, Elite Theory helps explain why certain policies that align with elite interests are more likely to be adopted and implemented, while those that challenge these interests may face significant resistance. In Nigeria, NGOs working on anti-corruption initiatives, for instance, often encounter opposition from political elites who may be implicated in corrupt practices or who benefit from the existing patronage systems. The resistance to the NGO Regulatory Bill of 2017 by civil society can also be seen through the lens of Elite Theory, where the government, influenced by elite interests, sought to curtail the activities of NGOs that were perceived as threatening to the status quo (Akor, 2017).

However, Elite Theory also highlights the strategies NGOs might use to navigate or counter elite dominance in the policy-making process. For instance, NGOs may seek to align themselves with certain elites who share their goals or who can champion their causes within the corridors of power. Alternatively, NGOs might focus on grassroots mobilization to build public pressure that can counterbalance elite influence. The success of NGOs in influencing public policy, therefore, often depends on their ability to effectively engage with or challenge elite interests within the Nigerian context.

Institutional Theory

Institutional Theory, on the other hand, offers a different perspective on the dynamics of public policy-making. This theory emphasizes the role of formal and informal institutions—rules, norms, and practices—that shape the behavior of actors within a given context (North, 1990; Scott, 2008). According to Institutional Theory, these institutions create the framework within which public policy is formulated and implemented, influencing the behavior of both governmental and non-governmental actors.

Institutional theory is especially helpful in the Nigerian context for comprehending how the official government structures and the informal political practices that define Nigerian politics affect nongovernmental organizations' capacity to influence public policy. According to the theory, NGOs must function inside an institutional setting that is characterized by deeply embedded

norms and practices in addition to legal frameworks. For instance, NGOs must negotiate a challenging institutional environment to bring about policy change in Nigeria due to the country's federal system, which divides authority among the federal, state, and municipal governments. Furthermore, informal practices that further complicate policy-making include patron-client relationships and ethnic-based politics. Depending on how well these practices correspond with these institutional realities, Institutional Theory also highlights the importance of understanding the regulatory environment within which NGOs operate. In Nigeria, the legal framework governing NGOs includes various registration requirements, regulations, and restrictions that can either enable or constrain NGO activities. For instance, the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) regulates the registration of NGOs, while other government agencies may impose additional requirements or restrictions on their operations. The proposed NGO Regulatory Bill of 2017, which sought to introduce more stringent regulations on NGO activities, is a case in point where institutional dynamics directly impact NGO operations (Akor, 2017).

Furthermore, Institutional Theory provides insight into the role of international norms and standards in shaping NGO activities and their influence on public policy. Many Nigerian NGOs are part of larger international networks or receive funding from international donors, which subjects them to global norms and practices. These international connections can strengthen NGOs' influence by providing them with additional resources, expertise, and legitimacy. However, they can also create tensions when international norms conflict with local institutional practices or when NGOs are perceived as imposing foreign values on Nigerian society (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

Understanding how NGOs themselves institutionalize within the policy-making process is another way that Institutional Theory is applied to this research. NGOs may establish networks, routines, and practices through their interactions with governmental institutions over time that seep into the formulation of public policy. As NGOs gain recognition as stakeholders in particular policy domains, their institutionalization may result in increased influence; however, it may also lead to co-optation, a situation in which NGOs run the risk of being overly associated with government institutions and losing their ability to advocate for change on their own (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Integrating Elite and Institutional Theories

While Elite and Institutional Theory offer distinct perspectives, integrating them provides a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in NGO's influence on public policy in Nigeria. Elite Theory emphasizes the power dynamics and the role of influential individuals or groups in shaping policy outcomes, while Institutional Theory focuses on the broader structural and normative frameworks that guide actor behavior.

In the Nigerian context, these theories suggest that NGOs must navigate a policy landscape shaped by both elite interests and institutional structures. For example, an NGO advocating for health policy reform must consider how to engage with powerful elites within the health sector while also working within the institutional framework established by government regulations and international standards. Understanding both the power dynamics and the institutional constraints allows NGOs to develop more

effective strategies for influencing public policy.

Moreover, these theories highlight the potential for NGOs to act as change agents within the policy-making process. While Elite Theory suggests that NGOs may face significant challenges in challenging entrenched interests, Institutional Theory offers a pathway for NGOs to gradually influence policy by working within and eventually altering the institutional frameworks that govern policy-making. By institutionalizing their advocacy efforts and building alliances within both the elite and institutional spheres, NGOs can potentially achieve lasting policy changes that reflect broader societal interests.

This framework will guide the subsequent analysis of NGO activities, strategies, and impacts on the Nigerian context, helping to illuminate the complex interplay between power, institutions, and policy outcomes. By applying these theoretical perspectives, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the roles of NGOs in shaping public policy and to provide practical insights for enhancing their effectiveness in future engagements.

To sum up, the study's theoretical framework which draws from Institutional Theory and Elite Theory. They offer a solid basis for examining how NGOs affected public policy in Nigeria between 1999 and 2019. The power dynamics that NGOs must manage in a political climate dominated by powerful elites are explained by elite theory, while institutional theory provides insights into the larger structural and normative frameworks that influence policy-making. When combined, these ideas provide a thorough lens through which NGOs can view both the opportunities and obstacles they encounter when trying to influence public policy, as well as the tactics that can be used to meet their advocacy objectives.

Empirical Review

An empirical assessment of NGOs and public policy in Nigeria is a methodical analysis of previous studies, research, and data in order to comprehend the function, significance, difficulties, and efficacy of NGOs in influencing public policy processes. The purpose of this review is to offer evidence-based perspectives on the dynamics of non-governmental organizations' involvement in Nigerian policymaking. Some of the critical and empirical analysis include the following:

Advocacy and Lobbying:

In Nigeria, NGOs use lobbying and campaigning to change laws, rules, and public policies to better represent the rights and interests of underrepresented groups. They operate as watchdogs, keeping an eye on government operations and promoting human rights, social fairness, and sound governance. NGOs use campaigns, petitions, and public awareness campaigns to bring attention to urgent problems, rally support from the public, and put pressure on decision-makers to make constructive changes.

Capacity Building and Empowerment:

NGOs in Nigeria run capacity-building initiatives to enable people and communities to become independent and proactive change makers. These initiatives could involve civic education, leadership workshops, enterprise development, and skill training. NGOs support sustainable development and community resilience by giving individuals the information, tools, and resources they need to raise their socioeconomic standing.

Environmental Conservation and Sustainability:

In Nigeria, NGOs are essential to sustainability and environmental preservation initiatives. They take part in initiatives including trash

management, biodiversity preservation, reforestation, and the development of renewable energy. NGOs promote policies that safeguard natural resources and lessen the effects of climate change, advocate for sustainable development practices, and increase public knowledge of environmental issues through advocacy campaigns, environmental education initiatives, and community mobilization.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response:

NGOs in Nigeria offer disaster response and humanitarian aid in times of crisis, including natural catastrophes, public health problems, and conflicts. They provide impacted populations with emergency relief assistance, such as food, water, shelter, healthcare, and psychological support. NGOs also work on long-term recovery and rehabilitation projects, assisting communities in reestablishing livelihoods, rebuilding infrastructure, and enhancing their ability to withstand future calamities.

Research and Policy Analysis:

In order to produce evidence-based insights and assist in decision-making, non-governmental organizations in Nigeria carry out policy analysis and research. To comprehend socioeconomic concerns, pinpoint the underlying causes of issues, and assess the efficacy of current policies and initiatives, they gather data, administer surveys, and examine patterns. NGOs push for evidence-based policy changes that take into account the goals and needs of underserved populations through policy lobbying and discussions with legislators.

Social Mobilization and Community Development:

In Nigeria, NGOs encourage civic participation in development projects, build social cohesion, and organize communities. They enable local communities to recognize their requirements, rank potential solutions, and take an active role in decision-making by facilitating participatory processes. NGOs support grassroots democracy, foster social inclusion, and create social capital through community-driven projects and initiatives.

Research Methodology

This research delved into the pivotal aspect of qualitative research approach. It provided a comprehensive understanding of the methods and techniques employed to gather, analyze, and interpret data within the qualitative paradigm. Through a careful selection of research design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques, the qualitative approach has enabled us to explore the intricate nuances and complexities of the research phenomenon. The rich and contextual insights gained from this approach have offered a deeper comprehension of the underlying factors, perspectives, and experiences that contribute to the research topic. The use of qualitative research has also made it possible to be as flexible and adaptive as is required to fully convey the subject matter's dynamic nature. Through the use of participant observations, in-depth interviews, and content analysis, we have been able to identify social constructions, hidden patterns, and motivations that may have gone undetected when using only quantitative methods. Furthermore, great attention has been paid throughout the research process to the rigor and ethical issues that are inherent in qualitative research. Ensuring participant confidentiality, reflexivity, and transparency has improved the findings reported in this chapter's credibility and reliability.

Discussions of Findings

The goal of this project was to collect critical data and investigate

the underlying impacts of Non-Governmental Organizations on Nigeria's Public Policy as a pivot for Public Advocacy. Case study of 1999 to 2019. The following key informant interview results of respondents in relation to the research questions will be used to underpin the discussion of findings.

What is the Contextual Detailed Roles of NGOs on Nigeria's Public Policy?

Findings to Research Question 1: According to findings from some of the respondents, the roles of NGOs on Nigeria's public policy has been significant to some extent.

According to a key respondent the BOD, based on his understanding and research, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been instrumental in fighting for human rights and child rights globally. These organizations have played a crucial role in promoting and protecting the rights of marginalized communities, advocating for policy changes, and supporting victims of human rights abuses. He stated that NGOs fight for human through advocacy. They engage with governments, international organizations, and other stakeholders to push for policy changes and legislation that protect human rights. For instance, Amnesty International has been at the forefront of advocating for the rights of refugees and migrants, while Human Rights Watch has been instrumental in exposing human rights abuses in conflict zones.

According to another major Respondent, stated that when it comes to child rights, NGOs work tirelessly to protect children from exploitation, ensure access to education and healthcare, and promote child participation. Save the Children, for example, has been instrumental in promoting access to quality education for marginalized children, while UNICEF has worked to reduce child mortality rates globally. They also collaborate with governments, international organizations, and local communities to amplify their impact. They build the capacity of local organizations and communities to sustain their efforts, ensuring that their work has a lasting impact.

In additions, According to both Respondent II and III, stated the role of NGOs fighting poverty by providing access to education and skills training. Education is a critical factor in breaking the cycle of poverty, as it enables individuals to acquire skills and knowledge that can help them secure better-paying jobs. NGOs like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank have implemented programs that provide vocational training, literacy programs, and scholarships to disadvantaged communities. According to him, NGOs also address poverty by providing access to healthcare and social services. Organizations like Doctors Without Borders and the Red Cross provide medical care, sanitation, and hygiene services to communities affected by conflict, natural disasters, or poverty. These services help to reduce mortality rates, improve health outcomes, and enhance the overall well-being of marginalized communities.

Furthermore, the organization work to raise awareness about social injustice issues. Organizations like the Nigerian Network of NGOs (NNNGO) and the Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEJ) conduct research, publish reports, and organize campaigns to educate the public about social injustice issues, mobilize support, and build a movement for change. NGOs also build capacity and empower marginalized communities to demand their rights. Organizations like the Community Life Project (CLP)

and the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND) provide training, resources, and support to community groups, enabling them to advocate for their rights, access government services, and participate in decision-making processes.

However, NGOs collaborate with government agencies, international organizations, and other stakeholders to leverage resources, expertise, and influence. This collaboration helps to amplify their impact, ensure sustainability, and promote a coordinated response to social injustice.

To what extent NGOs has Impacts in the Organization's work on public policy in Nigeria?

Findings to Research Question 2: According to the first respondent, the health sector in Nigeria has benefited significantly from the contributions of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) like the AIDS Prevention Initiative in Nigeria (APIN). APIN's efforts have led to improved health policies, enhanced service delivery systems, and a strengthened national HIV response, ultimately providing care and support to thousands of individuals affected by HIV. APIN's work has resulted in the development and implementation of effective policies, guidelines, and standards for HIV prevention, treatment, and care. This has ensured that healthcare facilities are equipped to deliver high-quality services, leading to increased access to HIV services, particularly for vulnerable populations. According to the findings it aided that, APIN's advocacy efforts have helped reduce stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV, creating a more supportive environment for those affected. The organization's partnership with the government has ensured sustainability and scalability of their interventions, demonstrating the critical role NGOs play in complementing government efforts to improve health outcomes and address public health challenges.

In addition according to Respondent II stated the role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in sustainable development cannot be overstated. One of the key areas where NGOs have made a difference is in environmental protection. Through initiatives such as tree planting, waste management, and conservation programs, NGOs have helped to mitigate the effects of climate change, protect biodiversity, and promote eco-friendly practices among communities. For instance, the partnership between the Katsina State Government and NGOs has led to the establishment of green spaces, reducing the urban heat island effect and improving air quality. NGOs have also played a crucial role in poverty alleviation. By implementing programs aimed at empowering vulnerable populations, including women and youth, NGOs have provided skills training, micro-finance, and entrepreneurship support. This has enabled individuals to break the cycle of poverty and improve their socio-economic status. For example, NGOs have established vocational training centers, equipping beneficiaries with skills in areas like tailoring, carpentry, and agriculture.

Furthermore, NGOs have supplemented government efforts in healthcare services, providing access to quality healthcare, particularly in rural areas. They have established health facilities, provided medical equipment, and trained healthcare workers. This has helped to improve health outcomes and reduce mortality rates in the community. Another significant contribution of NGOs is promoting community participation and ownership of sustainable development projects. By engaging local stakeholders in decision-

making processes, NGOs have ensured that projects are tailored to meet community needs and priorities. This approach has fostered a sense of responsibility and accountability among community members, ensuring the long-term sustainability of projects.

Secondly, in addition to NGOs effort, added that the organization play a crucial role in Transparency and accountability efforts that are essential components of good governance, and civil society organizations (CSOs) have played a vital role in promoting values in various countries. With the support of international funding and training, CSOs have successfully elevated transparency reforms on political agendas, contributing to policy reforms and anti-corruption efforts. One of the key ways civil society organizations have promoted transparency is by advocating for freedom of information laws and their effective implementation. These laws enable citizens to access information held by public bodies, allowing them to hold governments accountable for their actions. They have also pushed for the disclosure of government data, such as budget information and procurement contracts, enabling citizens to track government spending and identify potential corruption.

What Strategies does the organization use to advocate for policy changes?

Findings to Research Question 3: Respondent 1, emphasized the strategies of the organization by advocating for policy changes in Nigeria. Advocating for policy changes is a crucial aspect of an organization's efforts to drive sustainable development. The Organizations use research and data to build a strong case for policy changes. They conduct studies, gather evidence, and analyze data to demonstrate the need for policy reforms. This approach helps to build credibility and trust with policymakers, making it more likely that they will consider the organization's recommendations. For instance, an NGO advocating for environmental protection might conduct research on the impact of pollution on local communities and present their findings to policymakers to push for stricter regulations. The respondent went further to explain some key strategy of the NGOs use to research and data to build as a strong case for policy changes, involves;

- ◆ Conducting studies and gathering evidence to demonstrate the need for policy reforms
- ◆ Analyzing data to identify trends and patterns that support their advocacy goals
- ◆ Presenting research findings to policymakers to build credibility and trust
- ◆ Using data to develop policy briefs, reports, and other materials to inform policymakers

In his response for example, An NGO advocating for environmental protection conducts research on the impact of pollution on local communities and presents their findings to policymakers to push for stricter regulations.

However, respondent III, was of the opinion that multilateral talks with all essential key parties. He added, that talks should concentrate on Building Coalitions and Partnerships in the organization on policy advocacy. According to him, Organizations often build coalitions and partnerships with other stakeholders to amplify their advocacy efforts. By collaborating with like-minded organizations, community groups, and individuals, they can pool resources, expertise, and influence to push for policy changes. This approach helps to demonstrate broad support for policy reforms and can make it harder for policymakers to ignore their demands.

For example, an NGO advocating for healthcare reform might partner with healthcare providers, patient groups, and community organizations to push for policy changes. Here is a more detailed explanation of the three strategies. NGOs collaborate with like-minded organizations, community groups, and individuals to pool resources and expertise, Building relationships with key stakeholders, including policymakers, business leaders, and community leaders.

In addition, Organizations use public awareness and mobilization campaigns to build support for policy changes among the general public. They use various tactics, such as social media campaigns, public events, and media outreach, to raise awareness about policy issues and mobilize public support. This approach helps to create a sense of urgency and public demand for policy reforms, making it more likely that policymakers will take action. For instance, an NGO advocating for education reform might launch a social media campaign to raise awareness about the need for increased funding for public schools and mobilize public support for policy changes.

Conclusion

The understanding of the impacts of Non-Governmental Organizations on Nigeria's Public Policy: A Case Study of 1999 to 2019" provides a comprehensive analysis of the significant roles that NGOs have played in shaping public policy in Nigeria. It traces the evolution of these organizations from their early, limited functions during colonial times to becoming key players in advocacy and service delivery in the democratic era. The research underscores both the successes and the challenges faced by NGOs, particularly in a complex regulatory environment and under the pressures of foreign funding dependency.

The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the significant role that NGOs have played in shaping public policy in Nigeria. It traces the evolution of these organizations from their early, limited functions during colonial times to becoming key players in advocacy and service delivery in the democratic era. The research underscores both the successes and the challenges faced by NGOs, particularly in a complex regulatory environment and under the pressures of foreign funding dependency.

In addition, the study reveals that while NGOs in Nigeria have made substantial contributions to policy reforms, particularly in areas such as anti-corruption, healthcare, and environmental regulation, their full potential is often curtailed by external and internal constraints. The findings suggest that with continued organizational strengthening, strategic coalition-building, and improved regulatory frameworks, NGOs can further amplify their impact on public policy. As such, the study not only highlights the critical role of NGOs in the past but also calls for ongoing support and development to enable these organizations to continue driving meaningful policy changes in Nigeria's future.

However, the study reveals that while NGOs in Nigeria have made substantial contributions to policy reforms, particularly in areas such as anti-corruption, healthcare, and environmental regulation, their full potential is often curtailed by external and internal constraints. The findings suggest that with continued organizational strengthening, strategic coalition-building, and improved regulatory frameworks, NGOs can further amplify their impact on public policy. As such, the study not only highlights the critical role of NGOs in the past but also calls for ongoing support and development to enable these organizations to continue driving

meaningful policy changes in Nigeria's future.

Recommendation

The thesis titled Understanding the Impacts of Non-Governmental Organizations on Nigeria's Public Policy: A Case Study of 1999 to 2019 is a comprehensive and well-researched study that provides significant insights into the role of NGOs in shaping public policy in Nigeria over two decades. The research offers a thorough exploration of the historical context, challenges, and successes of NGOs in the Nigerian political landscape.

The study's strengths lie in its rigorous methodological approach, including qualitative research methods and an in-depth literature review, which are skillfully employed to dissect the complex relationship between NGOs and public policy. The findings are well-supported by empirical evidence, making a valuable contribution to the understanding of civil society's influence on governance and policy formulation in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the thesis addresses critical issues such as the challenges NGOs face, including limited organizational capacity, dependence on external funding, and the restrictive regulatory environment. These insights are crucial for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners who seek to enhance the effectiveness of NGOs in policy advocacy and implementation. Given the quality of research and the relevance of its findings to ongoing discussions about governance and civil society in Nigeria, I highly recommend this thesis for further dissemination and consideration by academic institutions, policymakers, and NGOs. It provides a solid foundation for future research and could serve as a reference point for improving NGO government relations and public policy outcomes in Nigeria. This recommendation highlights the key aspects of the research and its value to the academic and professional community.

Suggestion for Further Studies

The study on the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in shaping public policy in Nigeria provides a crucial foundation for understanding how these entities influence the nation's governance. However, as with any research, there remain several areas that warrant further exploration to deepen our understanding and broaden the scope of findings. Future research could significantly contribute to the discourse by focusing on a range of underexplored but important topics related to NGOs and their impact on public policy in Nigeria. One promising avenue for further research is conducting comparative analysis across different regions of Nigeria. Nigeria is a diverse country with significant regional variations in economic development, cultural practices, and political environments. Understanding how NGOs operate and influence policy in these different contexts could uncover regional disparities in NGO effectiveness. This research could also identify the unique challenges that NGOs face in less developed or conflict-prone areas, such as the northeastern region affected by insurgency. Such comparative studies could provide valuable insights into tailoring NGO strategies to specific regional needs, thereby enhancing their overall effectiveness.

Another important area for future study is the longitudinal tracking of NGO impact over extended periods. While this study provides a snapshot of NGO activities and their influence over two decades, there is a need for research that follows specific NGOs over longer periods. Longitudinal studies could reveal how sustained NGO efforts lead to lasting policy changes and whether these changes

are resilient over time. This type of research could also assess the durability of NGO-driven initiatives, particularly in the face of changing political administrations and shifting public priorities. The nature of partnerships between NGOs and government agencies presents another rich area for further exploration. Effective collaboration between NGOs and the government is often essential for successful policy implementation. Future studies could delve into the dynamics of these partnerships, identifying best practices and the common challenges that arise. This research could offer practical recommendations for optimizing these collaborations, thereby enhancing the overall impact of NGO activities on public policy. In today's digital age, the impact of digital advocacy by NGOs is a critical yet underexplored area. With the rise of social media and other online platforms, NGOs have new tools at their disposal for influencing public opinion and policy. Future research could investigate how NGOs are leveraging these digital platforms to amplify their advocacy efforts. Such studies could assess the effectiveness of digital campaigns compared to traditional methods and explore how technology is broadening civic engagement, particularly among younger populations.

The relationship between NGO funding models and their policy influence also merits closer examination. NGOs in Nigeria often rely on a mix of domestic and foreign funding sources, which can significantly influence their priorities and operations. Research could explore how these different funding models affect the ability of NGOs to advocate for policy changes. Understanding the implications of funding sources could help NGOs and their supporters develop more sustainable and independent funding strategies, thereby enhancing their long-term impact on public policy. Lastly, while much of the focus tends to be on the role of NGOs in policy advocacy, further research should also consider the role of NGOs in post-policy implementation and monitoring. Once policies are enacted, ensuring that they are effectively implemented and that their impact is monitored is crucial. Future studies could explore how NGOs contribute to these processes, providing a more comprehensive understanding of their influence throughout the entire policy life cycle. While the current study offers valuable insights into the role of NGOs in Nigeria's public policy landscape, there is a clear need for further research to expand and deepen these findings. By exploring these suggested areas, future studies can contribute to a more nuanced and holistic understanding of how NGOs operate within the complex socio-political environment of Nigeria. These insights will not only enhance academic knowledge but also provide practical guidance for NGOs, policymakers, and other stakeholders working to improve governance and public policy in Nigeria.

References

1. AICPA. (2025a). AICPA adds chapter on auditing crypto lending and borrowing to digital assets practice aid. Association of International Certified Professional Accountants. Akor, L. (2017). Civil society, the state and the struggle for space in Nigeria. **African Journal of Political Science and International Relations**, 11(7), 196-205.
2. Anheier, H. K., & Themudo, N. S. (2002). Organizational forms of global civil society: Implications of going global. **Global Civil Society Yearbook 2002**, 191-216.
3. Hafner-Burton, E. M., & Tsutsui, K. (2007). Justice lost! The failure of international human rights law to matter where needed most. **Journal of Peace Research**, 44(4), 407-425.
4. Ibeanu, O., & Luckham, R. (2006). Nigeria: Political violence, governance and corporate responsibility in a petro-state. **Ethics & International Affairs**, 20(2), 131-151.
5. Lewis, D., & Kanji, N. (2009). **Non-Governmental Organizations and Development**. Routledge.
6. Agbola, Tunde (1994). NGOs and Community Development in Urban Areas. *Cities*, 11 (1).
7. Amadi, L. O. (2010). The Role of Non-Governmental organization in International Relations in Nigeria: Challenges for Development. *Journal of Social Sciences and Development Vol. 1: 114-118.*
8. Ball, C. and L. Dunn (1996). *Non-Governmental Organizations: Guidelines for Good Policy and Practice*, London: The Commonwealth Foundation.
9. Chuku, C. D. (2008). *Understanding Sociological perspectives*. Port Harcourt: Rohi Publishers.
10. Iheme, E. (2002). *Fundamentals of NGO Project Management*. Lagos: Transition Monitoring Group, TMG.
11. Jegar, A. M. (2007). *Democracy, Good Governance and Development in Nigeria*. (Abuja; Spectrum Books Ltd.
12. Kalagbor, S. B. (2004). *Health Administration in Nigeria: A functional Perspective*. Port Harcourt: Horizon Concepts.
13. MCFubara, K. G. (2002). Making African NGOs More Responsive to Social Needs. *Journal of Social Development in Africa* 17(2): 39-58.
14. MCFubara, K. G. (2009) . The Impact of NGOs on Health in Nigeria". *Niger Delta African Journal of Health and Environment Vol. 3 No. 2: 28- 35.*
15. MCNuty, M. L. Balancing Local Extra Local Interests in Nigerian Communities. In: Blund, P. Waren and D. M. (eds). *Indigenous Organization and Development 1996*. Intermediate Technology Publications: London.