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By Gbeminiyi Kazeem Ogunbela, Kazeem Oyedele Lamidi & Bolanle Shiyanbade

Obafemi Awolowo University

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Identity for All, Service to None: A Survey of Post-Adoption Effects of Identification Policy in Nigerian Public Service

Gbeminiyi Kazeem Ogunbela [α], Kazeem Oyedele Lamidi [σ] & Bolanle Shiyanbade [ρ]

Abstract- The adoption of digital identification is one of the key drivers of the ongoing conversations about the multiple digitisations of the Nigerian public administration. Despite the operations of identification policy in Nigeria for more than a decade, the e-identification ecosystem which is expected to drive financial and social inclusion as well as enhance e-governability is being confronted with the vicious cycle of low enrollment especially among the lower class communities. For instance, during Covid-19 intervention, the database of the indigents was revealed to be only 2.5 million in the face of extreme poverty in the country. Yet, subsequent governments emphasised the need for citizens onboarding on the national database citing the significant role digital identification plays in providing effective administration of public services. The investigation of the post-adoption effects of the identification policy on activities of public administration agencies in Nigeria shows a dim outlook. The results questioned the possibility of the ongoing digitization to effectively support the provision of governmental services to public. The expectation is that the state-backed biometric scheme is fashioned to address demand of public service in the state. Policy redevelopment to reconstruct the Nigerian identification regime for the effectiveness of administrative agencies' decisions and service delivery was proposed.

Keywords: digital identification, nigeria, policy implementation, enrollment, post-adoption effects.

I. Introduction

The practice of identification is deep-rooted in the history of statecraft and governance. The official gathering of citizen information in view of Higgs (2014) predates the period of the industrial revolution. Traditionally, identification architecture was used during authoritarian regimes as an instrument of surveillance of prisons inmates and control of colonial people most especially by the colonialist states before it crept into the administration of modern cities, due to the centralisation of citizen information in the nineteenth century (Foucault, 1997; Higgs, 2014). Today, the growing complexities of globalisation and the self-regenerative nature of information technology contribute to the proliferation of schemes of identification technology in the Global North and the Global South. Identification technologies like fingerprint, biometrics, iris capturing, radio frequency identification and facial recognition are now being utilised by government bodies and multinational companies for everyday activities like crossing borders, applying for a passport, getting a driver license, collecting tax, monitoring movement, providing life chances and sorting population (Barton, Carlton & Ziehm 2007; Lyon, 2009).

In the Nigerian context, efforts have been ongoing to develop a biometric identification system after the 2007 enactment of national policy on digital identification. The policy hinges on the implementation of agencies' e-platform driven by identification technology for the dependability of citizen's identity while accessing public services. The national policy and institutional framework for an identity management system for Nigeria was deployed with the overriding policy thrust to harmonise existing identification schemes, introduce a unique national identification scheme, institutionalise a system of identity management, and establish a reliable environment of identity management. All these thrusts are expected to manifest into the attainment of a variety of the policy objectives set out in the policy document especially in the area of interoperability among government agencies. Having this in mind, it becomes probable to ask how effective is the Nigerian identification regime in aiding inter-agencies operation? Administratively and policy-wise, it is common knowledge in the theory of public policy that policies are formulated to remedy societal challenges. A policy is adjudged successful or otherwise when the outcomes of the implementation of such policy are evaluated against the set targets.

The policy on identity management system in Nigeria is expected to provide a foundational database that can be accessed by government agencies providing e-services. This is with a view to ensuring effectiveness among relevant government agencies. For instance, Aliyu (2017) asserted the core aim of the national identity management system (NIMS) in Nigeria is to provide real-time access to fifteen (15) government agencies especially in verifying and authenticating identity-related data of individuals accessing public

Author α: Department of Public Administration, Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Nigeria. e-mail: gbeminiyi.ogunbela@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng
Author σ: Department of Local Government and Development Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.
e-mail: akandekande@oauife.edu.ng
Author ρ: Department of Public Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. e-mail: bwshiyanbade@oauife.edu.ng

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services (see figure 1). Therefore, 15 applets are embedded in the general multi-purpose cards (GMPC, see figure 2) for interoperability among government agencies (Aliyu, 2017). Thus, the availability of GMPCs is necessary as well as a sufficient condition for full deployment and utilisation of the NIMS in Nigeria.

Going by the way of practical fallout from the above arrangements, grievous doubt hovers around the essence of the policy implementation. There are still concerns as to how effective can this identification scheme provide reliable information about Nigerians for provision of mass intervention palliative by the government (in form of direct benefit transfer) especially in time of national emergency. This was represented in the public condemnation that greeted the controversial e-identification-driven cash transfer to the vulnerable during the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Nigerian government claimed that the database of the indigents needed to be upgraded to 3.6 million from 2.5 million given the level of extreme poverty in the country (Royal, 2020), thereby remarking the ongoing identification scheme as ineffectual.

Previous efforts have been made by scholars to research peculiarities of the Nigerian identification regime. For instance, Osunade, Olanrewaju, and Phillips (2013) worked on a low-cost identification model, Onakoya, Adebayo and Owolabi (2013) studied Entry Relationship (ER) data model for Nigerian identity management. Ibrahim and Abubakar (2016) worked on the significance of identity management in Nigeria. Likewise, Ayamba and Ekanem (2016) worked on the social and economic benefits of implementing an identity management system and Olaniyi (2017) carried out a study on the usage of GMPCs in accessing public services in Nigeria. It could be deduced that previous studies concentrated on the prospects and the workability of the identity management system in Nigeria. Hence, the need to establish how effective is the identification scheme in achieving activities of government agencies from the perspectives of field operations.

This article provided in five parts. The first is the ongoing section where we contemporarily juxtaposed the blending of new identification tech into service administration of the state and revealed the particular concern about the Nigerian electronic identity regime, then, generally reviewed historical accounts of other cultures regarding deployment of digital identification. The third section elaborated on the methods and field surveys were made. In the next part, we analysed the administrative survey on the effectiveness of the identification regime on agencies' operations and this was immediately followed by evidence discussion while the article terminated with the concluding part.



Source: Aliyu (2017)

Fig. 1: Agencies Harmonised with NINs.

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Source: Balogun (2017).

Fig. 2: Front and Back View of the NIMC Multipurpose Card.

II. Biometrics Everywhere: Is the Nigerian Case Different?

Evidence from reports issued by scholars and international institutions on the stage of an identification system in European countries pointed out that the e-identification system has been diversely deployed. According to Aichholzer and Straub (2010), several European countries have migrated to electronic identity management owing to the global trend in the identity management ecosystem. The adoption of e-identification in Europe commenced over two decades ago. It was reported that e-identification started in Finland as far back as 1999 (EU Report, 2006). This is being followed by other European countries such as Austria (2000); Belgium (2003); Denmark (2001); Estonia (2002), France (2004); Germany (2001); Hungary (2001); Ireland (2000); Italy (2000); Latvia (2004); Malta (2004); Portugal (2005); Slovakia (2006); Slovenia (2005); Spain (2006); Sweden (2006) – meaning the majority of the countries in Europe saw the importance of identity management system. These countries clearly shared the opinion that before the e-government approach can be adequately deployed, a reliable means to electronically identify citizens is germane (EU Report, 2006). Castro (2011) analysis in a study carried out to review successes and failures recorded by countries that have adopted electronic identification systems show that Estonia, a European country is a global leader in the adoption and deployment of identity management in governance.

The report which was issued in 2011 confirmed that the e-identification platform in Estonia has issued fifty-two (52) millions of electronic signature and authenticated eighty-eight (88) millions of e-transactions. Also, Europe's Digital Progress Report (2016) scores Estonia high in digital public service in the EU, citing the e-identification strategy as the main driver. Historically, the policy on identity management was launched in 2002 with the alias "Digital Estonia". Previous works, have linked the success account of the e-identification system of Estonia to series of policy initiatives and strategies which include: legal and regulatory backings that stipulated general compliance especially in the area of digital signature, privacy, and data protection; a comprehensive collaboration between government agencies and private sector partners; adequate financing; strong political leadership and competence; technological and infrastructural sophistication; aggressive awareness campaign; techno-literate citizens (OECD, 2010; Aichholze & Straub, 2010; Martens, 2010; Castro, 2011; Ducasle, 2015).

The state of identification in Africa has been sparsely categorised. Though, it appears that deployment and adoption of the e-identification system have not gotten required attention from African governments, yet, studies have shown that little effort and progress have been made in the African Identification system. World Bank Report (2017) revealed that very few countries in Africa have developed a robust identification system. Countries such as Botswana, Kenya, Morocco, and Rwanda have relatively reached an advanced stage. Nigeria, Chad, and Tanzania among other countries are at the intermediate stage while many other African countries like the Republic of Congo, Guinea, Liberia, and host of others made very little or no progress in their

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identification systems. The study considered the extent of coverage, robustness, integration, and utilisation of identification system in these countries and revealed that absence of reliable foundational identity systems in most Africa countries produced hub of fragmented functional registries which is affecting the development of integrated identity management in African states (World Bank, 2017).

Generally, institutional arrangement and administrative capacity of African countries in the identity management system vary, especially on a country basis. Though the common pattern is the decentralised civil registration schemes and centralised national identification system, these structures are underutilised due to poor funding and inadequate resources (World Bank, 2017). Another finding of the World Bank Report (2017) on identification systems in Africa is low coverage occasioned by overhead cost, paper-based documentation, difficult geographical landscape, scattered population distribution, and lack of patronage by the public and private users. Many African states are adopting more sophisticated technology to enhance the security features in their identity management while some still use a manual identity management system. Few countries in Africa run an identity management system in line with international best practices and standards (World Bank Report, 2017). Furthermore, the level of integration of functional databases with foundational databases in Africa countries is not impressive, but certain countries like Nigeria, Kenya are integrating their identity management databases through unique identification numbers. Another issue in identification systems in Africa is inadequate legislation and protection of individual identity-related information. Legal frameworks are not adequate to provide cover for protecting personal data and the right to reasonable use of private data by public officials (World Bank, 2017).

Existing literature on identity management in Nigeria shows that only a few scholars have written on identity management in Nigeria. Ordinarily, identity management in Nigeria has really not attracted government attention. It was not until 2007 that identity management in Nigeria was given sincere attention by formulating the national policy and institutional framework for an identity management system for Nigeria. (Aliyu, 2017). The empirical finding of Onokoya, Adebayo and Owolabi (2013) confirmed that deployment of the identity management system that manages identities of residents in Nigeria including inmates, immigrants, and diaspora is a good direction towards the transformational goal of Nigeria. The study identified a shortage of ICT manpower and the absence of training institutes as part of the challenges facing the implementation of policy on identity management in Nigeria. Also, Onakoya et al (2013) flagged off low computer education, unstable power supply, and inappropriate communication channel as another set of challenges drawing back identity management in Nigeria. Olaniyi (2017) in an unpublished thesis titled "The Role of National Electronic Identity Card in Enhancing Public Service Effectiveness: The Nigerian Case" It was revealed that truly the identity card being issued in Nigerian will provide access to basic public service especially through e-government platforms by breaking bureaucratic processes in public service. The study revealed low coverage, government bureaucracy, and lack of interoperability as the major barriers affecting the implementation of the new identity regime in Nigeria. It summarised that national identity card in Nigeria has not been fully integrated into the public service system. Similarly, Ibrahim and Abubakar (2016) did a study on the significance of identity in developing countries with a specific focus on the Nigerian economy, development, and security. The study was conducted among 60 staff of the National Identity Management Commission. The study arrived at the findings that a robust identity management system is a precursor for enhancing e-governance and national development.

In a qualitative manner, Ayamba and Ekanem (2016) argued that current identity management should be designed to accommodate innovations that will goad socio-economic and political development rather concentrates only on enrollment and issuance of GMPCs. This work identified the ambivalent nature of government, lack of trust, and low level of technology acceptance among citizens. It further concluded that the government must provide a conducive and convenient environment for the national policy on the identity management system to be sustained at the instance of regime change in government. Osunade, Olanrewaju, and Phillips (2013) presented a virgin argument, technologically oriented for "Low-Cost Identification Management System as an alternative to the current arrangement by the National Identity Management Commission into the national database repository. They argued that registration and enrollment costs will be greatly reduced with the deployment of their proposed architecture. The architecture according to them considered issues surrounding the acquisition and updating of identity-related data as well as a distribution network for GMPCs. This work might look too abstract for policy practitioners, yet it added credence to the possibility of improvement in the ongoing implementation of the new identity management system in Nigeria.

Irrespective of previous research, the main agenda of e-identification policy pointed the need for interoperability of government agencies where an individual database is jointly explored as digital resources for decision making but it's becoming clearly unclear the extent which provision of digitised information corroborated activities of government agencies because the effectiveness of identity system in

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providing expected back up especially during an emergency like contact tracing during a disease outbreak, social intervention for the protection of the vulnerable raises concern more than hope. This result in a hypothetical commentary that no statistically significant difference in the effects of the implementation of the policy on the activities of selected government agencies, and this was later subjected variance analyses.

III. Field and Methods

The study was carried out in Southwestern Nigeria. This was because the region had the highest coverage (enrollment) for the period covered by this study. The study covered activities of the National Identity Management Commission and three out of fifteen agencies that are expected to be linked with the national database. They included the Nigerian Immigration Service, Federal Road Safety Corps, and the Independent National Electoral Commission. Primary and secondary sources of data were utilised. Primary data were collected through the administration of the questionnaire, then later, the conduct of in-depth interviews. The target population of 2139 consisted staff in the state offices of the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) in Ogun, Oyo, and Ekiti; the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) in Ogun, Oyo, and Ekiti; the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Ogun, Oyo and Ekiti and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Ogun, Oyo and Ekiti with the following enumerated components: Ogun State (NIMC 110; NIS 303; FRSC 286; INEC 67), Oyo State (NIMC 122; NIS 312; FRSC 306; INEC 72), Ekiti State (NIMC 79; NIS 201; FRSC 218; INEC 63).

It was a mixed-method research utilising multi-stage sampling technique. At the first stage, Ogun, Oyo, and Ekiti were selected out of six states in Southwestern Nigeria using a stratified random sampling technique due to limited resources and plausibility of the survey result. The second stage involved the purposive selection of NIMC, NIS, FRSC, and INEC in each of the selected states. The selection of NIMC was based on its direct involvement in the implementation of the policy while NIS, FRSC, and INEC were selected out of fifteen (15) government agencies identified in the policy document to be linked with the new national database. Moreover, inclusion of the three agencies was also owing to the currency and consistency of their activities in identity management. Also, their inclusion became incumbent as this work aimed at testing the effectiveness of e-identification in inter-agencies collaboration. Then, the study applied a proportionate random sampling technique in selecting respondents from selected institutions across the selected states using a sample fraction of 15%. In all, a sample of 321 was selected. This was distributed as follows: Ogun State (NIMC 17; NIS 45; FRSC 43; INEC 10), Oyo State (NIMC 18; NIS 47; FRSC 46; INEC 11), Ekiti State (NIMC 12; NIS 30; FRSC 33; INEC 9). The respondents in each group were selected using a simple random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was administered to the selected staff of NIMC, NIS, FRSC and INEC, and a response rate of 64% was achieved given the eventful nature of these institutions.

The questionnaire was designed to gather administrative testimonies on the effects of the policy implementation on the activities of selected government agencies with a scale of 6 dimensions (a – High Extent, b – Moderate Extent, c – Low Extent, d – No extent). After the results from the field survey, interview responses were analysed for possible triangulation of the field evidence. Hence, the interview sessions were held with a deputy coordinator, one facility manager, three (3) enrollment officers from NIMC and two public relation officers, and two technical officers from NIS, FRSC, and INEC. Secondary data obtained from textbooks, academic journals, official documents of NIMC and other relevant institutions, and the Internet. Given the sensitivity of activities of these agencies, adequate confidentiality of the identity and information supplied by each respondent was maintained. All the respondents had the right to withdraw from participation in the field exercise. Data collected were analysed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics.

IV. Administrative Survey from the Field

This section determined the effects to which the implementation of the national policy on identity management influences the activities of selected identity–related agencies. In order to achieve this, some items in the research instrument designed to gather the perception of respondents on the extent to which the implementation of the policy aided the activities of the relevant agencies thus far. The measurement scale employed to measure the extent of effect was sub-scaled into High Extent, Moderate Extent, Low Extent, and No Extent. Responses generated along these subscales were rated in order to infer the perception of the majority of the respondents regarding the extent to which the implementation of the policy aided the activities of the sampled agencies. Mean statistics (X) and standard deviation (SD) were used to support these inferences. In Table 1, the outcome of the survey showed that the implementation of the new identity regime has to a moderate extent aided real-time universal verification of citizens' identities by relevant government agencies. This position was supported by fifty-six per cent of the respondents ($X = 2.84$, $SD = 0.93$). Another finding showed that sixty-two percent of the sampled staff agreed that the implementation of the new policy on identity

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management achieved a reduction in identity-related fraud recorded by government agencies to a moderate extent. This implies that the implementation of the new identification system has not really exerted any significant influence on the prevention of identity-related fraud (X=2.98, SD = 0.98).

Another variable tested was the proliferation of multiple identities by an individual. The survey sought after the perception of the respondents on whether the implementation of the policy has to a reasonable extent forestalled multiple identities among citizens. The result showed that only fifty-five percent of the respondents agreed that the new identity regime forestalled the issue of multiple identities to a high extent. The responses shown high variation as the distribution produced a mean value of 2.83 and a higher standard deviation of 1.45 to buttress the inference that multiple identities still exist in the new identity management regime. The result of the survey revealed that the implementation of the policy provided backup for government agencies using functional databases as sixty-nine percent of the respondents rated the performance high. The result was confirmed to be adequate by a mean value of 2.55 and a standard deviation of 1.10. This means the policy relatively provided a platform to keep a large volume of identity-related data by government agencies.

The researcher tested whether the implementation of the new identity regime had positively influenced the sharing of intelligence information among government agencies. The result revealed a low extent with sixty-two percent of the respondents. This result shows that the perception of respondents on the variable tested was evenly diverse with a mean value of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 1.39. This outcome complemented the earlier view that not all functional databases had been fully integrated in Nigeria. Management of large volume of identity-related data was rated to high extent with the response of seventy-four percent. This was also confirmed by a mean value of 2.53 and a standard deviation of 1.15. This result indicates that the new identification system being implemented in Nigeria has enough capacity to provide adequate storage for all functional databases in Nigeria but that does not mean that all identity-related agencies have fully explored this asset.

Respondents rated implementation performance low in the area of promoting e-service delivery at sixty-nine percent. This implies that the current state of the new identity regime has not exerted considerable influence in the e-service industry. This was further upheld by a mean value of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 0.98 which confirmed representativeness of the view of the respondents. The responses gathered in relation to access to the history of citizens transaction for decision making by law enforcement agencies (LEAs) showed that implementation performance was moderate with sixty-two percent of the pooled responses supporting this result, with a mean value of 3.11 and a standard deviation of 0.98. This result indicates that the view among selected identity-related agencies converged on a moderate scale that the implementation of the new regime has been assisting the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to carry out their responsibilities.

The result of the survey also indicated that up to sixty-three percent of the respondents agree that implementation of the policy has to moderate extent eliminated paperwork related to capturing citizens' identity-related information. This might not be unconnected to the success rate of the pre-enrollment online site that reduces the number of credentials required to capture biometric data. The finding came with a mean value of 3.17 and a standard deviation of 1.08. The implementation of the policy has failed in eliminating multiple data capturing by government agencies as proposed in the policy document. Sixty-five percent of the responses gathered indicated that implementation of the policy has to no extent stopped multiple data capturing by the concerned agencies (X=4.97, SD = 1.66). This cast doubt on the policy agenda to de-fragment the identity ecosystem in Nigeria making the implementation of the policy a candidate of another inconsequential crusade of the government.

Qualitative evidence was gathered to complement findings that emanated from quantitative analysis on the effect of the implementation of the policy on the activities of government agencies. The bulk of narration in this section came from interviewees drafted from NIS, FRSC, and INEC. The researcher wanted to know whether the interviewees were aware of the policy under review. The majority of them responded positively. When asked how? An officer from NIS said that "the coordinator of Oyo State NIMC came on a courtesy call to our office". It was also asked whether the policy had a connection with the activities of their places of work and whether the implementation of the policy had actually aided the performance of their duties. The narrations from the interviewees showed that the majority of them believed the new identification regime which the policy sought to establish had direct bearing on the activities they carried out. One of the interviewees remarked:

> Yes, there is understanding that Nigeria Immigration Service should have a desk at NIMC office so that they can identify non-Nigerians who may want to register and then, they are thinking to provide a database, so that you wouldn't have to start bringing some of those hard copies like birth certificate, identity certificate, declarations because the NIMC database has captured that information already (NIS's respondent).

From the above, it is evident the new regime will aid the process of capturing people that come for issuance of passport as well as fish out non-Nigerians from the national database. Another view was aired "Yes, it's to enhance the identification process of citizens and prevent duplication of identity in the

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country, more so to enhance the voting process which is the mandate of INEC as an organisation". On the actual implication of the policy implementation, the majority of the respondents were negative. One of the interviewees supported this inference that "Nigeria is corrupt, the system is not well adopted" Another conviction which was raised with respect to the degree to which the policy implementation influenced activities of other identity-related government agencies was lack of commitment from the agencies to deploy NIMC's database interface in carrying out their activities as the majority of the interviewees could not pinpoint any challenges they faced in the process of accessing or interacting with the NIMC's database. As regards whether the implementation of the policy was going on the right track, the narration of the respondents showed mixed views. Some believed it was going well while others seemed to believe otherwise. One of the respondents who believed the scheme was going well said "yes it is on the right track. No two persons have the same national identification number". But, when probed further he said "the only problem is that no single government agencies have been synchronized into the NIMC's database".

Another key item in the guide was to determine whether NIMC had fully harmonised and integrated a high number of government agencies for smooth interoperability. The accounts from the participants affirmatively suggested that there was little or no interoperability among government agencies. All the interviewees responded with a "No". One of the interviewees while substantiating his view said "No, when the coordinator came, he said the process is in phases and up till now existing databases have not been synchronised". Another said "Banks capture biodata, NIMC, INEC and …It appears that there is a problem with the harmonisation of identity-related information among the agencies". Another interviewee remarked "We (INEC) collect our own data directly from eligible citizens. Obviously, it's an indication that we don't work together. I think we will come to that one day". These submissions confirmed that interoperability among governmental agencies in Nigeria is yet to be achieved after a decade since the policy came on board.

In general, the survey result was pooled from the selected government agencies as such indicated overall positions of the sampled administrators thereby not given room for individuality difference, in view of this, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test whether there is a statistically significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents on effects of the implementation of the policy on the activities of the selected agencies. Subsequently, responses gathered on ten (10) variables set out to measure respondents' opinion on the effects of e-identification policy from the selected institutions (NIMC, NIS, FRSC & INEC) were re-coded into high extent (formerly coded as very high extent; high extent; moderate extent); low extent (formerly coded as low extent; very low extent); no extent (formerly coded as no extent). The model, ANOVA within a 5% level of significance was used to test the differences.

Table 2 shows that the main effect of the implementation of the policy on activities of selected agencies yield an F-ratio of $F(3, 116) = 5.773$, $p < 0.05$, indicating that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean effect of the policy implementation on activities of selected agencies. This was sustained by a higher mean response from NIS ($M = 24.3$, $SD = 26.6$) and FRSC ($M = 24.7$, $SD = 26.4$) compared with the lower mean response from NIMC ($M = 9.3$, $SD = 6.09$) and INEC ($M = 10.3$, $SD = 7.4$). This is an indication that the effects of the implementation of the policy are being felt more by NIS and FRSC. The Post Hoc test revealed that mean response from NIMC was significantly different from NIS ($p = 0.017$), FRSC ($p = 0.014$) and not significantly different from INEC ($p = 0.997$). The mean response of NIS was significantly different from INEC ($p = 0.030$) and not significantly different from FRSC ($p = 1.000$) while the mean response from FRSC was significantly different from INEC ($p = 0.025$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the research hypothesis (alternative) was accepted meaning that there was a statistically significant difference in the effects of the implementation of the policy on the activities of selected government agencies. These results cast doubt on the possibility of the policy ensuring the effectiveness of service administration among government agencies.

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Table 1: Effects of e-identification on Activities of Government Agencies

Activity Areas	HE f (%)	ME f (%)	LE f (%)	NE f (%)	Mean	SD
The new identity regime has to what extent enhanced provision of real time universal means of verifying citizens identities by government agencies?	57 (27.8)	116 (56.6)	32 (15.7)	-	2.84	0.93
The new identity regime has to what extent promoted reduction in cases of identity fraud recorded by government agencies?	54 (26.4)	127 (62)	11 (5.4)	13 (6.3)	2.98	0.98
Proliferation of multiple identities by an individual has to what extent forestalled by the implementation of the new identification regime?	112 (54.7)	37 (18)	37 (17.6)	20 (9.8)	2.83	1.45
The new identification system has to what extent provided reliable backup for government agencies operating functional databases?	142 (69.3)	22 (10.7)	33 (16.1)	8 (3.9)	2.55	1.10
The new identity regime has to what extent promoted the provision of platform for sharing of intelligence information among government agencies?	36 (17.6)	25 (12.2)	127 (61.9)	17 (8.3)	4.14	1.39
The implementation of the new identity regime has to what extent aided government agencies in managing large volume of data?	152 (74.2)	10 (4.9)	33 (16.1)	10 (4.9)	2.53	1.15
The new identity regime has to what extent promoted efficiency in e-service delivery?	34 (16.6)	23 (11.2)	143 (69.7)	5 (2.4)	3.69	0.98
The new identity regime has to what extent provided access to government agencies in tracking transaction for decision making by Law Enforcement Agencies?	39 (19)	128 (62.4)	28 (13.7)	10 (4.9)	3.11	0.98
The new identity regime has to what extent eliminated paper work related to capturing of citizens information in your organisation?	33 (16.1)	131 (63.9)	26 (12.7)	15 (7.3)	3.17	1.08
The new identity regime has to what extent eliminated multiple data capturing by government agencies?	31 (15.1)	6 (2.9)	34 (16.6)	134 (65.4)	4.97	1.66

Source: Authors' computation from field survey

Table 2: Variances in the administrators' opinion on the effects of e-identification on agencies' activities

Descriptive				F-test				Post Hoc Test		
Subjects	N	Mean	SD	Subjects	Df	F	Sig.	Subjects	Mean diff.	Sig.
				Between Group				NIS	-15.00000*	.017
NIMC	30	9.3	6.09		3	5.773	.001	FRSC	-15.36667*	.014
								INEC	-1.03333	.997
				Within Group				NIMC	15.00000*	.017
NIS	30	24.3	26.6		116			FRSC	-.36667	1.000
								INEC	13.96667*	.030
								NIMC	15.36667*	.014
FRSC	30	24.7	26.4	Total	119			NIS	.36667	1.000
								INEC	14.33333*	.025
	30	10.3	7.4					NIMC	1.03333	.997
INEC								NIS	-13.96667*	.030
								FRSC	-14.33333*	.025

**. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.*

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V. Situating the Survey into Effectiveness Narratives

On the effects of the policy implementation on activities of the government agencies that deal with identity-related information. Sixty-two percent of the respondents agreed with the position that real-time universal verification of citizens' identities had been aided as a result of the policy implementation. This means that with the National Identification Number (NIN) and other regulatory identifiers like SIM card registration and bank verification number (BVN) government agencies can determine the authenticity of individual identity. However, objection to this finding could be located in the International Bank Reconstruction and Development 2017 report titled *The State of identification system in Africa,* it was reported that only Department of State Security (DSS) in Nigeria utilises one out of 13 real-time identification solutions, as such access to the national database might not be universal as not all the identity-related agencies have been fully integrated with the NIMC's database. Reduction in identity-related fraud recorded by the government was established by the study as one of the implications of the policy implementation. This finding suggested that the new identity regime being promoted by the policy under review does not allow two persons to have the same electronic identity, the NIN is a once in a lifetime token which dies with the bearer.

However, the above finding is weakened by another finding, which revealed that after almost a decade of the existence of the policy, issues of multiple capturing of identity-related information still goes on unabated. This position was supported by evidence generated from both interviews conducted and questionnaires administered. It also correlates with the view of Osunade, Olanrewaju, and Philip (2013) that several identification regimes being operated in Nigeria led to duplication of citizen's identity. Literature evidence of Mukherjee and Nayar (2011) also confirmed that in un-harmonised identity ecosystem, duplication of an individual's identity is an issue.

There is a low incidence of sharing intelligence information among government agencies. This outcome came up with a fifty percent acceptance rate among the respondents. Likewise, the explanatory evidence to support this result was provided in the interview session. This outcome is another indication that the implementation strategies adopted for the policy were not able to promote interoperability among government agencies since many government agencies collect separated identity-related information from the same citizens in Nigeria. As a result of this, the need to share information among them might be difficult. This result tallies with Barton, Carlton, and Ziehm (2007) submission that a good number of government agencies operate disjointed databases with no platform for integration or interoperability for the delivery of public services. In a contrary opinion, Otjacques, Hitzelbeger and Feltz (2007) established several instances of interoperability among public authorities. It was proved that the identity system provides a window through which intelligence information is shared among countries. The divergence in this literature could be attributed to the difference in the research location. Otjacques, Hitzelberger and Feltz findings were based on experiences of European countries, mostly developed countries while this current study was carried out in Nigeria, a developing country. The results discussed above-raised questions on the effectiveness of implementation strategies adopted by Nigeria in implementing policy on the identification system.

The study confirmed that the implementation of the policy has not yielded meaningful results in the area of e-service delivery. This outcome cannot be isolated from the previous findings discussed above especially on interoperability among agencies. It must be noted that where there is no interoperability among government agencies e-service will not be optimally deployed. This of course stresses the reason why the implementation of the policy under review must be managed. Though, this finding negated Anderson *et al*. (2016) submissions that despite challenges facing the implementation of the identification system, in Nigeria, e-services such as digital banking, social security, online tax regime, voter registration, and distribution of subsidies were being utilised. However, Anderson *et al.* failed to acknowledge that each of these services was provided by separate functional databases, and as such might not be linked to the implementation of the new identity regime being installed within the dictate of the policy under review. The study confirmed that the implementation of the policy under review has assisted law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in carrying out their duties with a support rate of sixty-three percent. This was also established in the report of IBRD on the state of identity management in Africa. The report indicated that the State Security Service (SSS) and other security agencies are given access to NIMC's database in the course of providing security to the public. On the overall basis, the resourcefulness of the expected e-identification regime in Nigeria has not been fully harnessed by the relevant government agencies for administrative effectiveness.

VI. Concluding Remarks

Effective service administration devoid of identity fraud was cited as one of the core objects in the national policy and framework on the identity management system in Nigeria. The policy thrust aimed at institutionalising a foundational biometric identification system where all relevant government agencies access reliable information in order to call adequate

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administrative and service decisions while interacting with the public. This research revealed numerous uncertainties on the possibility of the policy to build a dependable e-identification network that state institutions can access for effective service delivery. Literature shows that the implementation of the policy under consideration is largely non-holistic given the ongoing practice of fragmented functional databases by different agencies (Osunade, Olanrewaju & Philip, 2013). The expectation is that an individual gets enrolled and be identified by the state for life even up to the point of death thereby creating one solid identification system that can easily be managed, but the scrappy nature of Nigerian identification ecosystem led to difficulties in intelligence sharing among government agencies in the absence of a harmonised identity management system. Harmonisation and integration of existing databases were the first calls of the policy but it appears that the implementation went on without recourse to this thrust. In addition, the enrollment component of the policy requires an upgraded approach as the system risk the possibility of identity divide, especially among the vulnerable population. If adequate measures are not put in place, the identity divide will continue to drawback on the prospects of e-service delivery especially in the period of emergency. To buttress this, the inability and incapacity of a decade system of digital identification to provide information about the most vulnerable during lockdown occasioned by the outbreak of Covid-19 for possible palliative intervention by the government raise deep uncertainties as to the very essence of the new identification regime.

In a poverty-ridden country like Nigeria with over 70 million living in extreme poverty, only 2.6 million persons were listed on the government social safety register showing a huge gap in overall coverage. The rhetoric of effective and efficient e-service delivery usually played by the state serve less where enrollment is not accessible and affordable by the critical mass. The question is how possible can the state socially protect the vulnerable without knowing them demographically. It is minimally expected that the state-backed biometric scheme is fashioned to address human development demand of the state, hence, the plausibility of the policy redevelopment to reconstruct the Nigerian identification regime for the effectiveness of administrative agencies' decisions and service delivery. As this work is limited to the application of e-identity aided solutions among the government agencies, the need to explore insight as to how cultural, political and social peculiarities are shaping enrollment behaviour among the un-enrolled population for optimum utilisation of the scheme by government administrative and service institutions becomes research calling because the primary enabler of this tech is inclusive enrollment for all.

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