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# THE IMPACT OF ABSENTEE LEADERSHIP AND THE DYNAMICS OF TRADITIONAL RULERS IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN SOCIETIES: THE BAYELSA EXPERIENCE

**Azibagiri Samuel Omekwe**
Department of General Studies, School of Foundation Studies, Bayelsa State College of Health Technology PMB 131.
omekweazibagiri@gmail.com

**Abstract**
This study explores how absentee leadership affects the role and influence of traditional rulers in modern African societies, focusing on Bayelsa State, Nigeria. In many communities, traditional rulers are becoming less present, often due to political commitments, relocation to urban areas, or personal interests. Their physical and social absence creates a gap between them and the people they are meant to serve, weakening their authority and reducing their impact on community life and development. The background highlights the traditional role of these leaders as cultural guardians, peacemakers, and voices of the people. However, the problem identified is that their growing absence undermines these long-standing roles. The goal of the study is to understand the causes and effects of absentee leadership and how it shapes the interaction between traditional institutions and modern governance systems. To get a well-rounded view, the study used a mixed-methods approach, combining interviews, field observations, surveys, and data analysis. This helped to gather both detailed personal stories and measurable trends from selected communities across Bayelsa State. The findings show that absentee traditional rulers often leave communities with weaker leadership, more frequent local disputes, and a gradual loss of cultural values. The discussion points to factors like modernization and political interference as major contributors. In conclusion, the study suggests practical steps such as setting clearer roles for traditional rulers and creating better links between traditional and formal leadership. These changes could help keep traditional rulers active and connected to the people they serve.
**Keywords:** Absentee Leadership, Bayelsa State, Community Development, Traditional Rulers, Urbanization

## Introduction

Traditional institutions have always been the foundation of our political administration in African societies before the arrival of the colonial masters. As we know, traditional leadership is one of the oldest institutions of administration in Nigeria. The leaders are rooted in the beliefs, history and customs of the ethnic and cultural backgrounds they represent. In realistic terms, leaders through the years have contributed to administering governance in pre-colonial times, the colonial duration, and the submit-independence epoch (Agbam & Elenwa, 2021). They play a vital role in African societies, serving as a bridge between the past and present. However, the phenomenon of absentee leadership has become increasingly prevalent, undermining the effectiveness of traditional institutions.

Many African societies had well-organized administrative systems for maintaining law and order and generating revenue for the smooth running of the administration of their societies (Olu-Owolabi, et al., 2024). The influence of traditional institutions continued after independence to shape the history, culture of and traditions of the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria today. Prior to the pre-colonial era, governance in different parts of Nigeria was synonymous with traditional institutions and their rulers. Administration of communities and township was centered on the traditional leader who was considered as the repository of political, economic, religious, legislative, executive and judicial functions (Olu-Owolabi, et al., 2024).

Traditional leadership is noted to be the indigenous political arrangements wherein leaders with proven facts of feat are appointed and installed consistent with the provisions of their native laws and customs (Orji, &

Olali, 2010). Traditional leaders are the collection of persons who by community customs and practices (or traditions) occupy positions (stools) through which they exercise governance over a rather homogeneous people within a culturally defined territory Such persons are generally referred to as kings and chiefs, or in a more generic term, traditional rulers, irrespective of the particular titles of the stool they occupy (Wilhelmina, 2002).Despite the introduction of Local Government Reforms of 1976, which in the said reforms, leadership roles were clearly expressed, which states that it is not the intention of government to destroy the organic unity of the traditional institutions. The traditional emirate and chiefdom will remain, although their functions will be changed to accord with the present-day circumstances. Although the paramount of chiefs was undone by colonial rule, traditional rulers have served as important adjuncts in the administration of post-colonial government in both Nigeria and Africa (Miles, 2007).

Agbam & Elenwa (2021) noted that Traditional leaders in Nigeria remain for a variety of reasons, important to the design and implementation of development projects within their area of jurisdiction. Their core functions include the mobilization of their communities for developmental purposes. This consists of the supply of infrastructure for a more desirable preferred of residing in the community. Sometimes, traditional leaders initiate development initiatives and relaxed the support of both inner and external development agents for the execution of those tasks (Wilhelmina, 2002). Traditional leaders work alongside their projects and consequently deliver the entire network alongside to perform development tasks to be able to be of advantage to the whole community.

According to Wilhelmina, (2002), some of the roles of traditional leaders include:

i. Custody of ancestral and community land, culture, customary laws, tradition and history;
ii. Initiation and championing of development activities; and
iii. Maintenance of law and order, including presiding over and setting noncriminal, civil disputes.

Jeffrey (2004) on his part pointed out that traditional leaders play several important roles in their communities. For example, they help start education support programs, encourage people to invest locally, create strategies to fight poverty, lead campaigns to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, and serve as good examples and ambassadors for their people.

Building on this, Agbam and Elenwa (2021) noted that there are many different views about what traditional leadership really means in terms of development. Because of these varied opinions, it's hard to agree on a single definition of their role. It’s even more challenging to separate their duties into clear categories like community advocacy, grassroots mobilization, or rural development. These roles often blend together and can’t easily be separated—they are deeply connected and influence one another.

The influence of traditional rulers began to decline when the 1922 Clifford Constitution was introduced. This constitution reduced their power, turning them into more of local government administrators. Later, the 1976 Constitution further limited what they could do, especially in politics. It restricted their involvement in partisan politics and mainly allowed them to advise on traditional matters like customs, chieftaincy titles, religion, local law enforcement, and other issues that the government approves (Garba et al., 2018).

One of the biggest challenges facing traditional institutions today is that the constitution does not clearly define their roles. Because of this legal gap, it becomes difficult for traditional rulers to take on specific responsibilities or participate meaningfully in political decisions within their communities (Chukwudi et al., 2024).

Traditionally, African rulers have played a key role in their societies. They have been seen as the guardians of culture, peacekeepers during disputes, and strong symbols of community identity. But today, many of them are no longer as present in their communities as they used to be. This study explores how this growing trend of absentee leadership is affecting traditional rulers in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, and looks at how their roles are changing in modern times.

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**Brief Overview of Bayelsa State and Its Traditional Leadership Structure**

Bayelsa State, nicknamed the "Glory of All Lands", is a treasure trove of rich cultural heritage and traditional institutions. Located in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, in West Africa, the state is predominantly inhabited by the Ijaw ethnic group, who has a deep-rooted traditional leadership structure. It is situated between latitudes 4°30'N and 5°30'N, and longitudes 5°45'E and 6°45'E (Alagoa, 2013). The state shares borders with Rivers State to the west, Delta State to the north, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south (Ogbonnaya, 2017).

Bayelsa State has a rich cultural heritage, with a traditional leadership structure that dates back to the pre-colonial era (Ukperi, 2015). It has twenty three clans, with each clan having a first class chieftaincy stool with the incumbents; each clan has its clan head as member of the council of traditional rulers as a first class traditional ruler and is addressed as His Royal Majesty. While the second class and third class chieftaincy stools are addressed as His Royal Highnesses (Larry, n.d.).

In addition to its rich cultural heritage, Bayelsa State is also known for its natural resources, including crude oil, natural gas, and timber. The state has a total area of 10,773 square kilometers and a population of approximately 3.7 million people. The state is home to several ethnic groups, including the Ijaw, Nembe, Ogbia, and Epie-Atissa (Alagoa, 2013). Each of these ethnic groups has its own traditional leadership structure, with the king or monarch serving as the highest authority that plays an important role in maintaining peace and order, resolving conflicts, and promoting cultural heritage. The traditional leaders in the state serve as custodians of traditional knowledge and customs, and are responsible for preserving the cultural identity of their people.

Some of the traditional leadership titles in Bayelsa State include;

i. Chief: Local leaders who are representatives of their families or compounds in local communities, who play vital role in maintaining peace and order in the community.
ii. Amanyanabo: This is the title given to the king or monarch of the Twon Brass Kingdom, Nembe Kingdom, and Sangana Kingdom.
iii. Obanobhan / Obenema: a high-ranking traditional ruler in Ogbia who oversees multiple communities (clan or Kingdom head) and provide guidance on important matters. Also, is the title given to the king or monarch of the Ogbia Kingdom (Ukperi, 2015). While Obenema is the title given to a community traditional ruler in Ogbia.
iv. Paramount Rulers: a traditional ruler who oversee multiple communities and provide guidance on important matters such as the Paramount Ruler of Koromotoru Kingdom, and the Paramount Ruler of Okugbe-Isoko Kingdom
v. Ibedawei: the title given to the monarch who is the highest-ranking traditional ruler in Bilakiri Kingdom, and Akassa Kingdom
vi. Ibenanowei: title of a traditional kingdom head in Gbarain Kingdom, and Oyakiri Kingdom
vii. Amanannaowei: the title given to a community traditional head or a clan head such as Amanannaowei of Tombia Kingdom.
viii. Obenibe: a traditional title given to a clan or kingdom head in Epie.
ix. Pere: the traditional title of the head of Gbanraun Kingdom.

The traditional leadership structure in Bayelsa State follows a hierarchical pattern, with paramount rulers overseeing multiple communities and chiefs serving as intermediaries between the traditional ruler and the people. These leaders are revered and respected as custodians of tradition and are expected to provide guidance, leadership, and support to their communities. However, the impact of absentee leadership has become a growing concern in recent times. The consequences of absentee leadership are far-reaching. It leads to a lack of direction, poor governance, and a breakdown of community cohesion. Without active and engaged

traditional leaders, communities may struggle to address socio-economic challenges, resolve conflicts, and preserve their cultural heritage.

Furthermore, absentee leadership can create a power vacuum, allowing external influences to exploit and manipulate the traditional leadership structure for their own gain. This undermines the autonomy and authority of traditional leaders, eroding the trust and confidence the community places in them. And as such, understanding the traditional leadership structure in Bayelsa State is crucial to comprehend the impact of absentee leadership. The absence of active and engaged traditional leaders has significant implications for the well-being and development of communities, posing challenges to maintaining peace, preserving cultural heritage, and achieving sustainable growth in the state.

**Literature Review**

Absentee leadership refers to the practice of leaders being physically or emotionally absent from their followers, leading to a lack of effective leadership and guidance (Higgs, 2009). In the context of traditional rulers, absentee leadership can manifest in various ways, including physical absence from the community, lack of engagement with subjects, and failure to perform traditional duties. Studies have shown that absentee leadership can have severe consequences on organizational effectiveness, employee morale, and community development (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Henderson et al., 2009). In the context of traditional rulers, absentee leadership can lead to a disconnect between the rulers and their subjects, eroding trust and confidence in the traditional institution.

Traditional institution as defined by Emordi and Osiki (2008) is the Kingship system with a highly centralised system of government. African societies are characterized with the kingship system, this is a system whereby a person is selected as a king, queen or emperor of a community, society, or a state embedded with political power to govern their territory. The kingship system varies from one society, region or country to another (Olu-Owolabi, et al., 2024). The process of selecting the ruler is hereditary in some places meaning that the political power is passed down within a royal family from one generation to the next. For example, only the first male child of the ruling king is eligible to become the next ruler in the Benin kingdom, Edo state (Olu-Owolabi, et al., 2024).

For example, The Emir of Kano in Kano State is typically selected based on a well-established process that involves a council of kingmakers who consider the qualifications, integrity, and adherence to Islamic and traditional customs. According to Orji and Olali (2010) traditional institutions are characterized as the indigenous political structures through which individuals with established records of leadership competency are selected and officially inaugurated in adherence to the requisite criteria outlined within their respective traditional customs and legal frameworks. These traditional institutions serve as the guardians of their community's norms, cultural heritage, and customary practices (Olawale, 2018; Orji & Olali, 2010) contend that the scope of traditional institutions extends beyond monarchs and encompasses the entirety of the traditional leadership structure. This structure comprises individuals such as chief-in-council, elders-in-council, and traditional title holders. These individuals are bestowed with traditional chieftaincy titles in recognition of their substantial contributions to the advancement and progress of their respective communities, even though their roles may entail minimal or no executive, legislative, or judicial power (Olu-Owolabi, et al., 2024).

Jeffrey (2004) explained that traditional rulers are still very important in their communities. He noted that they help raise funds for education, encourage investment, lead efforts to fight poverty, organize health campaigns like those for HIV/AIDS, and act as respected role models for their people. These roles show that traditional rulers do much more than just hold titles—they are active contributors to the development of their societies. Agbam and Elenwa (2021) added that people have different opinions about what traditional rulers are supposed to do. Because their roles are so wide-ranging, it's hard to place them into neat categories.

Sometimes, they act as community advocates, other times they help with local development or reducing poverty. According to the authors, these roles are deeply connected, and it's hard to draw clear lines between them.

Arowolo and Aluko (2012), in their work Democracy, Political Participation and Good Governance in Nigeria, argued that traditional institutions remain important even in modern democracies. They noted that although traditional rulers don't make laws or hold political offices, their cultural authority helps promote peace and unity at the grassroots level. They are trusted by the people and can influence positive change in ways that formal government structures sometimes cannot. Similarly, Ajayi and Ayeni (2017) observed that traditional rulers help preserve community values and resolve disputes. In their article Traditional Institutions and Governance in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects, they highlighted how these leaders serve as bridges between the people and government. They understand the local languages, customs, and needs, and they can help make government programs more effective when they are included in development efforts.

Unfortunately, over time, their power has been reduced. The 1922 Clifford Constitution started this decline by removing many of their earlier political roles and labeling them as local administrators. Later, the 1976 Constitution made things even more limiting. It said that traditional rulers could not be involved in partisan politics, and instead, their roles were narrowed to giving advice on things like customs, religion, chieftaincy matters, and local law enforcement (Garba et al., 2018).

Chukwudi et al. (2024) pointed out that one of the biggest problems facing traditional rulers today is that their roles are not clearly defined in Nigeria's legal system. This lack of legal clarity makes it difficult for them to take on responsibilities in local governance. As a result, many of them are left unsure of what they are allowed to do, which weakens their influence in their communities.

Eme and Emeh (2012), in their study titled Traditional Rulers and Local Government in Nigeria: Partners in Progress or Rivals?, argued that traditional rulers should not be seen as a threat to democratic governance. Instead, they should be treated as partners. The authors believed that if given clear roles and proper support, traditional leaders can help bring development to rural areas and promote stability at the community level.

Beyond governance, traditional rulers are also cultural leaders. According to Nwabueze (2011), in his book Ideas and Facts in Traditional Leadership in Nigeria, they serve as keepers of history, customs, and moral values. In times of conflict, their wisdom and experience often help to calm tensions and bring about peaceful resolutions.

However, a growing concern in recent times is the issue of absentee leadership. Some traditional rulers no longer live in their communities or are too far removed from the everyday struggles of the people. This absence can weaken their relationship with the community and make it harder for them to lead effectively. This study focuses on this issue in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, where absentee traditional leadership is becoming more common. It aims to understand how this trend is affecting community development and the traditional institutions themselves.

In a nutshell, while traditional rulers are still respected and can play important roles in today's society, there is a need for clearer definitions of their responsibilities. If well-supported, they can serve as strong partners in grassroots development, cultural preservation, and peaceful governance.

**Traditional Institutions in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective**

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic country having over 300 ethnic groups and over 250 language including diverse cultures and traditions. These ethnic groups have their unique traditional institution, they also have their unique culture and tradition which differ from each other (Osifo, 2017; Olawale, 2018). Traditional institutions in Nigeria also have a complex and multifaceted history, understanding the evolution of these institutions provides valuable insights into the country's social, cultural, and political development. Traditional institutions

in Nigeria possess a rich and diverse history, dating back to the pre-colonial era. These institutions played a pivotal role in shaping the country's social, cultural, and political landscape (Alagoa, 2013; Ogbonnaya, 2017). In addition to their role as custodians of the oral traditions and historical narratives of their communities, traditional institutions also serve as instrumental agents in maintaining social stability and harmony within their specific domains. Their functions encompass the performance of significant spiritual and ceremonial duties, active contributions to the development and progress of their areas, and the informal resolution of conflicts and disputes (Baldwin and Holzinger, 2019). A nuanced examination of traditional institutions in Nigeria reveals a complex system of governance, characterized by various kingdoms, chiefdoms, and councils of elders during the pre-colonial era (Ukperi, 2015).

The British colonial authorities introduced a system of indirect rule, which relied on traditional institutions to implement colonial policies (Afigbo, 1981). However, this system also undermined the authority of traditional institutions and created tensions between traditional leaders and colonial authorities (Alagoa, 2013). The emergence of "Warrant Chiefs" appointed by colonial authorities further complicated the role of traditional institutions (Afigbo, 1981). Since Nigeria gained independence in 1960, traditional institutions have continued to play a significant role in the country's social and cultural landscape (Ogbonnaya, 2017). However, these institutions have also faced challenges posed by modernization, urbanization, and globalization (Ukperi, 2015). The missionary impact on modern Nigeria has also had a profound effect on traditional institutions (Ayandele, 1966).

Notable historians such as Ikime have also contributed to the understanding of traditional institutions in Nigeria. Ikime's work titled "The Fall of Nigeria: The British Conquest," provides valuable insights into the impact of colonialism on the traditional institutions in Nigeria (Ikime, 1980)

**The Role of Traditional Institutions in Nigeria**

Before Nigeria’s independence, traditional institutions played essential roles despite being restructured by the British colonial administration to serve colonial interests (Olu-Owolabi, et al., 2024). They were incorporated into the indirect rule system, where they took on legislative, executive, and judicial functions, including tax collection and recruitment efforts for the armed forces (Ali and Bukar, 2019). Despite that, traditional institutions in Nigeria play a pivotal role in maintaining social order, resolving conflicts, and preserving cultural heritage (Alagoa, 2013). These institutions have been an integral part of Nigerian society for centuries, and their influence extends beyond the traditional sphere to modern governance and development (Ogbonnaya, 2017).

The 1999 constitution did not assign specific roles to traditional institutions apart from providing them with advisory positions at the local government level. Unfortunately, these advisory roles are not binding on the elected local government officials, reversing many of the gains made by these institutions over the years (Chinwe, 2023). Despite the fact that they do not have constitutional specified roles, traditional institution have played major roles in the maintaining social order, resolving conflicts, and preserving cultural heritage as identified by Alagoa (2013).

In the maintenance of social order, traditional institutions in Nigeria contribute to the maintenance of social order through:

i. Conflict Resolution: Traditional leaders resolve disputes and conflicts within their communities, promoting peace and stability (Ukperi, 2015). For instance, the Ooni of Ife, a prominent traditional leader in Nigeria, has been instrumental in resolving conflicts between rival groups in the southwest region (Akinjogbin, 2018).
ii. Enforcement of Traditional Laws: Traditional institutions enforce traditional laws and customs, maintaining social norms and values (Alagoa, 2013). For example, the Igbo people of southeastern

Nigeria have a traditional institution known as the "Igwe," which enforces traditional laws and customs (Uchendu, 1965).

Also, traditional institutions in Nigeria help in the preservation of our rich cultural heritage through:

i. Promotion of Traditional Practices: Traditional leaders promote traditional practices, such as festivals, rituals, and ceremonies, which help preserve cultural identity (Ogbonnaya, 2017). For instance, the Osun Osogbo festival in southwestern Nigeria is a traditional festival that promotes cultural heritage and identity (Ojo, 2018).
ii. Preservation of Traditional Knowledge: Traditional institutions preserve traditional knowledge, such as herbal medicine, farming practices, and crafts, which are essential for community development (Ukperi, 2015). For example, the Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria have a traditional institution known as the "Babalawo," which preserves traditional knowledge on herbal medicine and spiritual practices (Abimbola, 1976).

Traditional institutions in Nigeria have also contributed greatly to modern governance and development through:

i. Providing Guidance: Traditional leaders provide guidance and advice to modern governments, helping to inform policy decisions (Alagoa, 2013). For instance, the Sultan of Sokoto, a prominent traditional leader in northern Nigeria, has been instrumental in providing guidance on issues related to Islamic law and practice (Laitin, 1986).
ii. Supporting Community Development: Traditional institutions support community development initiatives, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure projects (Ogbonnaya, 2017). For example, the traditional institution of the "Oba" in southwestern Nigeria has been instrumental in supporting community development initiatives, such as the provision of education and healthcare services (Akinjogbin, 2018).

**Theoretical framework: Institutional Theory**

The institutional theory was adopted for the study, in order to have an understanding of the Nigerian traditional institutions. The institutional theory was propounded by scholars such as John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan (Jepperson & Meyer, 2021). This theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the role of traditional institutions in Nigeria. Olu-Owolabi et al. (2020) posted that the institutional theory provides a theoretical lens through which to explore how traditional institutions in Nigeria play integral roles in the sustainable leadership and promotion of good governance within the broader societal framework. The theory posits that institutions shape the behaviour and actions of individuals and organizations within a society (Scott, 2014). North (1990) defines institutions as the "rules of the game" that govern human behaviour and interaction.

Institutional theory comprises of three key components which includes;

1. Institutional Environment: The institutional environment refers to the broader social, cultural, and economic context within which institutions operate (Scott, 2014). In Nigeria, the institutional environment is characterized by a complex mix of traditional and modern institutions (Alagoa, 2013).
2. Institutional Actors: Institutional actors refer to the individuals and organizations that operate within the institutional environment (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Traditional leaders, such as the Ooni of Ife and the Sultan of Sokoto, who are key institutional actors in Nigeria (Akinjogbin, 2018).
3. Institutional Logics: Institutional logics refer to the underlying values, norms, and beliefs that shape the behaviour and actions of institutional actors (Friedland & Alford, 1991). In Nigeria, the institutional logics underlying traditional institutions emphasize the importance of community, social order, and cultural heritage (Ogbonnaya, 2017).

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In the application of institutional theory to the traditional institutions in Nigeria, institutional theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the role of traditional institutions in Nigeria. The theory highlights the importance of considering the institutional environment, institutional actors, and institutional logics when analyzing traditional institutions.

A case study example in Nigeria, it illustrate how it is been applied in the Nigerian traditional institution such as, The Ooni of Ife, a prominent traditional leader in Nigeria, operates within an institutional environment characterized by a complex mix of traditional and modern institutions (Alagoa, 2013). The Ooni of Ife is an institutional actor who plays a key role in shaping the behaviour and actions of individuals and organizations within his kingdom (Akinjogbin, 2018). The institutional logics underlying the Ooni's institution emphasize the importance of community, social order, and cultural heritage (Ogbonnaya, 2017).

**Methodology**

To explore the impact of absentee leadership and the dynamics of traditional rulers in contemporary African societies: the Bayelsa experience, the study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods to gather more sophisticated and contextualized data. The study was conducted in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

**Research Findings**

The study revealed that absentee leadership is a significant challenge facing traditional rulers in Bayelsa State. Many traditional rulers were found to be physically or emotionally absent from their communities, leading to a lack of effective leadership and guidance.

The study also found that the dynamics of traditional rulers in Bayelsa State are complex and multifaceted. Traditional rulers face significant challenges in navigating modern governance structures while maintaining their cultural heritage. Many traditional rulers reported feeling marginalized and excluded from decision-making processes, leading to feelings of frustration and disillusionment.

**Conclusion**

This study highlights the significant impact of absentee leadership on traditional rulers in contemporary African societies. The findings of this study suggest that absentee leadership can lead to a disconnect between traditional rulers and their subjects, eroding trust and confidence in the traditional institution. The study also underscores the complex dynamics of traditional rulers in Bayelsa State, highlighting the challenges they face in navigating modern governance structures while maintaining their cultural heritage. The study recommends that traditional rulers, government agencies, and community leaders work together to develop strategies for strengthening the traditional institution and promoting effective leadership and governance.

**Recommendations**

1. Traditional rulers should prioritize their responsibilities and duties to their communities, ensuring that they are physically and emotionally present to provide effective leadership and guidance.
2. Government agencies and community leaders should work together to develop training programs for traditional rulers, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate modern governance structures.
3. Traditional rulers, government agencies, and community leaders should collaborate to develop policies and programs that promote the cultural heritage and traditional institutions of Bayelsa State.

**Study Limitations**

This study has several limitations. First, the study was conducted in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, and the findings may not be generalizable to other contexts. Second, the study relied on self-reported data from traditional rulers and community leaders, which may be subject to biases and limitations.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research should investigate the impact of absentee leadership on traditional rulers in other African societies, exploring the similarities and differences in the experiences of traditional rulers across different contexts. Additionally, research should examine the effectiveness of training programs for traditional rulers, assessing their impact on leadership skills and governance outcomes.

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